



**Report of the Second Inter-Agency Consultative Group
Meeting
on the preparations of the Ten-Year Review Conference of the
Almaty Programme of Action**

United Nations, Geneva

December 2012

A. Introduction

The United Nations Office of the High-Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) organized the second Inter-Agency Consultative Group Meeting (IACG) on the Preparatory Process for the Comprehensive Ten-Year Review Conference of the Almaty Programme of Action, on 6 December, 2012 in Geneva. The objective of the second IACG Meeting was to undertake further consultations and gather commitments by inter agency partners regarding the organization of pre-conference events, publications, regional review meetings, as well as their contributions to the private sector track of the conference and its main priority areas.

Ambassador Chanthalangsy pointed out that the new programme of action should address new challenges and opportunities that had arisen for LLDCs that were not yet visible in 2003, including climate change, land degradation, desertification and deforestation.

He informed the meeting that the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic would host the regional review meeting on the implementation of the Almaty Programme for the Asian and European region which would be jointly organized by UNESCAP, UNECE and OHRLLS from 5 to 7 March 2013 in Vientiane. He encouraged all stakeholders including all UN agencies and international organizations to contribute to and actively participate in the regional review meeting.

In his remarks, H.E. Ambassador Juan Esteban Aguirre Martinez noted that in preparing for the ten-year review, the LLDCs needed to adopt a different conceptual analysis of their special challenges with a view to achieve sustainable development. He underscored that LLDCs needed to undertake a strategic transformation of their economies through strengthening of their productive capacities, greater diversification and value addition to their exports. He also encouraged LLDCs to produce export goods that were of low volume but of high quality, which could help them minimize transaction costs while maximizing foreign exchange earnings. These measures would help LLDCs to improve their resilience against external shocks, including commodity price volatility. He stressed that such structural transformation also required technological advances through greater development of relevant innovations and intensified technology transfer; increased access to capital and increased participation of LLDCs in value chains at all levels, bilateral, sub-regional, regional and global.

Ambassador Martinez emphasized that an equal footing of cooperation on a win-win basis with mutual benefits should be strengthened between LLDCs, their transit neighbours and other neighbouring countries through enhanced South-South cooperation. This South-South cooperation should be projected to the rest of the world through increased commercial volume of trade. He underscored that the APoA was outward looking and depended on resources from the outside world. He underlined that the successor programme should make the LLDCs to focus inward and achieve greater changes from within and project these changes to the world.

Ambassador Martinez also stressed that LLDCs should make further efforts towards achieving the MDGs. In particular highly skilled labour and an educated and healthy population were important for achieving structural transformation. He called for more information and analytical work on the progress that LLDCs had achieved in all sectors

With regard to analytical and policy dialogue, Ms. Molnar pointed out that UNECE had: developed the Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL) multi-country transport investment plan; prepared a study on the comparison of inland vs. maritime transport between Europe and Asia; facilitated the policy dialogue with EATL countries; and launched a joint resource book by OSCE and UNECE. With regard to capacity building, UNECE

related policy work on regional norms adopted by the AU conference of ministers and endorsed by the AU Summit in January 2012; (c) collaboration with WTO, OECD, AU and the RECs on the Aid for Trade initiative including preparatory work for the Global Review in 2013; (d) trade facilitation research and implementation (with a number of development partners including AU, WTO, AfDB and the RECs) particularly in relation to transport/transit corridors across Africa; (e) harmonization of the legal/regulatory arrangements, establishment of corridor committees and one-stop border posts; (f) collaboration with AU and AfDB and other development partners on the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA); and (g) work undertaken on the implementation of the Yamoussokro Decision on Air Transport.

With regard to the preparation of the regional review meeting in Africa, Mr. Farahat informed the meeting that UNECA had recruited consultants to prepare the background document; the venue of the meeting would be Addis Ababa and the date of the meeting would be decided soon. He indicated that UNECA wished to organize a thematic event, however progress on this had been delayed due to financial and recruitment issues.

