

# Regional Organizations Cooperation Mechanism for Trade Facilitation Newsletter

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 11

JUNE, 2012



This Newsletter is  
prepared by



In collaboration with



Welcome to the 2nd edition of this regional trade facilitation newsletter for Asia and the Pacific.

This electronic newsletter is part of a new mechanism launched by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) - at the request of its member countries - to enhance cooperation and coordination among Asia Pacific regional organizations and programmes working on Trade Facilitation (TF).

This newsletter aims to provide information on recent as well as planned trade facilitation projects and activities of the various organizations active in this area, as well as on relevant publications and documents that may be useful across the Asia Pacific sub-regions. National and regional news on trade facilitation and paperless trade are also featured. We hope you enjoy the 2nd edition and find the information useful. We look forward to your contributions of news and information to future issues of the newsletter, which may please be sent to [escap-tisnet@un.org](mailto:escap-tisnet@un.org).



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## HIGHLIGHTS:

### Events and Meetings

#### ESCAP-ADB Capacity Building Workshop on Sub-regional Trade and Transit Cooperation for SASEC Countries

ESCAP and ADB co-organized the "Workshop on Sub-regional Trade and Transit Cooperation for South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Countries on 21 - 23 June 2012 in Kathmandu, Nepal. A Business Process Analysis (BPA) training was conducted, participated by over 20 stakeholders from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and India. The training provided an opportunity for SASEC stakeholders to learn how to conduct a systematic analysis of trade procedures with BPA skills in their subregional context, together with practical exercises. The meeting was also a valuable chance for SASEC stakeholders to share information on current status of SASEC corridors and discuss ways to improve the current situation and seek cooperation. The Workshop was followed by a small group planning session to prepare for cross border BPA study along SASEC corridors. The study findings will be shared during the week of the Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2012, in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 30-31 October 2012. For more details:

<http://www.unescap.org/tid/projects/sasec.asp>

**Online registration for APTFF 2012 is now available at :**

<http://www.unescap.org/tid/projects/tfforum12.asp>

### In Focus:

#### Asia Pacific Member States adopt resolution on paperless trade at the ESCAP 68th Commission Session

The Asia Pacific member states of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) have shown their support to enhance paperless trade in the region by adopting a resolution on 'Enabling paperless trade and the cross-border recognition of electronic data and documents for inclusive and sustainable intraregional trade facilitation' during the 68<sup>th</sup> Commission Session, held in May in Bangkok. The resolution encourages the Asia-Pacific countries to participate in the knowledge-sharing and capacity building activities of the United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (UNNExT), the main modality through which ESCAP delivers its Trade Facilitation programme. It also encourages members to adopt international standards for implementing paperless trade systems and consider entering in to bilateral and sub regional agreements on cross border recognition and exchange of trade related documents. It requests the Executive Secretary to support and facilitate the process for the development of regional arrangements on the facilitation of cross-border paperless trade. The resolution was sponsored by Republic of Korea and co-sponsored by Thailand, Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Mongolia.

## Regional Organizations Cooperation Mechanism for Trade Facilitation (ROC-TF): Moving Forward

The Regional Organizations Cooperation Mechanism for Trade Facilitation (ROC-TF) is the region wide coordination mechanism for the international organizations working in Trade Facilitation in Asia and the Pacific. The purpose of this mechanism is to bring together international organizations working in this field and facilitate dialogue, increase synergies and develop coherent strategies for effective project or programme implementation.

The mechanism emerged from a 'Dialogue on Regional Cooperation for Trade Facilitation' held on the side of last year's Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2011 in Seoul, Republic of Korea.

In line with the first recommendation suggesting a more inclusive involvement of organizations, including global ones with regional programmes, the ROC-TF Newsletter now also features information on trade facilitation activities of members of the United Nations Chief Executive Boards (CEB) Inter Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity. These members include: UNCTAD, UNIDO, UNDP, ITC, FAO, WTO, UNEP, ILO, UNCITRAL, and UNOPS. More details on ROC-TF can be found here: <http://www.unescap.org/tid/rctf.asp>

To find out more about the first meeting please visit: <http://www.unescap.org/tid/projects/rctf.asp>

The annual meeting of ROC-TF is scheduled to take place on **29 October, 2012 in Colombo, Sri Lanka** on the side of Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum (APTFF). It will again provide an opportunity for participating organizations to discuss their trade facilitation programmes with each other, and to identify collaboration opportunities and synergies. Implementation of the recommendations made in the *Dialogue* will also be reviewed during the meeting. To find out more about the meeting, APTFF and other side events, please visit: <http://www.unescap.org/tid/projects/tfforum12.asp>.

At that meeting, Dialogue participants agreed on a number of recommendations including:

- Organizing an annual meeting among the organizations working on trade facilitation in the Asia-Pacific region should be continued. Consideration should be given to participation of new organizations.
- As a first step towards exchanging information, an electronic newsletter would be launched and circulated among the group every quarter.
- The development of a common trade facilitation performance monitoring framework across the wider region.



ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK



Asia-Pacific  
Economic Cooperation



Oceania Customs Organisation Secretariat



Economic Cooperation  
Organization



WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION  
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DES DOUANES

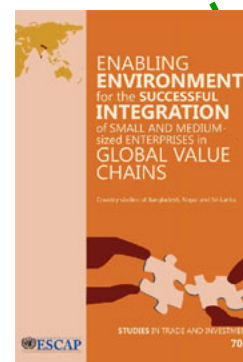
## Recent Publications

### ESCAP:

#### **Enabling Environment for the Successful Integration of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in Global Value Chains: Country Studies on Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka, Studies in Trade and Investment No. 70,** (available in PDF Version 1.02 MB, 228 pages)

This publication aims to propose practical policy interventions for improving business environments, by targeting three South Asian countries, namely Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka, to facilitate SMEs' access to global and regional markets, especially through GVCs. For this purpose, sector based value chain approach was adapted to focus on a few product groups with high export potentials: plastic goods from Bangladesh, coffee and ginger for Nepal and rubber and electronic products in Sri Lanka. National action plans and a subregional programme, along with operational strategies including needed institutional framework among stakeholders, for those products were developed and presented.

Published on April 2012, <http://www.unescap.org/tid/publication/indpub2610.pdf>



#### **Secure Cross Border Transport Model,** (available in PDF Version, 39 pages)

Non-physical barriers are a major challenge to growth in intra-regional trade and transport in Asia and the Pacific. The developments in information and communication technologies offer tremendous potential to deal with these barriers in cross-border and transit transport. The Secure Cross-Border Transport Model developed by ESCAP uses technologies such as global positioning systems, cellular communication systems, geographical information systems, radio frequency identification, advanced web based software(s), electronic seals and computer network to provide a conceptual basis for design of the system that can be used to facilitate cross-border transport while addressing the pressing concerns of the control authorities.

Published on May 2012, [http://www.unescap.org/ttdw/Publications/TFS\\_pubs/SCBM/SCBM-fulltext.pdf](http://www.unescap.org/ttdw/Publications/TFS_pubs/SCBM/SCBM-fulltext.pdf)

#### **Growing Together: Economic Integration for an Inclusive and Sustainable Asia-Pacific Century,** (available in PDF Version 8.83 MB, 196 pages)

The Asia-Pacific region's rapid growth since the 1950s has been supported by a favorable external economic environment and opportunities arising from globalization. But in a dramatically altered post-global financial crisis scenario, the region's dynamism, which is crucial for the elimination of poverty and hunger and the realization of the Asia-Pacific century, will critically depend on its ability to harness the potential of regional economic integration. In the light of the many complementarities arising from its diversity, the region, a late starter in regionalism, has many underexploited opportunities for mutually beneficial regional integration. Regional economic integration can also assist in making regional development more balanced, with the lagging economies receiving a boost through a stronger connectivity and integration with economic growth poles, such as China and India.

Published on 10 May 2012, <http://www.unescap.org/pdd/publications/themestudy2012/themestudy2012-full.pdf>



#### **Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2012,** (available in PDF Version 9 MB, 236 pages)

The 2012 edition of the Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific, the oldest and most comprehensive annual review of economic and social development in the region, analyses the short and medium-term challenges for the region and the outlook for the year ahead. The publication provides policy options for governments to overcome these challenges and maintain the pursuit of inclusive and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific. This year, the Survey was released by Dr. Noeleen Heyzer, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP, in Bangkok, Thailand on May 10. Simultaneous launches took place in 32 locations in Asia-Pacific, the Americas, Europe and Africa.

