BIMSTEC Course on Negotiating Regional Trade Agreements for Trade in Times of Crisis and Pandemic

Online, 22 November to 9 December 2022

Tentative Programme

This course, co-organized by ESCAP and USAID, aims to build capacity of stakeholders in selected member countries of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) on developing trade agreements that can promote greater preparedness and resilience of parties when faced with future pandemics and crises.

Principal lecturer: Katrin Kuhlmann, Visiting Professor of Law, Georgetown University Law Centre and President and Founder, New Markets Lab, who is also the lead author of the UN Handbook on Provisions and Options for Trade in Times of Crisis and Pandemic. She prepared the video lectures for the course and will speak at the first live session. Her areas of research and expertise include international economic law, law and development, regional trade agreements and comparative economic law. She is also a member of the Trade Advisory Committee on Africa at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR). In addition to practicing trade and corporate law at two international law firms, she spent six years as a trade negotiator with the USTR’s Office, where she focused on WTO accession negotiations, regional trade, non-tariff measures, intellectual property rights, and agricultural issues. She holds a J.D. from Harvard Law School and a BA in Economics from Creighton University.

Course structure: This course will provide e-learning materials including readings, videos lectures, online quizzes and an online forum for discussion, in addition, it also includes 3 live sessions providing deeper and broader discussions with the lecturer and guest experts. The main reading material is the UN Handbook on Provisions and Options for Trade in Times of Crisis and Pandemic. The course is essentially self-paced, with participants expected to spend from 8 to 12 hours going through the course materials and attending live discussion sessions. There will be 3 live discussion sessions on 5, 6, 7 December. Tentative programme of the live sessions is as follows.

Live session 1 – Monday 5 December 2022, 14:00-15:00 (UTC+7)

Subject areas:
- Introduction
- Countries’ responses to COVID-19
- Essential goods and services
  (Handbook Chapters Introduction, I, II)

Course facilitator (20min addressing selected quiz questions):
Ms. Runqiu Du, IMP assistant coordinator, ESCAP
**Guest experts (10-12min each presentation and Q&A)**
- Ms. Katrin Kuhlmann, Visiting Professor of Law, Georgetown University Law Centre and President and Founder, New Markets Lab, Principal author of the Handbook. *(Introduction)*
- Mr. Ganeshan Wignaraja, Professorial Fellow in Economics and Trade at Gateway House: Indian Council on Global Relations in Mumbai and Senior Research Associate at ODI Global in London. He is a member of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka’s Stakeholder Engagement Committee on monetary policy and financial stability matters and holds visiting appointments at the National University of Singapore and RIS in New Delhi. *(essential goods and services)*

**Moderator: Mr. Yann Duval, Chief, Trade Policy and Facilitation, ESCAP**

**Live session 2 – Tuesday 6 December 2022, 14:00-15:00 (UTC+7)**

**Subject areas:**
- Trade facilitation
- SPS/TBT measures
- Intellectual property rights

*(Handbook Chapters III, IV, V)*

**Course facilitator (20min addressing selected quiz questions):**
Ms. Runqiu Du, IMP assistant coordinator, ESCAP

**Guest experts (10-12min presentation and Q&A)**
- Mr. Yann Duval, Chief, Trade Policy and Facilitation, ESCAP *(trade facilitation)*
- Mr. Sanath C. Jayanetti, economic consultant with extensive experience in international trade and services, regional integration, policy development, reform, and fiscal and monetary policies. He has been a Senior Consultant (Trade) for the Government of Sri Lanka *(SPS/TBT measures)*

**Moderator: Mr. Prabir De, Professor, the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi**

**Live session 3 – Wednesday 7 December 2022, 14:00-15:00 (UTC+7)**

**Subject areas:**
- Digital Trade
- Transparency
- Development
- Building forward better

*(Handbook Chapters VI, VII, VIII, IX)*

**Course facilitator (20min addressing selected quiz questions):**
Ms. Runqiu Du, IMP assistant coordinator, ESCAP

**Guest experts (10-12min presentation and Q&A)**
- Mr. Sven Callebaut, Adviser on Trade, FDI, Digital Trade Policy, Digital Adoption and Transformation for Governments in Asia and the Pacific, ASEAN, RCEP, PIFS. (digital trade)
- Ms. Tracey Epps, Member of the Core Expert Group of the Initiative on Model Provisions for Trade in Times of Crisis and Pandemic. Ms. Epps is a former New-Zealand trade negotiator and main drafter of the UN Model Chapter on Trade in Crisis Situations (building forward better – standalone crisis chapter)
- Ms. Katrin Kuhlmann, Visiting Professor of Law, Georgetown University Law Centre and President and Founder, New Markets Lab, Principal author of the Handbook. (building forward better – sustainable development provisions) (TBC)

*Moderator: Mr. Selim Raihan, Professor at the Department of Economics, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh and the Executive Director of the South Asian Network on Economic Modelling (SANEM).*