



Summary assessment of the second session of the Committee on Trade and Investment*

Bangkok, Thailand
27-29 July 2011

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* Prepared by the Programme Planning and Partnerships Division based on feedback provided by government delegations that attended the second session of the Committee on Trade and Investment.

Summary Assessment of the second session of the Committee on Trade and Investment

The second session of the Committee on Trade and Investment was held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 27-29 July 2011. A questionnaire was distributed towards the end of the session to obtain feedback from participants on its relevance, efficiency and effectiveness. The response rate to the questionnaire was 61.5%, corresponding to 16 of the 26 participating delegations.

The present assessment has been conducted on the basis of the feed-back received from delegations together with a qualitative analysis of the draft report of the session, bearing in mind the terms of reference for the Committee on Trade and Investment, as contained in resolution 64/1 on the restructuring of the conference structure of the Commission.

I. Attendance

The Committee session was fairly attended, with 49% (N = 26/53) of ESCAP member States participating.

The majority of delegations that attended the Committee on Trade and Investment comprised of High-level officials from the Capital of their respective country (44% N = 7/16). 19 % N=3/16 were mainly from representatives from Bangkok (Embassy) and 31% or N=5/16 came from a combination of Ministry of Foreign affairs, or the other entities.

II. Ownership

The sense of ownership by participants of the Committee was good, with the majority of respondents indicating that the committee session was owned and driven by member States who indicated (56%, N=9/16) to a good extent or more. The majority 76%, N=12/16 indicated that overall outcome of the deliberations was a result of a collaborative effort, while 88% (N=14/16) indicated that the draft report adequately reflected the discussions, decisions and recommendations of the committee and that the secretariat's in-session interventions contributed to effective conduct and outcome of the session (81%, N=13/16).

III. Relevance

The feed-back indicates that participants were of the view that the Committee on Trade and Investment is a relevant mechanism for discussing issues and trends regarding trade and Investment in the Asian and Pacific region. The majority of respondents agreed that the Committee session was relevant to issues and trends regarding in the Asian and Pacific region (94%, N=15/16 to a good extent or more, The majority also indicated that the needs and priorities of their countries were reflected in the agenda items, (19%, N=3/16) to a greater extent and 56% N=9/16 to a good extent. A majority also indicated that the benefits of their delegation's attendance outweighed the costs (81%, N=13/16).

The most relevant agenda items for the delegations in attendance included (in order or relevance): (a) Agenda item 8: Integrating small and medium sized enterprises

into regional economy, Agenda item 5: Facilitating Intraregional trade (c) Moving multi-lateral and regional trade and investment forward.

Efficiency

The efficiency of organization and conduct of the Committee session was rated highly by respondents. The majority of the respondents agreed that the pre-session documents conveyed clear messages (88%, N=14/16) to a good extent or more, pre session documents were issued in a timely manner (88%, N=14/16) to a good extent or more, while the majority indicated that Committee used efficiently the time provided (88% N=14/16) to a good extent or more. A high majority 94% N=15/16 indicated that conference services provided by the secretariat were efficient and the organization of the work prior to/in between Committee sessions contributed to the effective functioning of the Committee (ACPR, working groups , task forces, communication with the secretariat), 81%, N=13/16 good extent or more.

IV. Outcomes in light of ESCAP resolution 64/1

The majority of respondents agreed that the second session of the Committee on Trade and Investment effectively addressed the issues outlined in resolution 64/1 that should be addressed by all Committees subsidiary to the Commission, including: to review and analyze regional trends (81%, N=13/16), identify priorities and emerging issues (88%, N=14/16), promote dialogue on regional and subregional approaches (94%, N=15/16), and promote a collaborative approach to addressing the development challenges at the regional and subregional levels (87%, N=14/16).

Most and least successful

The exchange of ideas and interactive sessions on Promoting Trade and Investment in low carbon goods and services, Facilitation trade integration were amongst the most successful feature of the session as preferred by the delegates, whereas others highlighted the administration and coordination by the secretariat and the chairman conducting the sessions.

In terms of the least successful feature of the session, there was a mixture of issues raised such as: Time management, and having too many panelists in some of the sessions.

