

## Summary Assessment

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### **Committee on Trade and Investment, sixth session** **Bangkok** **13-15 March 2019**

#### **I. Introduction**

The Committee on Trade and Investment, sixth session was held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 13-15 March 2019.

A questionnaire assessing the relevance, effectiveness and quality of the meeting was distributed to each delegation of ESCAP members and associate members. In total, 18 of the 35 members and associate members in attendance submitted questionnaires. The overall response rate is therefore 51 per cent. The present assessment was prepared on the basis of these questionnaire responses.

The main purpose of this assessment is to support the secretariat's ongoing efforts to improve its servicing of session.

#### **II. Attendance**

The Committee on Trade and Investment was attended by 56 per cent of all ESCAP members and associate members (35 of 62). 23 of the delegations (66 per cent) were headed by officials from the respective capital. In total there were 107 individual participants, of whom 39 were female (36 per cent).

A number of other entities participated, including United Nations bodies and agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and observers. From these entities, there were 76 participants, of whom 27 were female (36 per cent). Therefore, the total number of participants from both governments and other entities is 183 individuals and the total number of female participants is 66 (36 per cent).

#### **III. Relevance of the session**

Respondents agreed that the agenda items reflected the present development trends and issues in the Asian and Pacific region. The respondents also rated positively on the committee's relevance to the needs and priorities of their countries/territories (See table 1).

There were some suggestions and comments on the relevance of the session:

- Clear information sharing – Expectations from delegates to be conveyed in advance in clear terms and probably in a format – Make clear what can be decided in the session.
- Find a way to have more information discussion following panel presentations – perhaps have key questions distributed in advance so that members are better prepared to engage.
- See how the discussions can be differentiated with those at the WTO.
- Conduct NTMs survey in my country so it would be more relevant to pacific countries whereas it was relevant to Asia Pacific.
- The session was well organized and there is no objection.
- As we expect these courses to help reduce no-tariff barriers, we have not been able to measure the effectiveness and effectiveness of these courses in practice. Therefore, I suggest that we draw up an operational checklist so that we can assess the common issues of the international community over time. Maybe we need to create many committees such as education and auditor.

**Table 1**

EVALUATED STATEMENT	INDEX (0-100) <sup>1</sup>
The agenda items reflected the present development trends/issues of the Asian and Pacific region.	79
The agenda items are relevant to the needs and priorities of my country/territory.	78

#### **IV. Effectiveness of the session**

The respondents rated positively regarding the session’s effectiveness in highlighting regional development trends and issues; in identifying priority areas and emerging issues in the region; in promoting dialogue on regional and subregional approaches to trade and investment; and that the session documents were of high quality, concise and clear. However, the respondents gave a slightly lower rating in addressing gender-related issues. (See table 2).

There were some suggestions and comments on the effectiveness of the session:

- Present outline of what is expected to be contributed by participants.
- To include each country in the session by participation and presentation.
- If the courses are a workshop and case studies, we think it will be more effective.

<sup>1</sup> Methodology, an index between 100 and 0 is given, whereby, at a value of 100, all respondents rate to a great extent to the statement, and, at a value of 0, all respondents rate to not at all.

Index = actual value of all aggregated responses - minimum value of all aggregated responses / maximum value of all aggregated responses - minimum value of all aggregated responses.

**Table 2**

EVALUATED STATEMENT	INDEX (0-100)
The session effectively highlighted regional development trends and issues.	81
The session effectively identified priority areas and emerging issues in the region.	76
The session effectively promoted dialogue on regional and subregional approaches to trade and investment.	73
The session effectively addressed gender-related issues.	66
The session documents were of high quality, concise and clear.	82

## V. Efficiency of the session

The respondents rated positively on the efficiency of the servicing by the secretariat and the time available for discussion during the session was also rated positive. The rating was slightly less on the communications to the member States on the preparations for the session. (Table 3).

There were some suggestions and comments on the efficiency of the organizational and servicing aspects of the session:

- I think it is great. My observation of things makes me feel good and happy about the way things are arranged.
- As this is my first time attending, I noted that whilst very good slides are presented during the meeting. What is missing for the advance dissemination is aspect at the end of the paper that clearly identifies simple issues for possible further discussion. The current recommendation section is a bit too broad especially if members are not fully apprised what the real issues are.
- To maximize the discussion and mingle time for all participants.
- If possible, to first identify the issues of the members and these problems will be prioritized.

**Table 3**

EVALUATED STATEMENT	INDEX (0-100)
The time available for discussion during the session was adequate.	80
The servicing by the secretariat was efficient and effective.	83
The communications from the secretariat to the member States on the preparations for the session were effective.	76

## VI. Other comments

The respondents indicated concrete actions that their government would take in response to the decisions and recommendations of the session included:

- At this point I cannot identify any actions. This is my first time attending the session and I need to understand the issues here more deeply.
- My view is that it would be more effective if the secretariat, who well-aware and very familiar with the content of the report, would be able to make sure that international organizations under the UN related to such matter/ content/ agenda will attend the committee such as WTO, UNCTAD.
- As this is the first time my Ministry is attend the CTI, I will unfortunately need to touch base with our Ministry of Foreign Affairs to assess how we will respond. With respect to ad hoc informal discussions, we will probably be supportive but as our resources are stretched, timing of such discussions should not be conflict with ASEAN RCEP and APEC meeting so as to increase probability of my government attendance at ESCAP CTI.
- Our government will revise the decisions and recommendations of the session in decision making with regard to navigating non-tariff measures towards sustainable development, rising protectionism, including trade wars, for regional trade and investment, promoting cross-border paperless trade in Asia and the Pacific, consider the future focus of the subprogramme on trade, investment and innovation in trade and investment and the strategic direction of the Committee on Trade and Investment.
- Our government has seek funding on the Laboratory in testing imported goods which is very weak at, but the feasibility study has been completed early this year January in order to protect the health, animal and plants from exported goods. The Trade Portal has been started this year funded by the UNCTAD to improve the export and import on the country status and requirements.
- We would like to express our commitment to ongoing participation in ESCAP activities related to the Framework Agreement.
- In accordance to the growing trend in service trade, Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute is paying more attention in promoting service trade, especially Macao is the Commercial and Trade Cooperation Service Platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries.
- 1-correction the procedures of conformity assessment 2- reduction the (NTMs) 3- education our employees and private sectors about these issues 4- Implement decisions as much as possible

## VII. Conclusion

Overall, in conclusion, responding delegations agreed that the sixth session of the Committee on Trade and Investment was successful.

The session was generally seen as relevant to the needs of the region. The effectiveness of the session was seen to be positive in highlighting regional development trends and issues. The session documents were also of high quality, concise and clear. The efficiency of the session also received positive feedback, especially in the servicing by the secretariat

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