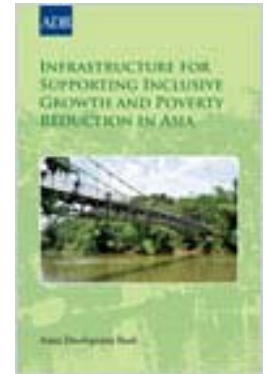
Published on 10 May 2012, [http://www.unescap.org/pdd/publications/survey2012/download/Survey\\_2012.pdf](http://www.unescap.org/pdd/publications/survey2012/download/Survey_2012.pdf)

**ADB:**

**Infrastructure for Supporting Inclusive Growth and Poverty Reduction in Asia**, (available online, pdf version, 106 pages)

This publication summarizes the papers and presentations in Workshops on Economics of Infrastructure in a Globalized World, funded by the Asian Development Bank through a regional technical assistance project. The discussions at the conferences focused on three themes: (i) the role of infrastructure in supporting inclusive growth and poverty reduction; (ii) the need for appropriate soft infrastructure, including the policy environment and regulatory institutions; and (iii) the potential for public and private partnerships in infrastructure provision. Each theme elaborates the premise that extensive, efficient infrastructure services are essential drivers of economic growth and sustainable poverty reduction.

Published Date: May 2012 <http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/pub/2012/infrastructure-supporting-inclusive->



**Evaluating the Environment for Public-Private Partnerships in Asia-Pacific: The 2011 Infrascopie**, (available online, pdf version, 48 pages)

This document comprises a summary and analysis of a benchmark index and learning tool that assesses the capacity of countries in the Asia-Pacific region to carry out sustainable public-private infrastructure partnerships, as of June 2011. The methodology is based on a similar study of Latin America and the Caribbean published in 2009 and 2010. The index was built by the Economist Intelligence Unit and commissioned by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Published Date: May 2012

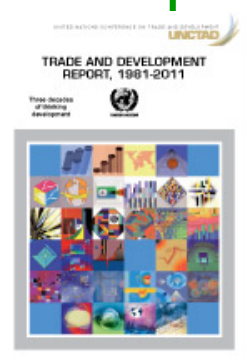
<http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/pub/2012/evaluating-environment-ppp-2011-infrascopie.pdf>

**APEC:**

**Concepts and Trends in Global Supply, Global Value and Global Production Chains**, (available in PDF Version, 404.02 KB, 19 pages)

The purpose of this issues paper is to clarify the concepts of global supply chains, global value chains and global production chains to enhance APEC's understanding, highlight the evolution and major trends of the three chains, and identify the key challenges and priorities where APEC can help address.

Published Date: May 2012 [http://publications.apec.org/publication-detail.php?pub\\_id=1283](http://publications.apec.org/publication-detail.php?pub_id=1283)

**UNCTAD:**

**Trade and Development Report**, (available online, pdf version, 150 KB, 15 pages)

This review first revisits the concept of interdependence, which has shaped the TDRs' policy analyses and recommendations for three decades. Section 3 then tries to explain the approach of the TDR to macroeconomic and financial policies in both developed and developing countries. Section 4 reviews the TDR's contribution to the debate about the shortcomings and the reforms of global governance in trade, finance and macroeconomics. Section 5 summarizes the TDRs' assessments of the failures and successes of development policy, as well as their recommendations for development strategies, taking into account the lessons from past experience.

[http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/gds2012d1\\_en.pdf](http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/gds2012d1_en.pdf)

**Trade and biodiversity: the BioTrade experiences in Latin America**, (available in PDF Version, 1.95 MB, 64 pages)

This paper illustrates the potential for developing Sustainable Environment Management practices such as BioTrade in Latin America. In 2008, these practices have already generated over \$230 million in exports of sustainably-produced products and services derived for Latin America's biodiversity. Examples of other results obtained are: the diversification of exports; the strengthening of biodiversity-based sectors including the enhancement of the policy framework that promotes their sustainable development; facilitating access of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) with differentiated quality products to national and international markets, and the fair and equitable distribution of benefits generated. Hence, BioTrade makes good sense for both business and biodiversity.

Published Date: May 2012 [http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditcted20103\\_en.pdf](http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditcted20103_en.pdf)



**UNIDO:**

**SPS Compliance: A Requisite for Agro-industrial Exports from Developing Countries**, (available online, pdf version, 788.65 KB, 16 pages)

UNIDO responded to the Doha Development Agenda by realigning its technical assistance work, strengthening strategic partnerships with other trade-related agencies—World Trade Organization (WTO), International Trade Centre (ITC) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)—and initiating its new Trade Capacity-Building Programme (TCB).

[http://www.unido.org/fileadmin/media/documents/pdf/tcb\\_sps\\_compliance.pdf](http://www.unido.org/fileadmin/media/documents/pdf/tcb_sps_compliance.pdf)



**A Practical Contribution for Aid for Trade**, (available online, pdf version, 1150 KB, 15 pages)

It is widely acknowledged that trade is a strong growth engine. Yet, for trade liberalization to have a positive impact on development and on poverty reduction a strong supply response to reform efforts is needed. Historical evidence shows that manufactured exports often stimulate faster growth than other types of export. So it appears that what form trade takes does matter.

[http://www.unido.org/fileadmin/media/documents/pdf/tcb\\_aid\\_for\\_trade.pdf](http://www.unido.org/fileadmin/media/documents/pdf/tcb_aid_for_trade.pdf)



**ISO 9001 – Its Relevance and Impact in Asian Developing Economies**, (available online, pdf version, 10.04 MB, 100 pages)

While ISO 9001 is the most successful international standard published by the International Organization for Standard (ISO), there have been discussions on the effectiveness on accredited certification to ISO; whether the focus has shifted to the achievement of certification itself as the only goal. This survey report provides empirical evidence on the effectiveness and perception of ISO 9001 in Asian developing economies' manufacturing sector. The results published in the survey revealed that, in general, organizations do obtain value from accredited certification to ISO 9001, and that customers recognize ISO 9001 certification as the basis of confidence in products or services. The study has also identified a number of areas where improvements can be made, providing effective guideline to the public and private bodies in the field of standards certification and accreditation.

[http://www.unido.org/fileadmin/user\\_media/Publications/Pub\\_free/ISO%209001%20Impact%20Survey-](http://www.unido.org/fileadmin/user_media/Publications/Pub_free/ISO%209001%20Impact%20Survey-)

**WORLD BANK:**

**Logistics Performance Index: Connecting to Compete 2012**, (available online, pdf version, 3.26 MB, 68 pages)

This publication based on a worldwide survey of operators on the ground (global freight forwarders and express carriers), providing feedback on the logistics “friendliness” of the countries in which they operate and those with which they trade. They combine in-depth knowledge of the countries in which they operate with informed qualitative assessments of other countries with which they trade, and experience of global logistics environment. Feedback from operators is supplemented with quantitative data on the performance of key components of the logistics chain in the country of work, data collected for 155 countries. The LPI consists therefore of both qualitative and quantitative measures and helps build profiles of logistics friendliness for these countries.

[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/TRADE/Resources/239070-1336654966193/LPI\\_2012\\_final.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/TRADE/Resources/239070-1336654966193/LPI_2012_final.pdf)>

**WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM:**

**Global Enabling Trade Report 2012: Reducing Supply Chain Barriers**, (available online, pdf version, 7.21 MB, 405 pages)

The Global Enabling Trade Report 2012 reflects a world in which trade has rebounded from its 2009 slump. It is a world where trade is no longer dominated by developed economies but is now more concentrated in and among emerging economies. This shift highlights the virtuous role trade can play in economic growth and poverty reduction. With progress stalled in multilateral trade negotiations, the Report's practical focus on tackling barriers is increasingly important. Many of this year's contributions reflect a growing recognition that trade facilitation is most effective when it is designed to support global value chains. Countries, like companies, increasingly specialize in tasks rather than products, adding value to intermediate products that cross many borders.