V. Conclusion

This assessment concludes that the second session of the Committee on Trade and Investment was successful. A good attendance and a high level of relevance of the topic for delegations enabled productive substantive discussions and agreement on a number of important issues for trade and investment in the region.

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Annex I

Overall relevance of the session

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	To a great extent (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Not at all (5)
a. The agenda items were timely and relevant to issues and trends regarding trade and investment in the Asian and Pacific region.	9(56%)	6(38%)	1(6%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
b. The agenda items reflected the needs and priorities of my country.	3(19%)	9(56%)	3(19%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
c. The benefits of my delegation's attendance justified the costs (travel, time, opportunity cost of absence from the office).	8(50%)	5(31%)	1(6%)	1(6%)	(0%)

Organization

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	To a great extent (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Not at all (5)
a. The pre-session documents conveyed clear messages concerning the issues placed on the agenda.	7(44%)	7(44%)	1(6%)	1(6%)	0(0%)
b. The pre-session documents were issued in a timely manner.	7(44%)	7(44%)	0(0%)	1(6%)	1(6%)
c. The Committee used efficiently the time available for discussions.	11(69%)	3(19%)	1(6%)	1(6%)	(6%)
d. The conference services provided by the secretariat were efficient.	9(56%)	6(38%)	1(6%)	(0%)	(0%)
e. The organization of work prior to/in between Committee sessions contributed to the effective functioning of the Committee.	8(50%)	5(31%)	1(6%)	1(6%)	(0%)

Substantive outcome of the session

To what extent did the deliberations on the following substantive agenda items meet the expected outcomes as described below?	To a great extent (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Not at all (5)

To what extent did the deliberations on the following substantive agenda items meet the expected outcomes as described below?	To a great extent (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Not at all (5)
<p>a. Agenda item 4, Capturing trade and investment opportunities in the new decade</p> <p><i>Expected outcome: Member States gain an overview of the possible modalities to turn current global and regional economic challenges into opportunities for inter- and intraregional trade and investment in the decade ahead.</i></p>	7(44%)	7(44%)	1(6%)	1(6%)	0(0%)
<p>b. Agenda item 5, Facilitating intraregional trade</p> <p><i>Expected outcome: Member States gain an overview of barriers to intraregional trade and the establishment of a regional network of trade facilitation experts, the United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (UNNExT). Member States are also informed of the future direction and focus, and adopt decisions on particular priority issues in this area.</i></p>	6(38%)	8(50%)	2(13%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
<p>c. Agenda item 6, Promoting trade and investment in low-carbon goods and services</p> <p><i>Expected outcome: Member States discuss modalities and opportunities for promoting trade and investment in low-carbon or climate-smart goods, technologies and services and provide guidance on the role of ESCAP.</i></p>	5(31%)	7(44%)	4(25%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
<p>d. Agenda item 7, Transferring technology for inclusive and sustainable trade and investment</p> <p><i>Expected outcome: Member States review the role and activities of APCTT and UNAPCAEM, provide guidance on their future direction and focus, and adopt decisions on particular priority issues in this area.</i></p>	8(50%)	5(31%)	3(19%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
<p>e. Agenda item 8, Integrating small and medium-sized enterprises into the regional economy</p> <p><i>Expected outcome: Member States are informed of the various implemented programmes to support the development of SMEs. Member States also gain an overview of new initiatives on promoting and facilitating FDI, in particular intraregional FDI.</i></p>	9(56%)	7(44%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
<p>f. Agenda item 9, Moving multilateral and regional trade and investment cooperation forward</p> <p><i>Expected outcome: Member States review the state of RTAs in the region and the role of ESCAP in identifying modalities to move the multilateral and regional trade and investment regimes forward and in promoting their convergence towards an effective set of mutually complementary multilateral and regional trade and investment rules.</i></p>	8(50%)	7(44%)	1(6%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