The **UNCTAD** representative, Mr. Gunter Fischer, noted that 2014 would also be the 50th anniversary of UNCTAD. He noted that UNCTAD had been working on LLDCs-related issues since its very first conference held in 1964 with a focus on transport and transit related issues. He indicated that UNCTAD will bring in a wealth of the experience to the preparatory process. He stated that UNCTAD would organize three events: (1) an expert group meeting on innovations in the trade logistics for LLDCs in 2013; (2) a global services meeting in China, also in 2013, that would devote a session to services of importance to LLDCs; and (3) a World Investment Forum in early 2014 that would also dedicate a special session to the LLDCs. He indicated that UNCTAD would be ready to contribute to other events organized by other organizations.

Mr. José María Rubiato of UNCTAD Division on Technology and Logistics, presented the main activities of UNCTAD in the field of transit transport and trade facilitation relating to improving LLDCs' trade potential. In doing so Mr. Rubiato presented a study "The way to the Ocean", soon to be published, looking at three transit corridors in Eastern Africa and drawing lessons on successful so

Furthermore, Mr. Rubiato noted that other planned contributions include technical assistance in the field and consensus building events. Regarding the former, two projects were currently being executed by UNCTAD in partnership with LLDCs: one reviewing the linkage at national, regional and multilateral levels of trade facilitation measures being launched by LLDCs and transit neighbours; the second project, co-executed with UNESCAP and UNECA, is aimed at disseminating the "Toolkit for Cross-Border and Transit transport Process Management" in pilot corr

to actively participate and coordinate at country level with their counterparts in charge of the Almaty Programme implementation.

The **WTO** representative, Mr. Raul Torres highlighted that the 4th Global Review on Aid For Trade would focus on connecting to value chains and would include a monitoring exercise for the private sector. On the Trade Facilitation negotiations he mentioned that negotiations continued with the view of having a Trade Facilitation (TF) deliverable for the Ninth WTO Ministerial Conference to take place in Bali in December 2013. He also noted that whether or not an Agreement on Trade Facilitation is adopted at the Ministerial Meeting, it was certain that 2013 was going to be a critical year for the TF negotiations. Therefore LLDCs should become more engaged and proactive in the negotiations of a TF

of 2013 on the following topics: Handbook for LLDCs Trade Negotiators; Bilateral and Transport Agreements of the LLDCs: A comparative St

the meeting that the CFC focuses on actions which could work effectively in landlocked CDDCs to address this problem.

Mr. Kuleshov indicated that the CFC was a practical institution and its main instrument of operations was project financing. CFC provides support for actions which would identify successful experience in the context of LLDCs, and provide opportunities for up-scaling of successes to take maximum advantage of its development benefits. The typical projects funded by the CFC fell in one of the broad areas of: capacity building; value addition; diversification; financial instruments and risk mitigation.

Mr. Kuleshov provided two examples of projects recently funded by the CFC. These

D.

and a Brainstorming Meeting to provide substantive

- The accession procedure for LLDCs should be simplified and there is need to take into account the individual levels of development and the special needs and problems caused by the geographical disadvantage of being landlocked during the accession process to the WTO.

3. Trade Facilitation and fundamental transit policy issues (soft infrastructure)

- Harmonization of legal and administrative regulation of road/rail transport, border crossing and customs procedures on the basis of international agreements and conventions;
- Increased ratification/accession and effective implementation of international conventions and agreements and regional and sub regional agreements on transport and trade facilitation.
- Mainstreaming of the conventions and regional agree

5.

took note of the pre-conference and side events that were suggested by the partners, the studies, the special analytical reports on LLDCs, projects and capacity building activities.