[http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GETR/2012/GlobalEnablingTrade\\_Report.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GETR/2012/GlobalEnablingTrade_Report.pdf)



## On-going and Upcoming Projects

### UNESCAP:

#### → Trade Facilitation for Poverty Reduction: Building Capacity for the Implementation of Pro-Poor Trade Facilitation Policies and Measures in Developing Asian Countries

- **Objective:** Increase the capacity of ESCAP member States to formulate and implement more effective and coherent policies on trade, investment, enterprise development and technology transfer with a specific focus on trade facilitation for poverty reduction and regional connectivity.
- **Results:** Increased capacity of officials and business representatives in least developed and other developing countries of ESCAP to implement trade facilitation measures contributing to poverty reduction.
- **Duration:** 2012
- **Activities:** Research studies on trade facilitation for poverty reduction (on going)
- **Partners:** The International Poverty Reduction Center in China (IPRCC) and China International Electronic Commerce Center (CIECC)

#### → Network for knowledge Transfer on Sustainable Agriculture Technologies and Improved Market Linkages in South and Southeast Asia (SATNETAsia)

- **Objective:** To contribute in part to improve food security in South and Southeast Asia by enhancing regional trade facilitation for food products.
- **Results:** Effective trade facilitation measures for food products are defined and recommended in six South and Southeast Asian countries.
- **Duration:** 2012 - 2014
- **Planned Events:**
  - ◇ Business Process Analysis Training, August, Bangkok (tentative)
- **Partners:** The Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture (CAPSA); Trade and Investment Division (TID), ESCAP; The Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT); The World Vegetable Centre; and Food Security Centre (FSC) of the University of Hohenheim in Germany

#### → Strengthening the capacity of developing countries and transition economies to access the global supply chains

- **Objective:** The main objective of the Roadmap is to develop a model of the information exchange and processing taking place in modern international supply chains, to identify the specific opportunities that better information sharing can bring to exporters of developing and emerging economies and to identify a list of enabling prerequisites and activities that Governments and companies should take to participate in future information supply chains.
- **Results:**
  1. Increased knowledge by policy makers & managers of techniques to detect regulatory, procedural, organizational barriers to trade and of international standards and best practices to address them.
  2. Enhanced capacity by policy makers & managers to formulate and implement trade facilitation policies, measures and instruments for linking to global supply chain.
  3. Improved coordination at inter/intra regional level among key institutions for trade facilitation & improved dialogue with the business community.
- **Duration:** September 2011 - August 2013

- **Activities:** Background Study on "Roadmap: enhancing information exchange in international supply chains" by each UN Regional Commission
- **Partners:** Lead - Economic Commission for Europe (ECE); Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean (ECLAC), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP) and Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

→ **Cross-border Business Process Analysis (BPA) of South Asian Trade and Transit Corridors for Sub-regional Cooperation**

- **Objective:** To facilitate subregional trade and transit among Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal by identifying at and behind the border bottlenecks for trade along major trade and transit corridors in these countries through an in-depth analysis.
- **Results:** The analysis study report will list all the bottlenecks and impediments and propose practical recommendations and strategic action plans on facilitation measures in the areas of harmonization of processes and documentation, infrastructure, policy framework (bilateral and multilateral agreements, etc.), application of ICT, etc. In addition, the project aims to enhance capacity of stakeholders, in particular those of Nepal and Bhutan, to assess issues and bottlenecks in trade and transit procedures and design corrective measures.
- **Duration:** February – December 2012
- **Partners:** United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (UNNExT) and Asian Development Bank (ADB)

**ADB:**

→ **Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation: Working with the Private Sector in Trade Facilitation**

- **Objective:** To support the design, implementation and monitoring of key trade facilitation and private sector development activities under the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program (CAREC). Specifically, it will establish and provide institutional support to the National Joint Transport and Trade Facilitation Committees (NJC) and the Regional Joint Committee on Transport and Trade Facilitation (RJC); conduct performance measurement and monitoring of selected CAREC transport and trade facilitation corridors; and organize private-public sector dialogues to enhance business environment for trade development, and explore opportunities of public and private partnership (PPP) in support of trade logistics development.
- **Results:** National and regional collaboration, including partnerships between the public and private sectors, will be strengthened in managing the key CAREC corridors and addressing broader issues of transport and trade facilitation.
- Please find more details at: <http://pid.adb.org/pid/TaView.htm?projNo=43078&seqNo=01&typeCd=2>

→ **Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation - Transport and Trade Facilitation: Border Crossing Point Improvement and Single Window Development Project**

- **Objective:** To support NSW development in selected CAREC member countries and develop a regional platform for the networking of NSWs for the CAREC region through public private partnerships and the establishment of the Alliance of National Single Window Operators of CAREC. It aims to maximize the regional public good feature of BCP and SW development through a regional approach.
- **Results:** The outcome of the proposed project is speedy, low cost and predictable processes for cross-border transport and trade activities. This is to be achieved by eliminating bottlenecks to trade and transport and development and by developing single filing and well as streamlined and cost efficient trade and transport clearance processes.
- Please find more details at: <http://pid.adb.org/pid/TaView.htm?projNo=44048&seqNo=01&typeCd=2>

→ **Integrated Trade Facilitation Support for Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation**

- **Objective:** Sustained economic growth and improved living standards through the expansion of international and intra-regional trade.
- **Results:** Greater volume of trade intra- and extra- regionally from time and cost savings - resulting from harmonized cross-border regulations, procedures, and standards; and improved logistics.
- Please find more details at: <http://pid.adb.org/pid/TaView.htm?projNo=40015&seqNo=01&typeCd=2>

## On-going and Upcoming Projects (cont'd)

### UNCTAD:

#### → Supporting Trade Facilitation in South East Asia: new project

- **Objective:** To help developing countries in Africa and Asia strengthening their capacities to participate effectively in bilateral, regional and multilateral trade facilitation arrangements. More concretely, the project focuses in one transit and two landlocked countries of South Asia, namely, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal and three East African countries namely, Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania.
- **Results:** National implementation plans for each country, regional assessments, training events, inter-regional information sharing mechanism
- **Duration:** 2011- 2014
- **Planned Events:**

UNCTAD will organize four regional forums, two in East-Africa and South-East Asia. The objectives of these working sessions will be (1) to exchange best practices for already implemented measures, (2) to identify additional challenges and windows of opportunities brought by the different RTAs and (3) to discuss those measures where cooperation in the region is a condition sine qua non for their successful implementation. Other countries in the regions such as Burundi, Kenya and India will be invited to participate in the forums.

Please find more details at: <http://www.unctad.info/en/TC/?mode=SeeProject> (project no. 2672)

### UNIDO:

#### → Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF): Conformity assessment capacity-building in Bhutan

- **Objective:** To ensure the protection of the public from fraudulent trade transactions and to enhance public safety by the country-wide verification of measuring instruments used in trade and the inspection and testing of identified strategic electrical components and products, particularly in the building industry.
- **Results:** Strengthen the country's conformity assessment infrastructure through two targeted interventions, namely establishing a regional Weights and Measures office at Mongar, eastern district of Bhutan and establishing an electrical testing laboratory at the Bhutan Bureau of Standards, Thimphu.  
**Duration:** November 2010—December 2013
- **Partners:** Bhutan Standards Bureau (BSB)

#### → Strengthening Bangladesh Accreditation Board (BAB) through UNIDO: Institutional cooperation between Norwegian Accreditation (NA) and BAB

- **Objective:** to ensure that BAB has established the necessary infrastructure for handling applications, assessment of conformity assessment bodies and surveillance visits of accredited bodies by using technically competent personnel and appropriate recognized quality systems. The ultimate goal of the programme is to ensure that BAB becomes a signatory to Multilateral Recognition Arrangements established by APLAC, ILAC and IAF.
- **Duration:** July 2012 – June 2014
- **Partners:** Norwegian Accreditation (NA) & Bangladesh Accreditation Board (BAB)



→ **Trade capacity-building in the Mekong Delta countries of Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam, through strengthening institutional and national capacities related to Standards, Metrology, Testing and Quality (SMTQ) Phase III**

- **Objective:** The overall development goal of the project is facilitation of the industrial development, consumer protection and enhanced export capabilities through further strengthening of standards, metrology, testing and quality management institutional infrastructure and national capacities. The enhanced quality infrastructure will in turn strengthen the integration of Mekong Delta countries into the multilateral trading system.
- **Duration:** July 2011 – June 2014
- **Partners:** National Quality Infrastructure related institutions

→ **Post WTO Accession Support to Vietnam - TBT/SPS Compliance Capacity Development Related to Key Export Sectors**