To what extent did the deliberations on the following substantive agenda items meet the expected outcomes as described below?	To a great extent (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Not at all (5)
g. Agenda item 10, Consideration of the future focus of the subprogramme <i>Expected outcome: Member States provide guidance on the focus of the short- and long-term work in the area of trade and investment, taking into account the programme direction and priorities outlined in the strategic framework for 2012-2013.</i>	5(31%)	5(31%)	3(19%)	(0%)	3(19%)
h. Agenda item 11, Consideration of the draft resolutions for submission to the Commission session at its sixty-eighth session <i>Expected outcome: Member States consider possible draft resolutions relating to trade and investment for consideration by the Commission at its sixty-eighth session.</i>	7(44%)	5(31%)	2(13%)	0(0%)	2(13%)
i. Agenda item 12, Dates, venue and provisional agenda for the third session of the Committee <i>Expected outcome: Member States are informed of the tentative dates, venue and provisional agenda of the third session of the Committee in 2013.</i>	6(38%)	3(19%)	2(13%)	(0%)	5(31%)
j. Agenda item 13, Other matters <i>Expected outcome: Member States decide on any other concerns related to the Committee on Trade and Investment</i>	2(13%)	4(25%)	3(19%)	(0%)	7(44%)

Committee's general terms of reference

To what extent did the Committee session succeed in addressing its terms of reference?	To a great extent (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Not at all (5)
a. Review and analyze regional trends.	8(50%)	5(31%)	2(13%)	(0%)	1(6%)
b. Identify priorities and emerging issues, particularly those with implications for the work of the secretariat.	6(38%)	8(50%)	2(13%)	(0%)	(0%)
c. Promote dialogue on regional and subregional approaches and an exchange of experiences on policies and programmes.	7(44%)	8(50%)	1(6%)	(0%)	(0%)
d. Promote a collaborative approach to addressing the development challenges at the regional and subregional levels.	5(31%)	9(56%)	1(6%)	(0%)	1(6%)

Participation

To what extent do you feel that...	To a great extent (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Not at all (5)
A. the Committee session was owned and driven by member States?	3(19%)	9(56%)	1(6%)	2(13%)	1(6%)
B. the overall outcome of the deliberations is a result of a collaborative effort by members of the Committee?	6(38%)	6(38%)	4(25%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
C. the draft report adequately reflects the discussions, decisions and recommendations of the Committee?	6(38%)	8(50%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	2(13%)
D. the secretariat's in-session interventions contributed to effective conduct and outcome of the session?	9(56%)	4(25%)	2(13%)	0(0%)	1(6%)

My delegation's attendance at the Committee session was:	
7 (44%)	mainly from the Capital
1 (6%)	mainly from the Capital – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
3 (19%)	mainly by representatives in Bangkok (Embassy)
5 (31%)	a combination of the above
0 (0%)	other:

Annex II

Questionnaire comments

What was the most relevant agenda item for your delegation?

- Agenda 5.
- Item 6, 7, 8, 9.
- Agenda item 9, 8, 5.
- Item 8.
- 4, 5, 7, 8, 9.
- Item 4, 5, 8, 9.
- Agenda 5, 8
- Facilitating Intraregional Trade
- All agendas were equally important.
- Trade Facilitation SMEs.
- Agenda item 7.
- Item 6 and 10
- Capturing trade and investment opportunity.

How can the Committee more effectively address its terms of reference (5 (a-d) above)?

- 1. Sending the agenda or putting the agenda and summary paper on the webpage before at least 5 days in advance. 2. Discussing on specific manner or SMART manner.
- Generally, exceptional well. Keep up the good work.
- Since the Committee meet only once in two years, a mid term review may be introduced.

Is there anything that could have been done to encourage higher and wider representation from your country at the Committee session?

- Travel cost bear by ESCAP may encourage Government representation.
- Relevancy of the issues.
- You should set the meeting for Parliamentary members, I think (and invite).
- This is Committee on trade and investment, so theme must/should the representation from Ministry of trade or commerce in regular basis.

What was the most successful feature of the Committee session?

- The way how the chairperson conduct the session. Time management, selection of panelist. Participation of delegation.
- I was interesting on item 5 on Facilitation Integration Trade and also item 6 on Promoting Trade and Investment in low carbon goods and services.
- The chairmanship is impressive.

- We could confirm that it was necessary to support SMEs to sustainable economic growth.
- The quality of the background documents – high. Good organization and arrangements.
- Interactive discussions.
- Presentation by the panel member and experts.
- is difficult to pin point just one feature.
- Trade trends and low carbon development.

What was the least successful feature of the Committee session?

