



## **Summary**

This is a report of the Inter-Agency Consultative Group Meeting (IACG) held on 10 February, 2012 in New York to launch the Preparatory Process for the Comprehensive Ten-Year Review Conference of the Almaty Programme of Action. The meeting was organized by United Nations Office of the High-Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) in accordance with the General Assembly resolution 66/214, in which it decided to hold a comprehensive ten-year review conference of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2014. The Resolution indicated that the Conference would: undertake a comprehensive appraisal of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action by the landlocked developing countries and their transit neighbours, and all the relevant development partners; share best practices and lessons learned; identify obstacles and constraints encountered; analyze emerging challenges and opportunities facing the landlocked developing countries; as well as identify effective international, regional and domestic policies, actions and initiatives needed to support Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) in the next decade.



With respect to trade, Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra stated that the proportion of merchandise exports of LLDCs

(6) Organisations to designate a focal point for the Ten-Year Review Conference, who would have the overall responsibilities for planning, mobilizing and coordinating the efforts of their organization to the substantive and organizational preparations of the Conference.

In his statement, His Excellency Mr. Jose Antonio Dos Santos reminded the meeting that the LLDCs were still facing challenges related to difficulties in accessing seaports that they faced in 2003 such as poor infrastructure, and high trade costs. He also indicated that in addition to these challenges LLDCs were now facing new challenges that include rising food and energy prices and climate change. He stressed that these new challenges were undermining sustainable

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infrastructure development; and a Customs Union between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan that had resulted in more than 25% trade growth.

She concluded her remarks by inviting all participants to the two meetings and urged them to consider holding side events related to the review process.

During the opening session, Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury, Senior Special Advisor to the President in the Office of the President of the General Assembly, took the opportunity to share his thoughts. He stated that the President of the General Assembly was very supportive of and has been very vocal in favour of countries in special needs. He indicated that the President would be willing and ready to provide support and leadership for the preparation and convening of the Ten-Year Review conference to be held in 2014. He assured participants not to hesitate calling upon the President's support whenever it was needed in the preparatory process.

**C. The draft conceptual framework and Roadmap of the Comprehensive Ten-Year Review Conference of the Almaty Programme of Action including suggested pre-conference events**

Mr. Sandagdorj Erdenebileg, Acting Director of UN-OHRLLS presented the concept note and roadmap of the conference and of the preliminary list of suggested pre-conference events. He emphasized that major changes had occurred since the APoA had been formulated and adopted in 2003 and these new developments need to be taken into account when designing a new programme of action. For example, he indicated that most LLDCs were becoming sources of energy and other natural resource based commodities which made them more vulnerable to commodity price volatility. Other new developments that were affecting LLDCs were climate change and austerity measures. He stressed that the review should take into account these new elements in order to develop a new agenda that would be more responsive to the needs of LLDCs.

Mr. Erdenebileg highlighted that the objectives of the Conference would include the following:

- 1) Comprehensively and critically assess the implementation of the APoA, with a view to identify effective international and domestic policies in light of the outcome of a comprehensive appraisal, as well as new and emerging challenges and opportunities and the means to address them, and develop a new common action-oriented strategic framework for the next decade;
- 2) Reaffirm the global commitment to addressing the special needs of the LLDCs, in particular those related to infrastructure development, transit and trade facilitation, and policy framework, in order to reduce prohibitive transit costs and enable those countries to fully participate in the global trade;
- 3) Mobilize additional international support measures in favour of the LLDCs, and in this regard, formulate and adopt a renewed partnership between the LLDCs, transit developing countries and their development partners.
- 4)

- 5) Harmonization and strengthening of the regulatory and legal framework pertaining to international transport and transit
- 6) Emerging issues including vulnerabilities to external shocks, climate change and food and fuel prices and economic and financial downturn.
- 7) Building productive capacity of the LLDCs
- 8) Reducing economic and social disparities

In presenting the roadmap, Mr Erdenebileg emphasized that the whole preparatory process should be transparent and inclusive, promoting dialogue with all stakeholders (Governments, UN System Organizations, international and regional development and financial institutions, private sector, academia, business community). He reiterated that the preparatory process would involve three tracks: Intergovernmental Track; United Nations and other international and regional organizations Track and the Private Sector Track. He underscored that LLDCs and transit developing countries should be involved in the preparatory phase and the conference itself.