- The WTO accession in January 2007 brings Vietnam benefits from free trade in the global market, but it places significant challenges at the same time in order to promote the country's exports to be competitive and compliant with the rule-based trade system. This project envisages to strengthen Vietnam's capacities related to standards, testing and conformity infrastructure, so as to ensure the effective implementation of WTO membership obligations such as Technical Barriers to Trade and Sanitary and Phytosanitary commitments, by building upon the findings and achievements in Phase I, which was initiated in 2004 and completed in 2007.
- **Objective:** To develop and strengthen demand-oriented Standards, Metrology, Testing and Quality capacities that will enable Vietnam's export products to conform to the ever-tightening international regulations, thereby aiming to reduce technical barriers to trade.
- **Results:** The project is expected to contribute to the reduction of export rejection cases of Vietnamese exports as well as international accreditation of testing laboratories by 2015
- **Partners:** FAO, ITC, UNCTAD and National Quality Infrastructure related institutions
- **Donors:** SECO
- **Duration:** July 2008 – December 2012

## **OTHER REGIONS**

### **AFDB:**

→ **Border Posts, Checkpoints, and Intra-African Trade: Challenges and Solutions, African Development Bank (AfDB) , 2012**

- **Objective:** The authors argue that few trade facilitation initiatives have successfully addressed building and operating efficient border posts and customs procedures, and hence improved the processes of moving goods and services across national boundaries. The paper explores the extent to which inefficient border posts and checkpoints in many African countries are contributing to low intraregional trade activity. The paper finds that improving and harmonizing customs procedures as well as addressing corruption and other illicit practices that take place at checkpoints can significantly reduce the cost of trade and increase government revenues.(potentially by up to 25 percent)
- **Results:** Recommendations are provided on how to promote harmonized and integrated border management systems through the creation of a One-Stop Border Posts or Joint Border Posts.

Please find more details at:

[http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/INTRA%20AFRICAN%20TRADE\\_INTRA%20AFRICAN%20TRADE.pdf](http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/INTRA%20AFRICAN%20TRADE_INTRA%20AFRICAN%20TRADE.pdf)>

## Upcoming Events and Meetings

### ESCAP:

#### → Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2012

- **Objective:** Share experiences and knowledge on trade facilitation between countries of the greater Asia and Pacific region; Increased understanding and exchange of views between public and private stakeholders, as well with trade facilitation standards developers and technical assistance providers; Learn about and draw lessons from on-going implementation of national and regional trade facilitation measures; and introduce relevant international tools, instruments, and facilities aimed at increasing the efficiency of regional and global cross-border trade.
- **Organizers:** ESCAP, ADB and Ceylon Chamber of Commerce
- **Date:** 30-31 October 2012
- **Location:** Colombo, Sri Lanka

For more information: [www.unescap.org/tid/projects/tfforum12.asp](http://www.unescap.org/tid/projects/tfforum12.asp)

#### → WTO-ESCAP-IIUM Regional Workshop on Intellectual Property, Public Health and Environment Policy for Asian and Pacific Region

- **Objective:** The Workshop addresses a number of important public policy issues in the field of intellectual property relevant to the work in the WTO and other forums, including IP and Public Health, and IP and the Environment i.e. access to pharmaceutical products, access to genetic resources and protection of traditional knowledge, and IP and climate change. The aim is to provide updated information and an opportunity for an exchange of views among countries of the region in order to facilitate the effective participation of participants in the policy areas under active consideration in several international forums, including the WTO, WHO, and WIPO
- **Organizers:** ESCAP, WTO, WHO, and WIPO
- **Date:** 10-12 July 2012
- **Location:** Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

#### → WTO/ESCAP Eighth ARTNeT Capacity Building Workshop for Trade Research “Recent Advances in the Field of trade Theory and Policy Analysis Using Micro-Level Data”

- **Objective:** This workshop will focus on the use of micro-level data in empirical research of trade related issues. It will be based on so-called “new-new trade theory”. The acquired skills could be used to assist developing countries in building high quality firm level datasets, which are necessary to improve the understanding of firm constraints to do business in general and to export.
- **Organizers:** ESCAP, WTO
- **Date:** 23-27 July 2012
- **Location:** Bangkok, Thailand

#### → UNNExT Business Process Analysis Training, Bangkok

- **Objective:** The BPA training is used to analyse 'as-is' business processes and recommend improvement measures in any given business sector or operations. This particular training is mainly designed to build the capacity of the consultants working on the SATNET (Network for Knowledge Transfer on Sustainable Agriculture Technologies and Improved Market Linkages in South and Southeast Asia) project. After receiving the training, the consultants will carry out BPA studies in selected countries in South and Southeast Asia.
- **Organizers:** ESCAP
- **Date:** Mid August (tentative)
- **Location:** Bangkok

**ADB:**→ **Ways Forward for Corridor-Based Transport Facilitation Agreements in the CAREC Region**

- **Objective:** Knowledge sharing on the current state of transport facilitation agreements among the 10 CAREC countries; Exposure of CAREC officials to experience with transport facilitation agreement development and implementation in other regions and consideration of feasible approaches to improving cross-border transport of goods and people in the CAREC region.
- **Organizers:** Asian Development Bank and CAREC Program secretariat
- **Date:** 2-3 July 2012
- **Location:** Beijing, Peoples' Republic of China

For more information: <http://www.adbi.org/event/5026.transport.facilitation.agreements.carec/>

→ **Seminar by Douglas H. Brooks - Importance of International Supply Chains to the Performance of APEC Developing Economies**

- **Organizers:** Asian Development Bank and CAREC Program secretariat
- **Date:** 21 July 2012
- **Location:** Asian Development Bank Institution (ADBI), Tokyo

**WCO:**→ **Global Excise Summit in cooperation with the International Tax and Investment Center (ITIC),**

- **Objective:** The primary objective is to bring together all actors from Member countries, international and regional organizations, as well as industry and academia representatives to openly discuss public/private partnership regarding tax administration and enforcement, and the linkage with illicit trade.
- **Organizer:** The World Customs Organization (WCO) and the Korea Customs Service (KCS)
- **Date:** 2-3 July 2012
- **Location:** Headquarters of the World Customs Organization, Brussels, Belgium

→ **WCO 2012 Knowledge Academy for Customs and Trade**

- **Objective:** This year's Knowledge Academy will be dedicated to promoting connectivity, including enhanced cooperation and communication, under the slogan "Borders divide, Customs connects.
- **Organizer:** The World Customs Organization (WCO) and the Korea Customs Service (KCS)
- **Date:** 2-15 July 2012
- **Location:** Headquarters of the World Customs Organization, Brussels, Belgium

→ **Enhancing Air Cargo Security and Facilitation – Synergy Through Cooperation**

- **Objective:** To enhance coordination and cooperation between aviation security, customs authorities and other key stakeholders with the aim to strengthen aviation and border security and facilitate the movement of air cargo.
- **Organizer:** International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)/World Customs Organization (WCO)
- **Date:** 5-6 July 2012

## Selected Past Events and Meetings

Meeting and Events	Organizers
<i>Global/ Regional/ Sub-regional</i>	
Benchmarking Trade Promotion: A Look at the ITC's Comparative Institutional Assessment and Performance Improvement Programme, June 28 2012 <a href="http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:23219429~menuPK:34482~pagePK:2524753~piPK:51421526~theSitePK:4607,00.html">http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:23219429~menuPK:34482~pagePK:2524753~piPK:51421526~theSitePK:4607,00.html</a>	World Bank
ESCAP-ADB Capacity Building Workshop on Sub-regional Trade and Transit Cooperation for SASEC Countries Kathmandu, Nepal, 21-22 June 2012 <a href="http://www.unescap.org/tid/projects/sasec.asp">http://www.unescap.org/tid/projects/sasec.asp</a>	ESCAP/ADB
The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development "Rio+20" Rio de Janeiro, Brazil 20-22 June 2012 <a href="http://www.adb.org/news/events/united-nations-conference-sustainable-development-rio20">http://www.adb.org/news/events/united-nations-conference-sustainable-development-rio20</a>	ADB
Ad hoc Intergovernmental Meeting on an Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports Bangkok, Thailand, 20-22 June 2012 <a href="http://www.unescap.org/ttdw/common/Meetings/dry_ports/iga-dp-bkk.asp">http://www.unescap.org/ttdw/common/Meetings/dry_ports/iga-dp-bkk.asp</a>	ESCAP
Regional Forum of Freight Forwarders, Multimodal Transport Operators and Logistics Service Providers Bangkok, Thailand, 13-14 June 2012 <a href="http://www.unescap.org/ttdw/index.asp?MenuName=FFForum2012">http://www.unescap.org/ttdw/index.asp?MenuName=FFForum2012</a>	ESCAP
Business Implication of the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA) for Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 13 June 2012 <a href="http://www.unescap.org/tid/mtg/aptabang.asp">http://www.unescap.org/tid/mtg/aptabang.asp</a>	ESCAP
Regional Trade and Private Sector Support Seminar (Asia-Pacific) Movenpick Hotel, Hanoi, 11-14 June 2012	EU
17th session of the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) Project Working Group on Transport and Border Crossing Almaty, Kazakhstan, 6 to 7 June 2012	ESCAP
Supporting Equitable Economic Development in ASEAN: Experts Meeting of the thematic area on 'Agricultural Productivity and Natural Resources Management' ADBI, Tokyo, Japan, 5 - 6 June 2012 <a href="http://www.adbi.org/event/5067.supporting.equitable.economic.dev.asean/">http://www.adbi.org/event/5067.supporting.equitable.economic.dev.asean/</a>	ADBI
WCO Asia Pacific Regional Dialogue on Partnership for Customs Modernization Bangkok, Thailand, 31 May – 01 June 2012 <a href="http://www.wcoomd.org/home_cboverviewboxes_arapregdialoguepartnership.htm">http://www.wcoomd.org/home_cboverviewboxes_arapregdialoguepartnership.htm</a>	WCO, ROCB, Thai Customs
International Conference on Facilitating Trade in South Asia: Challenges and the Way Forward New Delhi, India , 28 May 2012 <a href="http://www.ris.org.in/index.php?option=com_content&amp;view=article&amp;id=370&amp;Itemid=48">http://www.ris.org.in/index.php?option=com_content&amp;view=article&amp;id=370&amp;Itemid=48</a>	RIS, CWS, IIFT, FICCI
ESCAP-ECO Joint Trade Facilitation Forum on Paperless Trade and Single Window, Kish Island, Islamic Republic of Iran, 24-25 May 2012 <a href="http://www.unescap.org/tid/projects/swiran.asp">http://www.unescap.org/tid/projects/swiran.asp</a>	ESCAP/ECO