- 1. The time for presentations by experts could be shortened and the time for discussion among delegations should be extended. 2 The speeches by some invited scholars were inane and out of date.
- Too many panelists, too little time for delegates to make interventions.
- Long and non-specific country statements. Sometime they were out of the track.
- Same as above (it is difficult to pin point just one feature).
- Trade agreements.

Please provide any additional comments you may have on the Committee session and further suggestions on how we may improve on secretariat preparations for and the servicing of future session:

- 1. Timely invitation. 2. Introduce outing programme. 3. Arrange cocktail party for introducing participants with each other.
- Please review the content of all materials used in the presentations by invited panelists, such as ppt. files, in accordance with UN's regulations and practice in order to avoid any inaccuracy.
- Pre-session documents uploaded in ESCAP website weeks prior to the CTI session. Less panelists, with wider perspectives/participation from developed countries.
- It will be more effective if the documents related to the session could be disseminated before the delegates leaving their capitals for the session.
- 1. Sometime panelist can't see the presentation. How to deal with this, just above the head is presentation. 2. Committee will have balance between theory and practice. 3. Others are best ESCAP especially TID may arrange training on "Trade Negotiation" which may help for all countries if possible.

Annex III
Qualitative Assessment of the substantive outcomes of the Committee session

	Agenda Item Expected outcome	Quantitative questionnaire response	Qualitative assessment based on a review of the draft report of the session
e. Agenda item 4, Capturing trade and investment opportunities in the new decade	Expected outcome: Member States gain an overview of the possible modalities to turn current global and regional economic challenges into opportunities for inter- and intraregional trade and investment in the decade ahead.	88% (14/16) agree to a great or good extent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expected outcome was met to a great extent. • The Committee noted that in order for countries to benefit from trade, policies had to be implemented to develop their productive capacities. Principles of fairness and equity had to be built into the multi-lateral trading system. • One delegation noted that the potential for trade and investment in climate-smart goods and in commercial services relied on the diversification of exports, transfer of technology, infrastructure development and upgrading standards in the agricultural sector, creating a conducive environment for the private sector and regional cooperation.
f. Agenda item 5, Facilitating intraregional trade	Expected outcome: Member States gain an overview of barriers to intraregional trade and the establishment of a regional network of trade facilitation experts, United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (UNNExT). Member States are also informed of the future direction and the focus, and adopt decisions	88% (N=13/14) agree to a great or good extent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expected outcome was met to a great extent. • The Committee expressed continuous support for the (UNNExT) and the annual Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum and Exhibition and asked the Secretariat to continue developing simple and practical guides for implementation of trade facilitation and paperless trade measures that were accessible to non-specialist

	on particular priority issues in this area.		<p>practitioners and policymakers in developing countries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee highlighted the difficulties exporters encountered in meeting regulatory requirements of trade partners countries and suggested common rules and standards to be developed and implemented to overcome those difficulties, like the need to develop market access at the subregional level. The Committee also suggested that ESCAP promote deeper regional cooperation through trade facilitation and in particular through transit facilitation.
g. Agenda item 6, Promoting trade and investment in low-carbon goods and services	Expected outcome: Member States discuss modalities and opportunities for promoting trade and investment in low-carbon or climate-smart goods, technologies and services and provide guidance on the role of ESCAP.	75% (N=12/16) agree to a great or good extent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expected outcome was met to a great extent. • The Committee agreed that trade and investment in low-carbon goods, services and technologies in particular renewable energy technologies could help countries mitigate and adapt to climate change but also recognised the productive capacity and technological constraints faced by developing countries in that regard. The Committee agreed that policies for industrial development, poverty reduction and environmental sustainability should not be mutually exclusive and that countries required policy space to address those issues as appropriate. • The Committee did not support the Secretariat's proposal for a regional trade and investment partnership or agreement for the mitigation and