With regards to the private sector track he noted that based on the discussions:

- The primary objectives of the private sector involvement should be: to review what has worked and has not worked, major lessons learnt and recommend policy reforms; the increased role of the private sector to foster structural transformation and development in LLDCs; the role of the private sector in promoting environmental sustainability; and the concrete deliverables from the private sector that ensure a win-win situation for all;
- In addition to the private sector track that involves all private sector representatives from all LLDCs the meeting suggested a panel composing of private sector representatives including national business representations and associations from each region to share their experiences;
- The meeting suggested consideration of a wide range of topics for the roundtables including corporate social responsibility, sustainable consumption and production, and resource efficiency, the green economy, sustainable transport, transfer of technology, telecommunication services, road safety, border crossing facilitation and FDI.
- Organizations had indicated the special events in which they would involve the private sector for example: UNCTAD's special session on LLDCs during the World Investment Forum in 2014; an experts meeting in April 2013 that will look at logistics innovation for LLDCs and trade; and the dedicated segment on LLDCs at the 2nd Global Services Forum to be held in May 2013.
- The meeting suggested that a goal to ensure that all LLDCs become contracting parties to the Convention on Harmonization of frontier controls and the TIR before the global conference could be concrete and achievable.
- In terms of substantive work, UNCTAD will prepare an expanded section and possible separate publication on FDI in LLDCs in 2013; and ITC could share the results of their project on non-tariff measures.

With regards to the key elements of the new PoA, the High Representative noted that OHRLLS had captured all the extensive and comprehensive inputs made by the participants and will take into full account the comments raised. He stressed that it was important to not only identify the challenges but to determine the solutions and explore all the opportunities and try to utilize them to the optimal benefits of LLDCs. He agreed

ANNEX 1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Common Fund for Commodities

Mr. Andrey Kuleshov, Senior Project Manager, Policy, Programme Management and Evaluation Unit, P.O. Box 74656, 1070 BR Amsterdam,

Mr. Bonapas Onguglo, Division on International Trade and Commodities, Email: bonapas.onguglo@unctad.org

Mr. Gunter Fischer, Economic Affairs Officer, Division for Africa, LDCs and Special Programmes, Tel: 41 22 917 5901, Fax: 41 22 917 0046, Email: gunter.fischer@unctad.org

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

Dr. Mohamadou Mansour N'Diaye; Chef de Cabinet; UNCCD; Langer Eugen, Herman-Ehlers St 10; D-53113 Bonn, Germany; Tel: 49 228 815 2803; Fax: 49 228 815 28098; Email: mndiaye@unccd.int

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Mr. Miroslav N. Jovanovic, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe;
Transport Division; Palais des Nations; CH-1211 Geneva 10; Switzerland; Tel: +41 22
917 2493;Email: miroslav.jovanovic@unece.org

Ms. Heidi Schroderus-Fox, Director, UN-OHRLLS, United Nations Secretariat, 405 East 42nd Street, Room S-3257, New York, NY 10017, USA, Tel: 212-963-0932, fax: 917-367-3415, E-mail: schroderus-fox@un.org

Mr. Sandagdorj Erdenebileg, Chief, Policy Development, Coordination, Monitoring and Reporting Service, UN OHRLLS, United Nations Secretariat, 405 East 42nd Street, Room S-3252, New York, NY 10017, USA Tel: 212 963 7703, Fax: 917 367 3415, E-mail: erdenebileg@un.org

Ms. Gladys Mutangadura, Economic Affairs Officer, OHRLLS, United Nations Secretariat, 405 East 42nd Street, Room S-3245, New York, NY 10017, USA, Tel: 212-963-3316, fax: 917-367-3415, Email: [muta6272\(d\)-0.956417\(o\)-1058\(\)250JTJ](mailto:muta6272(d)-0.956417(o)-1058()250JTJ)

ANNEX 2

**Programme of Work for the Inter-Agency Consultative Group Meeting
on the Preparatory Process for the Comprehensive 10-Year Review**

ANNEX 3: Updated list of preconference events

| | | |
|---|--------------|-----------|
| <p>io IT d ,T d ili io d Aid o T d</p> | <p>_____</p> | <p>ON</p> |
| <p>Ro d dR il i i Co</p> | <p>_____</p> | |
| <p>3 S o d i is i l Co u o-asi T s o i s AT</p> | <p>_____</p> | |
| <p>4 i s o i i o h io i s o N w v lo A d o h dlo d v lo i Cou i s</p> | <p>_____</p> | |
| <p>x G ou i o ov io si T d o is is o Cs</p> | <p>_____</p> | |

I -