## Selected Past Events and Meetings (Cont'd)

<p>ESCAP-ADB Capacity Building Workshop on Single Window Implementation, Seoul, Republic of Korea, 23 - 26 April 2012  <a href="http://www.unescap.org/tid/projects/swi.asp">http://www.unescap.org/tid/projects/swi.asp</a></p>	ESCAP/ADB
<p>19th UN/CEFACT Forum                  Geneva, Switzerland, 16 - 20 April 2012  <a href="http://www.unece.org/?id=28431">http://www.unece.org/?id=28431</a></p>	UNECE, UN/CEFACT
<p>ARTNeT/WTO Research Workshop on Emerging Trade Issues in Asia and the Pacific: Meeting Contemporary Policy Challenges, Nakorn Pathom, Thailand, 4-5 April 2012  <a href="http://www.unescap.org/tid/artnet/mtg/policychallenges.asp">http://www.unescap.org/tid/artnet/mtg/policychallenges.asp</a></p>	ARTNET/WTO/ESCAP
<p>APEC Symposium on Supply-Chain Connectivity Measurement Framework                  31 March -1 April 2012  <a href="http://www.apec.org/Events-Calendar.aspx?filter=Year%7C2012%7CMonth%7C3%7CGroup_Filter%7C%7B1b41a355-2b1b-4769-9113-37f4365c5269%7D">http://www.apec.org/Events-Calendar.aspx?filter=Year%7C2012%7CMonth%7C3%7CGroup_Filter%7C%7B1b41a355-2b1b-4769-9113-37f4365c5269%7D</a></p>	APEC
<p>2nd APEC Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI2)                  Singapore, 28 March - 3 April 2012  <a href="http://www.apec.org/Groups/Committee-on-Trade-and-Investment.aspx">http://www.apec.org/Groups/Committee-on-Trade-and-Investment.aspx</a></p>	APEC
<b>National</b>	
<p>Business Implication of the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA) for Bangladesh                  Dhaka, Bangladesh, 13 June 2012  <a href="http://www.unescap.org/tid/mtg/aptabang.asp">http://www.unescap.org/tid/mtg/aptabang.asp</a></p>	ESCAP



APEC Symposium on Supply-Chain Connectivity Measurement Framework  
 31 March—1 April 2012



Sixty-eighth session of the Commission  
 Bangkok, Thailand, 17-23 May 2012



ARTNeT/WTO Research Workshop on Emerging Trade Issues in Asia and the Pacific



Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2011  
 Seoul, Korea 5-6 October 2011



Seminar on Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA): Business Implications for Bangladesh, 13 June 2012



UNNExT Legal Advisory Group Meeting,  
 Bangkok, Thailand, 22-23 March 2012

## News Items on Trade Facilitation

### GLOBAL

**Lending agencies urge WTO 'trade facilitation' pact**, *Reuters*, 27 June 2012

The heads of the World Bank and other international lending agencies on Wednesday urged countries to salvage an agreement to help poor nations increase trade from the remains of failed world trade talks that began in 2001. "More than a decade after the launch of the Doha Round, this agreement could be a down payment on the commitment WTO (World Trade Organization) members have made to linking trade and development," World Bank President Robert Zoellick and the heads of five regional development banks said in an op-ed. One part of the Doha round of world trade talks was a "trade facilitation" pact aimed at reducing red tape and other border delays that boost the cost of doing trade. Despite disagreements that blocked an overall Doha round deal, "the outlines of a new WTO trade facilitation agreement are already clear," the bank chiefs said. However, developing countries want a credible commitment from richer countries "to support implementation costs such as technical assistance and capacity building," they said. A World Bank study estimated the cost of implementing the commitments at about \$7 to \$11 million in each developing country, spread over a number of years, they said.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/commoditiesNews/idAFL2E8HRISZ20120627>

### ASIA PACIFIC

**Asia-Pacific governments call for action to promote regional economic integration, trade and energy connectivity**, *ESCAP Press Release*, 24 May 2012

Bangkok (UN ESCAP Strategic Communications and Advocacy Section) – Asia-Pacific governments have issued a call to action to strengthen regional economic integration, trade and energy connectivity as keystones of a future of shared and sustainable regional growth in the face of daunting socio-economic and environmental challenges. A series of resolutions adopted at the conclusion of the 17-23 May annual session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) have articulated an agenda for inclusive and sustainable regional growth aiming to close development gaps among and within Asia-Pacific countries and setting economic progress on a greener path. The resolutions range from a call to enhance regional economic integration, enable paperless trade, facilitate intraregional transport and support inclusive and sustainable growth in least developed and geographically disadvantaged countries, to the proclamation of the period 2013-22 as a new Asian and Pacific Decade for Persons with Disabilities. The ESCAP session also adopted a milestone resolution on promoting regional energy connectivity. "A more integrated regional power system – effectively an Asian Energy Highway – could strengthen energy security, improve efficiency, and promote a greater share of renewables and clean energy for a more sustainable future," Dr. Heyzer said.

<http://www.unescap.org/unis/press/2012/may/g27.asp>

**APEC ministers vow to facilitate trade amid Doha impasse**, *Business World Online*, 6 June 2012

Trade Ministers in Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) countries appeared to have taken a conservative stance in resolving the Doha Round impasse, committing instead at the end of their meeting to improve side deals, trade facilitation and efforts at establishing its own free trade area. While we continue to be disappointed at the impasse in completing all the elements of the Round, our focus in APEC is on the best path forward," a statement released after the 2012 Meeting of APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade in Kazan, Russia on June 4 and 5. Although urging the World Trade Organization (WTO) to "continue exploring different, fresh, and credible negotiating approaches" to conclude the Doha deal, which is about to enter its 11th year of deadlock in negotiations, APEC Trade ministers also identified "productive areas for ongoing work." These include trade facilitation, WTO accession of least-developed countries and other "development-related issues." It particularly noted recent calls for the informal talks on the expansion of product coverage and membership to the WTO Information Technology Agreement (ITA), which requires participating countries to lift tariffs on high-tech products. "[We] call on ITA participants to strengthen their engagement in order to achieve a good outcome of the negotiations," the statement said.

<http://www.bworldonline.com/content.php?section=Economy&title=APEC-ministers-vow-to-facilitate-trade-amid-Doha-impasse&id=53035>

## BANGLADESH

### **Constraints to external trade expansion identified,** *Financial Express*, 22 May 2012

Speakers at a roundtable Monday identified poor transportation infrastructure, inefficiency in operation of ports, bureaucratic tangles, power-gas crisis and limited access to land as the main constraints to expansion of external trading activities of Bangladesh. Taking a positive note of enormous opportunities for enhancing, strengthening and deepening Bangladesh's trade with the neighbouring countries, they urged all concerned groups including policy makers, civil society and business people to look at business "from the perspectives of business rather than that of politics." The discussants expressed such views while taking part in a roundtable on 'Enhancing Trade Facilitation in Bangladesh.' The discussion was organised by Policy Research Institute (PRI) of Bangladesh in partnership with International Finance Corporation (IFC) in a city hotel. Senior Trade Logistics Specialist of IFC William J Gain presented the keynote paper on the occasion. PRI Chairman Dr. Zaidi Sattar moderated the programme and Executive Director of the think-tank, Dr Ahsan H Mansur, made the opening statement. In his opening statement, Ahsan H Mansur urged all stakeholders to identify the bottlenecks to trade facilitation.