			adaptation to climate change. The Committee emphasised the principles of cooperation in the area of trade and investment in low-carbon goods and services: (a) ensuring mutual benefits and duly recognizing the differing capacities of countries, (b) Striking a balance on the basis of common but differentiated responsibilities and (c) Bridging the development gap through cooperation among countries in research and development.
h. Agenda item 7, Transferring technology for inclusive and sustainable trade and investment	Expected outcome: Member States review the role and activities of APCTT and UNAPCAEM, provide guidance on their future direction and focus, and adopt decisions on particular priority issues in this area.	81% (N=13/16) agree to a great or good extent	<p>The expected outcomes were met to a great extent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee appreciated the Governing council of APCTT and some delegations noted that the planned work programme of APCTT in emerging technologies such as nanotechnology was useful and one delegation recommended that APCTT should incorporate research findings on practical issues faced in the area of technology transfer into its technology transfer capacity building work to ensure the sharing of best practices. • The Committee noted the need to change the name of UNAPCAEM to bring it in line with the current needs of development in the region. The Committee also noted that UNAPCAEM should consider the uniqueness of the topography and

			other country specific features when addressing agricultural technology needs.
i. Agenda item 8, Integrating small and medium-sized enterprises into the regional economy	Expected outcome: Member States are informed of the various implemented programmes to support the development of SMEs. Member States also gain an overview of new initiatives on promoting and facilitating FDI, in particular intraregional FDI.	100% (N=16/16) agree to a great or good extent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expected outcomes were met to a great extent. • The Committee considered the following issues (a) the status of the SME sector and its development (b) the emergence of global value chains and opportunities of SMEs(c) Policies and opportunities for the development of SMEs (d) the promotion and facilitation of intraregional foreign direct investment flows to less developed countries (e) the promotion of corporate social responsibility (f) ESCAP activities in the area of SME development and (g) Issues for consideration by the Committee. • In particular the Committee called for the strengthening of financial mechanisms for SMEs, including credit rating and credit guarantee mechanisms and export credit. The Committee recognising the important of foreign direct investment (FDI) in promoting the integration of SMEs into regional and global value chains, called for higher levels of intraregional investment and requested the Secretariat to pay due attention to the issue.

<p>j. Agenda item 9, Moving multilateral and regional trade and investment cooperation forward</p>	<p>Expected outcome: Member States review the state of RTAs in the region and the role of ESCAP in identifying modalities to move the multilateral and regional trade and investment regimes forward and in promoting their convergence towards an effective set of mutually complementary multilateral and regional trade and investment rules</p>	<p>94% (N=15/16) agree to a great or good extent</p>	<p>The Committee noted that although RTAs could be complementary to the multilateral trading system, there was scope for some degree of consolidation, the coverage of RTAs often extended beyond trade in goods to such areas as trade in services, competition, trade facilitation and investment and that they increasingly addressed behind-the – border obstacles to trade and enable the upgrading of regulatory institutions. The Committee called for the full integration of least developed countries and other disadvantaged economies into the multilateral trading system and a continued commitment to the Doha Negotiations and looked forward to the accession of the Russian Federation to WTO.</p>
<p>Agenda item 10, Consideration of the future focus of the subprogram</p>	<p>Member States consider provide guidance on the focus of the short-and long-term work in the area of trade and investment, taking into account the programme direction and priorities outlined in the strategic framework for 2012-2013</p>	<p>62% (N=10/16) agree to a great or good extent</p>	<p>The Committee considered the future focus of the subprogramme on trade and investment and considered proposals for implementation of the programme of work for the period 2012-2013 and took note of the proposals for inputs to the strategic framework for the period 2014-2015 in the context of the programmatic approach adopted by the Executive Secretary of ESCAP.</p>
<p>Agenda item 11, Consideration of the draft resolutions for submission to the Commission session at</p>	<p>Member States consider possible draft resolutions relating to trade and investment for consideration by the Commission at its sixty-eighth session.</p>	<p>75% (N=12/16) agree to a great or good extent</p>	<p>No resolutions were submitted for discussion by the Committee.</p>

its sixty-eighth session			
I). Agenda item 12, Dates , Venue and provisional agenda for the third session of the Committee in 2013	Member States are informed of the tentative dates, venue and provisional agenda of the third session of the Committee in 2013	57% (N=9/16) agree to a great or good extent	The Secretariat would in due course make a proposal on the dates, venue and provisional agenda for consideration by ACPR.
j). Agenda Item 13, Other matters	Member States decide on any other concern related to the Committee on Trade and Investment	38%(N=6/16)	No other matters were discussed.