He pointed out that the global review of the conference would be preceded by national, sub-regional and regional preparations. At the national level, LLDCs would be required to submit

<b>(3) Assessing the vulnerability of LLDCs to external shocks and developing vulnerability indicators for early warning purposes in LLDCs</b>	<u>UN-OHRLLS</u> DESA, UNCTAD, UNDP, World Bank ...	TBD – 2013/14
<b>(4) Infrastructure Development and Maintenance: Enhancing the role of the private sector</b>	<u>World Bank</u> Asian Development Bank, African Development Bank, Inter American Development Bank, OHRLLS, UN regional commissions, IRU ...	TBD – <i>March-April 2013</i>
<b>(5) Strengthening the legal framework for more efficient transit cooperation</b>	<u>ECE, ECA, IRU, UN Office of Legal Affairs, OHRLLS</u> UNCTAD, World Bank, WCO ...	TBD – <i>June 2013</i>
<b>(6) Enhancing productive capacities of LLDCs</b>	<u>UNIDO</u> UNCTAD, ITU, ITC, OHRLLS ...	TBD – <i>September 2013</i>
<b>(7) South-South Cooperation in transit transport</b>	UNDP SU/SSC UNCTAD, OHRLLS ...	TBD – <i>November 2013</i>



A representative of the **WTO**, Mr. Raul Torres highlighted that in the recently held Eighth Ministerial Conference of WTO, it had become clear that the Doha Development Agenda was



and Central Asian states; Border Waiting Times Observatory; and “Transpark”. He indicated that IRU will contribute to the review process through: (1) Special Study on road transport in LLDCs; (2) Conference Perspectives of development of transport and transit in Central Asia and Caspian Region”, Ashgabat (May 2012); (3) 7th Eurasian Conference, Amman (June 2013); and (4) Special coordination meeting of international organisations and financial institutions as a side event of the Conference in 2014.

The **Economic Cooperation Organization** was represented by the Turkish Mission to the United Nations who is the current chair of the organisation. Mr Adnan Altay Altınörs, First Secretary of the Turkish Mission to the United Nations stressed that effective integration of LLDCs into the international markets is of great importance for their development. He emphasized that the comprehensive appraisal of the APoA is important for shaping the future agenda. In this regard, ECO was ready to cooperate and support the preparatory process.

The representative of the **International Trade Center (ITC)**, Ms. Helen Lassen expressed the readiness of her organisation to support the ten-year review process. She explained to the meeting the research activities that her organisation was undertaking to analyse the impact of non-tariff barriers in selected 27 developing countries that included 5 LLDCs. She indicated that the results of this work can form background material for the trade facilitation pre-conference event to be held in Kazakhstan.

The **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)** could not be present in the meeting but sent their contribution by email. Mr Roel Janssens, a representative of OSCE indicated that *OSCE and UNECE had prepared a Handbook of Best Practices at Border Crossings: a Trade and Transport Facilitation Perspective* – a resource material that can be used for the ten year review and OSCE in particular would like to organize a special Handbook side-event on the occasion of one of the next meetings taking place in the framework of the Almaty Programme of Action Review Process. The OSCE is planning to support the Government of Turkmenistan and the IRU in organizing in May 2012 an *International Conference on Perspectives for the Development of Transport and Transit in Central Asia and the Caspian Sea Region*. OSCE will continue supporting activities aimed at promoting the establishment of multimodal transport and logistics systems, including further development of Euro-Asian transport links and corridors.

### **Summary of the plenary discussion**

Participants expressed their support to the preparatory process and to the convening of the conference in 2014. They posed questions on the venue and dates of the Conference in 2014 and the availability of resources to be utilized in support of the preparatory process in particular regional reviews and pre-conference events.

Several participants including UNECE, IRU, WTO, UNESCAP, UNECA, AUC, OSCE and UNECLAC indicated relevant events that they were already planning to organize in for 2012 and 2013 that could be included as part of the preparatory process for the Review conference. They also suggested some of their planned activities that could be held as side events during the conference in 2014. Participants including UNECE, WTO, UNESCAP, UNECA, UNECLAC, UNDP, OSCE, Asian Development Bank, World Bank, IRU, WCO, UNCTAD and ITC also highlighted relevant activities, studies, reports and handbooks that they were currently preparing that could be used as key components or resources in the preparatory process of the conference and at the conference itself. Participants agreed to submit details of the events and the resource materials to OHRLLS after the meeting.





**The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)**

Mr Roel Janssens, Economic Adviser, Economic Governance Unit, Tel: +43 1 514 36 6221,  
Email: [roel.janssens@osce.org](mailto:roel.janssens@osce.org).

**United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)**

Mr Gunter Fischer, Economic Affairs Officer, Division for Africa, LDCs and Special

Mr. Yonas Bekele, Individual Contractor: Infrastructure Specialist, Regional Integration, Infrastructure & Trade Division (RITD), ECA, P.O. Box 3001, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Tel.: 251-11-5445160, Fax: 251-11-5153005, Email: [ybekele@uneca.org](mailto:ybekele@uneca.org)

Mr. Yinka Adeyemi, Senior Regional Advisor, Economic Development and NEPAD Division (EDND), Economic Commission for Africa, P.O. Box 3001, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Email: [YAdeyemi@uneca.org](mailto:YAdeyemi@uneca.org)

**UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)**

Mrs Eva Molnar, Director, UNECE Transport Division, Palais des Nations, 8-14, Avenue de la Paix, CH - 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland, [eva.molnar@unece.org](mailto:eva.molnar@unece.org), Phone: +41 22 917 2400 Fax: +41 22 917 003

**UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)**

Mr. Ricardo Sanchez, Chief, Infrastructure Services

Ms. Willa Liburd, Programme Officer, United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, One UN Plaza, Room DC1-1201A, NY 10017, Tel: 1 (917) 367-2147, Fax: 1 (212) 963-3892, E-mail: liburd@un.org

Mr. Ben Idrissa Ouedraogo, Programme Officer, Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, 1 UN Plaza, DC-1 Room 1216B, New York, NY, 10017, Tel: 1 917 367 3068, Fax: 1 917 963 3892, Email: ouedraogob@un.org

**UN Women**

Ms. Verona Collantes, Intergovernmental Specialist, 220 East 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, New York, NY 10017, Tel: +1 646-781-4504, Fax: +1 646-781-4567, Email: verona.collantes@unwomen.org

**World Bank**

Mr Gilles Alfandari, Senior Economist, International Policy and Partnership Group, The World





## ANNEX 2

### **Programme of Work for the Inter-Agency Consultative Group Meeting “Launching the Preparatory Process for the Comprehensive Ten-Year Review Conference of the Almaty Programme of Action” 10 February 2012**

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 10:00am – 10:45am | Opening of the Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Statement by Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.</li><li>- Statement by H. E. Ambassador Jose Antonio Dos Santos, Permanent Representative of Paraguay to the United Nations and the Chairman of the LLDC Group.</li><li>- Remarks by H.E. Mrs. Byrganym Aitimova, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations on the 4th Meeting of Trade Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries, and the High-Level Meeting on International Trade, Trade Facilitation and Aid for Trade to be held in Kazakhstan in September 2012.</li></ul> |
| 10:45am – 1:00pm  | Consultations on the substantive and organizational preparations for the Comprehensive Ten-Year Review Conference of the Almaty Programme of Action at sub-regional, regional and global levels. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Presentation of the draft conceptual framework and Roadmap including suggested pre-conference events by Mr. Sandagdorj Erdenebileg, Acting Director, UN-OHRLLS</li><li>- Contributions/Comments by participating organisations</li><li>- Discussion</li></ul>  |
| 1:00pm - 3:00pm   | Lunch   |
| 3:00pm - 4:00pm   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Briefing on the 4th Meeting of Trade Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), and the High-Level Meeting on International Trade, Trade Facilitation and Aid for Trade to be held in Kazakhstan by Mr. Andre Nikwigize, Senior Programme Officer, UN-OHRLLS.</li><li>- Contributions and comments by participating organisations</li><li>- Discussion</li></ul>   |
| 4:00 pm – 5:30pm  | Summary of the consultations and closing remarks and by Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra, UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative.   |



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**The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)**

Mr Roel Janssens, Economic Adviser, Economic Governance Unit, Tel: +43 1 514 36 6221,  
Email: [roel.janssens@osce.org](mailto:roel.janssens@osce.org).

**United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)**

Mr Gunter Fischer, Economic Affairs Officer, Division for Africa, LDCs and Special



Mr. Yonas Bekele, Individual Contractor: Infrastructure Specialist, Regional Integration, Infrastructure & Trade Division (RITD), ECA, P.O. Box 3001, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Tel.: 251-11-5445160, Fax: 251-11-5153005, Email: [ybekele@uneca.org](mailto:ybekele@uneca.org)

Mr. Yinka Adeyemi, Senior Regional Advisor, Economic Development and NEPAD Division (EDND), Economic Commission for Africa, P.O. Box 3001, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Email: [YAdeyemi@uneca.org](mailto:YAdeyemi@uneca.org)

**UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)**

Mrs Eva Molnar, Director, UNECE Transport Division, Palais des Nations, 8-14, Avenue de la Paix, CH - 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland, [eva.molnar@unece.org](mailto:eva.molnar@unece.org), Phone: +41 22 917 2400 Fax: +41 22 917 003

**UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)**

Mr. Ricardo Sanchez, Chief, Infrastructure Services

Ms. Willa Liburd, Programme Officer, United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, One UN Plaza, Room DC1-1201A, NY 10017, Tel: 1 (917) 367-2147, Fax: 1 (212) 963-3892, E-mail: liburd@un.org

Mr. Ben Idrissa Ouedraogo, Programme Officer, Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, 1 UN Plaza, DC-1 Room 1216B, New York, NY, 10017, Tel: 1 917 367 3068, Fax: 1 917 963 3892, Email: ouedraogob@un.org

**UN Women**

Ms. Verona Collantes, Intergovernmental Specialist, 220 East 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, New York, NY 10017, Tel: +1 646-781-4504, Fax: +1 646-781-4567, Email: verona.collantes@unwomen.org

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