[http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/more.php?date=2012-05-22&news\\_id=130330](http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/more.php?date=2012-05-22&news_id=130330)

### **Country yet to derive benefit from APTA,** *Financial Express*, 14 June 2012

Speakers at a seminar Wednesday said the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA) still could not become effective and beneficial for the smaller countries like Bangladesh due to unwillingness by some big players. They emphasised the need for exploiting the potential by Bangladesh and to be benefited by taking the advantage of concessions offered under the regional pact. The Ministry of Commerce, United Nations Economic Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), and the ICC Bangladesh jointly organised the seminar titled 'Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA): Business Implications for Bangladesh' at a city hotel. International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)-Bangladesh president Mahbubur Rahman presided over the programme. Speaking as the chief guest Commerce Minister Ghulam Muhammad Quader said undoubtedly the trade among APTA member countries is upward but Bangladesh's gain from the pact is not clear. The minister emphasised the need for exploitation of the potentials (concession) that accrued from the regional trade pact by the member states. He said the ministry of commerce is trying to find out the problem and prospects of the agreement which barred the pact from becoming an effective one.

[http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/more.php?news\\_id=132974&date=2012-06-14](http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/more.php?news_id=132974&date=2012-06-14)

## CENTRAL ASIA

### **UN calls on Central Asia to construct dry ports,** *Trends*, 8 June 2012

The 17th session of the Project Working Group for Transport and Border Crossing Facilitation (PWG-TBC) under the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) under the chairmanship of deputy Minister of Transport and Communications of Kazakhstan Azat Bekturov, completed its work in Almaty, the press service of the ministry said. The need for a dry port was stressed during the meeting. In particular, there was a call on countries to support the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) to develop an intergovernmental agreement on dry ports. Members of the PWG also noted the priority projects in road, rail and inland waterway transport as defined by the expert group for the Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL), worth \$215 billion who discussed the organisation's results over the past year. These include such projects as the reconstruction of the international transit corridor Western Europe - Western China, the construction of the Baku - Tbilisi - Kars rail line, Baku International Port Complex and the redevelopment of the Bishkek - Naryn - Torugart highway. The meeting was attended by delegations from Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and several international organisations. The Kazakh side was attended by representatives from the Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Border Service of the National Security Committee.

<http://en.trend.az/regions/casia/tajikistan/2035140.html#popupInfo>

## CHINA

### **Logistics week highlights growing hub of Kunming,** *China Daily*, 7 May 2012

Expected to give a strong boost to the local industry, Asia's largest and most influential logistics show kicked off on May 6 in Kunming, the capital of Southwest China's Yunnan province. The eighth-annual China International Logistics Week, which will continue until May 8, is highlighting ways to further internationalize the sector by sharing the best practices in the industry, according to organizers. "The event will present unprecedented opportunities for Kunming's logistics industry," said Cheng Siwei, vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of National People's Congress. The city's logistics industry will benefit from the provincial government's strategy as a "gateway" for trade and investment in Southeast Asian and South Asian countries, as well as the central government's Western Development program and the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area that began operation in 2010, he added. Participants from

National Security Committee.

<http://en.trend.az/regions/casia/tajikistan/2035140.html#popupInfo>

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[http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/regional/2012-05/07/content\\_15224202.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/regional/2012-05/07/content_15224202.htm)

## HONG KONG, CHINA

**Achievements made since implementation of CEPA**, *China Daily*, 18 June 2012

It has been nine years since the signing of the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) in June 2003, an important trade agreement that gives Hong Kong's firms preferential measures in trade in goods, trade in services, as well as trade and investment facilitation. With eight supplements signed from 2004 to 2011, the CEPA, broadening the scope of Hong Kong beneficiaries, provided wider and deeper openness of the mainland's market to the city's companies, especially in the service industry. The implementation of the CEPA has not only provided unprecedented opportunities for Hong Kong's firms to tap the mainland's market potential and promote local manufacture and service industries, but also boosted up the mainland's economic development, said John Tsang, the financial secretary of the city government, earlier in a forum on the CEPA. Following are some facts and figures demonstrating achievements that have been made since the CEPA entered into effect. -- By the end of March, 2012, the value of the mainland's import goods under the CEPA had been worth of \$4.96 billion with total preferential tax of 2.84 billion yuan (\$0.45 billion). -- More than 81,000 applications for Certificate of Hong Kong Origin under the CEPA had been approved by the end of April, 2012, with the total export value of the goods concerned amounting to over HK\$40 billion (\$5.15 billion). Major product categories include pharmaceutical products, plastics and plastic articles, textiles and clothing, food and beverages. -- The newly signed Supplement VIII allows Hong Kong's traders to include the value of raw materials and component parts originated from the mainland when calculating the "value-added content." The value allowed to be included into the calculation can be up to half of the "value-added content" (i.e. 15 percent).

[http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/HK15th/2012-06/18/content\\_15510532.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/HK15th/2012-06/18/content_15510532.htm)

## INDIA

**India, Bangladesh to sort out trade issues**, *The Hindu Business Line*, 19 June 2012

It seems to be a torrent of activities this monsoon on the Indo-Bangla trade front. The Federation of Indian Export Organisation (FIEO) said on Tuesday that it has planned a meeting of Bangladesh exporters with Indian importers in city shortly. Early this month the Indo-Bangla Trade Fair 2012 was held in Dhaka and the joint trade study team launched a tour of North-Eastern States beginning with Tripura. In July both neighbours are scheduled to meet on the Protocol on Inland Water Transport and Trade. The trade between the two countries is expected to have grown to over Rs 300 crore (official available statistic up to December, 2011, says Rs 232 crore). Mr R. K. Agarwal, Eastern Regional Chairman of FIEO, at an interaction with the Bangladeshi Deputy High Commissioner, Ms Abida Islam, said the trade body will hold a meet on trade issues. The programme is aimed at providing Bangladesh businessmen access to their Indian counterparts to imports textiles, jute and leather and export engineering goods,



electronics items, auto parts, agri products and processed foods. The Bangladesh diplomat said there was a need for greater engagement to sort out trade-related problems and remove bottlenecks. She said traders on both sides of the border face almost identical irritants — delays on the land border posts, payments and absence of efficient mechanisms infrastructure. “In May, one such issue pertaining to long-term visas was taken up at an official level meeting”, Ms Islam said. Mr Agarwal said an improvement in the formal and informal trade channels would justify the investments in facilitation measures of the two countries. FIEO also urged that the system of the certification called ‘Clear Record of Findings’ for exports from India be removed altogether.

[http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/economy/article3547537.ece?ref=wl\\_industry-and-economy](http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/economy/article3547537.ece?ref=wl_industry-and-economy)

### IRAN

**Despite U.S. opposition, Iran to be transport hub for North-South Corridor, *The Hindu*, 31 May 2012**

A multi-nation transport corridor that would radically reduce cargo transportation time between India on one side and Central Asia and Russia on the other with Iran being the pivot could see dry runs beginning next year. A three-day meeting of experts from 16 countries discussed ways to smoothen the way for the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and at least six supplementary routes despite the U.S. pushing its Silk Road proposal in which its bete noire Iran has been excluded. In stark contrast, Iran plays a crucial role in the multi-modal North-South Corridor as its port Bandar Abbas will be the hub of all activity. Experts proposed the setting up of two four-nation groups to resolve many of the issues. Iran along with Russia and India (all three initiators of the project) will be in both groups. The meeting on the INSTC which ended here on Wednesday proposed a joint venture between Iran, India, Russia and Azerbaijan to find solutions to aspects such as infrastructure and funding. It also suggested a core group on customs — India, Russia, Iran and Turkey — consisting of experts from these countries, based in Delhi to sort out issues. When India pointed to the missing link of 500 km in Iran that could impede the project, Tehran gave some good news. It said 372 km of the Quazvin-Rasht-Astra was complete and the contractor identified 163 km of the Rasht-Astra route. But there were technical problems in the last leg leading up to Azerbaijan. The experts suggested that a fund may be created to help Iran complete the route as quickly as possible.

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article3473943.ece?homepage=true>

### KAZAKHSTAN

**Integrated customs tariff to be developed in Kazakhstan, *Gazeta*, 10 April 2012**

An integrated customs tariff is planned to be developed in Kazakhstan in order to ensure transparency of the customs clearance and simplification of its application concerning goods, measures of tariff and non-tariff regulation, Chairman of the Customs Control Committee Mazhit Yessenbayev said. The integrated customs tariff is a systematized and codified list of information about all tariff and non-tariff measures applied for import, export of transit including all state requirements for particular goods. As Chairman of the Customs Control Committee Mazhit Yessenbayev said at the Government session today, introduction of the integrated customs tariff would increase the transparency of the customs procedures. The main advantage of the integrated customs tariff for business is that it ensures access to the single window of regulative requirements for good crossing the border. The information about administrative and legal requirements will be constantly updated.

<http://engarticles.gazeta.kz/art.asp?aid=360793>

### LAO PDR

**Lao trade portal aims to ease import, export barriers, *Lao Voices*, 24 June 2012**

The Ministry of Industry and Commerce has unveiled a portal which provides local and foreign businesses with guidelines on the import and export of goods. Industry and Commerce Minister Dr Nam Vinhaket, local and international senior officials yesterday cut a digital ribbon to launch the Lao Trade Portal in Vientiane, marking a significant milestone in Laos’

preparations to join the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Laos hopes to join the World Trade Organisation by the end of this year. One of the key requirements for membership is the transparent publication of all trade-related information in a way that is easily accessible both by businesses and the sectors concerned. The Lao Trade Portal, which was built with support from AusAID, GIZ, the EU and the World Bank, will allow local and international traders to access laws, regulations, decrees and other legal instruments, enabling them to expedite imports and exports. The [www.laotradeportal.gov.la](http://www.laotradeportal.gov.la) also provides other trade and import related information, such as regulations on animal health control, food safety, licensing for specific products, prohibitions and restrictions, and technical conformance standards. Businesses can also access official announcements on import and export measures, and learn how these may positively or negatively impact their operations. This will help them to adjust to the new business environment. Dr Nam said he believed the Lao Trade Portal would be a significant contributor to trade facilitation not only in terms of increased transparency but also improving the time it takes to import, export and clear goods in Laos.

<http://laovoices.com/lao-trade-portal-aims-ease-import-export-barriers/>

### NEPAL

**World Bank to help Nepal boost trade**, *The Himalayan Times*, 14 June 2012

Nepal's trade with India and Bangladesh will get a boost soon after the World Bank facilitated multi-functional lab comes into operation. "The World Bank is facilitating the establishment of a joint multi-functional lab between Nepal, India and Bangladesh to increase intra-regional trade," said senior operations officer at the World Bank South Asia region Diep Nguyen-Van Houtte here today. The bank is also helping Nepal in putting together the missing trade infrastructure, upgrading the roads as land transportation is key to intra-regional trade, and coordinating among trade related agencies to create a single window to remove bureaucratic hassles apart from supporting institutional and human resources capacity building, she said, adding that market integration will help generate more employment in the region that has to create 1.2 million new jobs per month over the next two decades as the number of new job seekers is increasing rapidly in the region. Trade can be a powerful solution for landlocked countries like Nepal, she added. However, the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) of South Asia need to be supported to boost their infrastructure and remove supply side constraints for regional integration, said executive director of South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment Dr Ratnakar Adhikari. "The participation of LDCs in the South Asian Free Trade Agreement has been disappointing measured by their share in overall regional trade, in particular exports," he added. LDCs in South Asia, along with Sri Lanka, are seeing a huge increase in their imports from the region, but the share of their exports is shrinking. Nepal's intra-regional merchandise exports' share stood at 3.23 per cent in 2010 from 10.7 per cent in 2000, according to him. The LDCs that have been marginalised from the global trade regime will again be marginalised in the region, said Adhikari, suggesting at setting up of a 'LDC Integration Fund' to help them increase their capacity to strengthen their infrastructure needs for trade. One of the most impoverished regions in the world that houses some 1.5 billion people, South Asia is the least integrated region in the world due to poor logistics and trade barriers.

[http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullNews.php?](http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullNews.php?headline=World+Bank+to+help+Nepal+boost+trade&NewsID=335940)

[headline=World+Bank+to+help+Nepal+boost+trade&NewsID=335940](http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullNews.php?headline=World+Bank+to+help+Nepal+boost+trade&NewsID=335940)

### PAKISTAN

**World Bank to restructure trade corridor programme**, *Tribune*, 14 June 2012

KATHMANDU: As efforts to integrate the South Asian region gain momentum, the World Bank is reviving and restructuring the 'dead' National Trade Corridor programme aimed at reducing cost of trade and improving logistics infrastructure between Pakistan and regional peers. Once completed, the multi-billion-dollar project is expected to bring down losses, estimated to be in the range of 4% to 5% of gross domestic product, due to poor road and rail infrastructure, according to various studies. "The World Bank is in the process of restructuring the National Trade Corridor programme after years of slow progress," said the Washington-based lending agency's Senior Operations Officer for South Asia Diep Nguyen.

She was speaking here on Wednesday at a conference on “Regional Cooperation in South Asia”, organised by the World Bank. Pakistan’s poor road and rail infrastructure is not only adding to the cost of doing business but is also causing significant losses to the economy. The rickety infrastructure was particularly because of heavy movement of Nato containers, which has damaged most of the national highways and Lahore-Islamabad Motorway, according to the National Highway Authority. According to Salman Zaheer, the WB’s Programme Director for Regional Integration, the WB has embarked on a challenging programme of connecting Pakistan with Central Asia and further to Far East Asia. It was also working to connect Pakistan and India by simplifying border procedures and improving road and rail networks.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/393213/world-bank-to-restructure-trade-corridor-programme/>

## PAKISTAN – INDIA

### **Hightime for Pak-India trade visa deal, *The News*, 5 June 2012**

KARACHI: Expressing disappointment over a holdup in the signing of a liberalized business visa regime agreement, Sharat Sabharwal, the Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan, has said that both Pakistan and India are keen on building trade new bridges, Geo News reported. Addressing a gathering of businessmen in Karachi, he said both Pakistan and India had, in principle, agreed upon the terms and conditions of the said visa regime accord, adding the Indian delegation was here with an aim to strike a deal in this regard. The Indian high commissioner said that his country wanted to build a relationship of friendship and mutually beneficial cooperation with Pakistan. “India believes that the negative trade list will be phased out by December this year as New Delhi has decided to allow direct investment in Pakistan”, said Indian High Commissioner. He said that decisions like opening of Munabao-Khokharapar route for trade would contribute significantly to the economy of the region besides giving freight advantage to both the countries. He said that India and Pakistan should target \$12 billion trade within the next five years. He said that they were convinced that growing trade and economic linkages between the two countries besides contributing to economic progress and well-being of people on both sides would also enhance mutual trust and further enlarge constituencies for peace in India and Pakistan. “We have an agreed revised visa agreement-agreed to by the two interior ministries-which provides for very liberalized provisions for businessmen, amongst others. It’s our hope that it will be signed soon,” Sabharwal said. Speaking on the occasion President India Pakistan Chamber of Commerce & Industry, S M Muneer, said that the bilateral trade between both neighbours currently stood around \$ 2.7 billion, which could reach \$10 billion if both governments push the envelope further. “The current visa policy of issuing three city visas instead of a multiple city visa has acted as a major impediment to the growth of business ties in both the countries,” another chamber official said. “There is a huge potential for increased bilateral cooperation between both the nations as currently Pakistan only shares 0.43 per cent of India’s total trade. The majority of the trade between India and Pakistan is at present routed through other countries,” he added.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-52716-Hightime-for-Pak-India-trade-visa-deal>

## PHILIPPINES

### **Philippines jumps 20 notches up in world trade facilitation index, *Zambo Times*, 6 June 2012**

Department of Trade and Industry Secretary Gregory Domingo expressed his optimism towards reducing trade barriers and assured that the government is continuing its effort to improve the business environment in the country. “It’s been a long time coming, we’re happy with the results, it shows that all our efforts this past two years are starting to pay off” Domingo said in response to the results of the 2012 Global Enabling Trade Report, where the Philippines recorded a significant improvement, from the 2010 ranking of 92nd to 72nd this year. The Global Enabling Trade Report 2012, which was published by the World Economic Forum (WEF), measures the factors, policies, and services that facilitate the trade in goods across the borders of 132 countries. It includes the areas of market access, border administration, transport and communication infrastructure, and business environment. Each area consists of pillars and indicators that assess the different aspects of a country’s trade environment. The Philippines greatly improved in the area of market access where it jumped 50 notches, from 64th in 2010, to 14th this year. Domingo attributed this improvement to the DTI’s efforts to facilitate trade across borders such as the Doing Business in Free Trade Areas (DBFTA), an awareness campaign that aims to help various stakeholders understand the emerging and new markets as well as instruments such as free trade agreements (FTAs). “We involve everyone. We’re trying to spread the word to our people to be able to use the FTAs,” Domingo said. DBFTA sessions will be held in key cities in the country this year, and each session will include presentations on market opportunities, including non-tariff measures, country’s FTA markets, tariff rates of top exports for sectors under the FTAs, rules of origin, an open forum, as well as business testimonials. Help desks will also be made available after each session to provide assistance to interested exporters and importers. Other initiatives are already in place to bring down trade barriers. Secretary Domingo cited the ASEAN Single Window (ASW), which is a component of the progressive schemes on customs development shared by the 10-member ASEAN bloc. Among its pivotal role is the formulation

and implementation of rules and procedures for trade facilitation.

<http://www.zambotimes.com/archives/48186-PHL-jumps-20-notch-up-in-world-trade-facilitation-index.html>

## VIET NAM

**JICA promotes e-customs in Vietnam**, *Saigon Money*, 10 April 2012

The General Department of Vietnam Customs (GDVC), Ministry of Finance and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) have signed the record of discussion of Japanese Technical Cooperation Project for “Promoting E-customs in Vietnam”. The project follows up the Japanese grant aid project for “E-Customs and National Single Window for Customs Modernisation” which was signed last month. The newly-signed Technical Cooperation Project aims to establish environment for operating and maintaining customs automation system integrated with Japan National Single Window system (NACCS) which will be transferred to Vietnam Customs. It will help Vietnam establish necessary laws and regulations corresponding to the usage of NACCS, the structure to properly operate, maintain and manage the system and its information security policy and mechanism. It will also provide training for officials of GDVC and users of private sector on knowledge and skills to properly use the system and develop necessary related human resources as well. The project will be implemented during three years with budget of \$5.8 million. “We do hope that supports of the two grant aid projects – one for infrastructure development and the other for human resource development – shall complement one another to successfully transfer the so-called NACCS to Vietnam,” said Tsuno Motonori, JICA chief representative in Vietnam.

<http://www.saigonmoney.com/2012/04/10/jica-promotes-e-customs-in-vietnam/>

## NEWS FROM OTHER REGIONS

### SOUTH AFRICA

**Border delays put the brake on intra-African trade**, *Business day*, 7 May 2012

Delays at border posts in southern Africa involving duplication of customs, migration, police, agriculture and health formalities are costing traders millions of dollars and are retarding the growth of intra-African trade significantly, an African Development Bank study has shown. The delays, sometimes as long as three days, also create many opportunities for corruption, which further increases the cost of trade and harms investment in the region. A paper produced by African Development Bank chief economist and vice-president Prof Mthuli Ncube says a border post can be defined as the location where one country’s authority over goods and persons ends and another country’s authority begins. “It is the location where a multitude of government agencies are ... involved in the various document and goods controls, the calculation and collection of duties and taxes, as well as immigration. “The multiplicity of those agencies operating on both sides of the same border doubles the bureaucracy ... which translates into congestion and delays (the waiting time for a container/truck to cross a border post in Africa ranges from three minutes to 2,8 days). The cumbersome procedures in customs processing can cost a consignment about \$185 for each day of delay.” In southern Africa, goods are transported along four major corridors involving Dar-es-Salaam, Walvis Bay, Beira, and the north-south corridor through Durban. “The large number of border posts and roadblocks along those corridors and the inefficiency of the procedures are overwhelmingly costly to traders and businesses in the sub-region. For instance, traders/trucks have to wait about 36 hours at the SA -Zimbabwe border post (Beitbridge). In southern Africa, customs delays cost the region about \$48m per year,” Prof Ncube said.

<http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/Content.aspx?id=171082>

### UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE)

**Customs Authority signs MOU with Ajman DED**, *AME Info*, 5 June 2012

The Federal Customs Authority (FCA) signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Ajman Department of Economic Development to activate their mutual cooperation in the

field of educating traders, fighting fraud and counterfeiting, exchanging information, regulating the joint events and activities, planning, setting policies, strategies, economical, health and customs legislations in order to accelerate the UAE economical growth rates. Khalid Ali Al Bustani, Deputy General Manager of the FCA signed the MOU on behalf of the FCS and Mahmud Khalil Al Hashimi, Deputy General Manager, on behalf of Ajman DED. "Signing the MOU with Ajman DED comes within the framework of the FCA's plan to widen the strategic partners circle and enhancing the cooperation and partnership relationships with them in order to serve the national economy and enhance the economical growth rates," said Khalid Ali Al Bustani, Deputy General Manager of the FCA. He also pointed out that Ajman DED is one of the most effective economical organizations in the UAE in the field of setting the economical policies, achieving the comprehensive development, removal of trade obstacles and fighting fraud and counterfeiting and this is the source of the importance of signing the MOU with them, expecting that the MOU shall participate in increasing the effectiveness of strategic planning and raising the sustainable development rates in the UAE in general and in the Emirate of Ajman in particular. "Signing the MOU with Ajman DED motivates achieving the strategic and operational initiatives of the authority and activate communication with all institutions operating in the UAE in general to raise the efficiency level of customs performance and achieve the strategic objectives of the authority represented in protecting the security of society and to facilitate trade and enhance cooperation with the outside world," he added. Al Bustani explained that the partnership relationships between the FCA and Ajman DED shall expand to include the participation in formulating the legislation and laws related to the economical development and customs work such as the import and export laws, consumer protection and fighting fraud and counterfeiting in addition to participating in the joint commissions and delegations to represent the UAE in the international events. The Deputy General Manager of FCA pointed out that the MOU concluded with Ajman DED includes cooperation and coordination between the two parties in fields of exchanging advice and study on the economical and customs strategies, policies, plans and legislations. The MOU stipulates the exchange of advice and studies between the two parties on strategies, policies, plans and legislation relating to areas of joint economic, trade and development and customs particularly the fight against fraud and smuggling, counterfeiting and control over the import and export in addition to the exchange of mutual information, data and statistics between the FCA and the DED.

<http://www.ameinfo.com/customs-authority-signs-mou-ajman-ded-302685>

## **ZAMBIA - ZIMBABWE**

### **One-stop shop at borders speeds up trade, *Business day*, 7 May 2012**

A Ground-breaking one-stop border post (OSBP) at Chirundu between Zambia and Zimbabwe has demonstrated how the cost of trading in Southern Africa can be substantially reduced by streamlining border procedures. At present delays at border posts in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) cost traders millions, with Shoprite Checkers complaining recently that it had to complete 16 000 documents in order for the group to send supplies to its African footprint. An African Development Bank study also finds that the delays at border posts provided significant opportunities for fraud and corruption to flourish. Streamlined procedures and reduced waiting times would help to eliminate this. African Development Bank chief economist and vice-president Mthuli Ncube, in a study of factors negatively affecting intra-regional trade, says in Southern Africa, the one-stop arrangement or joint border control was first introduced at the Chirundu border, between Zambia and Zimbabwe, to simplify and harmonise cross-border procedures and significantly reduce the cost of trading across borders. Prof Ncube says Chirundu is a key gateway to Central and East Africa and handled high volumes of commercial traffic, with an average of 268 trucks a day. "This led in the past to heavy congestion, delays at border posts and related corruption activities, and hence increased costs of trading. The bottlenecks faced by traders at Chirundu and other border posts motivated the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa to introduce one-stop border posts in the region, with Chirundu being a pilot," he says. At Chirundu trucks and traders are checked only once — northbound on the Zambian side and southbound on the Zimbabwean side. "A recent evaluation of the Chirundu OSBP has highlighted many benefits of the new facility, including the reduced supply chain transaction costs, increased government revenues, reduced duplication of efforts, reduced retail price of consumer goods, and promoted investment and growth. "The time taken by a truck to cross the border has been reduced from two to three days to just two hours, and the fast-track pre-clearance process takes only 15 minutes.

<http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/Content.aspx?id=171098>