

**OFFICE OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED  
COUNTRIES, LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND SMALL  
ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES**

**Report of the Inter-agency Meeting on the International Ministerial Meeting of  
Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and  
International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport  
Cooperation**

**Held at the United Nations headquarters, New York  
5 June 2002**

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## I. Introduction

1. The Inter-agency Meeting on the International Ministerial Meeting of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation to be held in 2003 (Ministerial Meeting), was held on June 5, 2002 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.
2. Mr. Anwarul K. Chowdhury, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, chaired the Inter-agency Meeting.
3. The following documents were made available to the Inter-agency Meeting: Note prepared by the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States on the Ministerial Meeting; General Assembly Resolution 56/180; Report to the 56<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly on the specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of Landlocked Developing Countries (A/ 56/427); Letter of Chairman of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries addressed to the Secretary General of the United Nations (A/56/865).

## II. Opening Statements

4. Opening the Inter-agency meeting, **Mr. Anwarul K. Chowdhury, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States** welcomed the representatives of UN agencies and regional commissions, members of the Bureau of the Fifth Meeting of Governmental Experts of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Representatives of Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions. He particularly welcomed the large attendance of the UN entities and specially thanked ECA, ESCAP, UNCTAD and the World Bank for sending representatives from their respective headquarters.
5. **Mr. Patrizio Civilli, Assistant Secretary-General, Secretary of CEB**, called attention to the emphasis that the General Assembly resolution on convening the Ministerial Meeting had placed on the involvement of all major -- global, regional and sub-regional-- institutional and other stake-holders, including the private sector. The agenda of the Ministerial Meeting was very broad, covering infrastructure development; the creation of an enabling environment, particularly regulatory frameworks that maximize efficiency and are geared to attracting FDIs as well as investments in managerial expertise; and human capacity building. Creating the right synergies among these factors to ensure sustainable progress was the main challenge not only for national policies but also for international cooperation and for the support to be provided by the UN system. The Ministerial Meeting offered a unique opportunity for the system to effectively contribute to the achievement of a specific set of inter-related objectives around which it could easily unite and which was not beyond its means to substantially advance. Some UN Agencies have specific contributions to make to infrastructure development and capacity building. Others could play equally crucial roles in terms of advocacy or investment promotion. No single Agency has the capacity alone to make the crucial difference. But, together, the organizations of the system have the mix of

capacities required to make a major contribution to advancing the objectives of the Ministerial Meeting. The renewed unity of purpose that now characterizes the work of CEB augurs very well for the success of this effort. Equally, within each Agency, the task of the official who will serve as focal point in this process should be to harness the various capacities available throughout the Agency in support of the objectives of the Ministerial Meeting.

6. Introducing the substantive issues before the Ministerial Meeting, **Mr. Chowdhury, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States** said that the Ministerial Meeting was expected to be a landmark event for the cause of the Landlocked Developing Countries. The purpose of the Inter-agency meeting was to have consultations on the conceptual framework and organizational aspects of the Ministerial Meeting in order to chart out our common strategy for its preparation and to launch the UN Secretariat level preparations. He said that he initiated the consultations during his recent mission to Geneva, Brussels and Addis Ababa. He had useful exchange of views on this issue with the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, Executive Secretary of the ECA as well as with the European Commission.

7 He said that the international community was fully aware of the long and vigorous efforts made by landlocked countries to ensure their unfettered access to the sea and establish efficient transit systems. The particular needs and problems of the landlocked developing countries have become a matter of concern to a large number of countries, including their transit neighbours. The decision by the General Assembly to convene the Ministerial Meeting is an important achievement for this group of countries to place their issue higher on the international development agenda. He pointed out that the establishment of efficient transit transport systems could only be achieved through constructive dialogue and collaboration among landlocked developing countries and their transit neighbours with the support of their development partners. It was also true that efficient transit systems and lasting solution to the problems of landlocked developing countries could be established at the sub-regional and regional levels. He said that the Ministerial Meeting should be seen as a joint undertaking and common rallying point for Governments of landlocked and transit developing countries and donor countries, as well as UN agencies and other relevant international, regional and sub-regional organizations. They should have the ownership of the preparatory process and outcome of the Ministerial Meeting. Therefore, all relevant players should be involved in the preparatory process from the very beginning. Each organization should take a lead in the area where it has the relevant mandate and comparative advantage. Well-coordinated and well-planned preparations should be carried out in order to arrive at specific and action-oriented outcomes, the implementation of which would lead to tangible and measurable progress. He said that the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) was prepared to take the responsibility for the overall coordination of the preparation and organization of the Ministerial Meeting, in close cooperation with the relevant agencies, particularly with UNCTAD. He announced that this Inter-agency Meeting constituted the launching of the United Nations Secretariat level preparatory process for the Ministerial Meeting.

8. Speaking as the Chairman of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, **His Excellency Mr. Alounkeo Kittikoun, the Permanent Representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic** said that his Group strongly believed that the Ministerial Meeting should contribute to the speedy attainment by the landlocked developing countries of the United Nations goals and targets on poverty eradication, sustainable development and their effective participation in the world economy. The Ministerial Meeting should adopt a global programme of action. Its outcome would be judged against its success in generating high visibility to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries, building up a global consensus on policies and measures to establish efficient transit systems, and mobilize strong international support to landlocked developing countries and their transit neighbours in achieving the above objectives.

9. He also emphasized the need, from the beginning to ensure full involvement of all relevant actors in their respective mandates in order to enable them to carry out their respective responsibilities for the preparation of the Ministerial Meeting and to fulfill relevant commitments arising from it. He called the agencies to appoint a focal point for the Ministerial Meeting at a senior level. He said that sub-regional and regional meetings should formulate regional and sub-regional agreed measures with a view to improving transit systems, including infrastructure development and trade facilitation measures, as well as “deliverables” on concrete sub-regional projects and initiatives. The sub-regional meetings should be linked with the regional initiatives. He said the Group of landlocked developing countries welcomed the establishment of the Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States with renewed hope and satisfaction. He welcomed the appointment of Mr. Anwarul Chowdhury, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. He expressed his belief that OHRLLS will maximize the synergies and complementarities in implementing specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of land locked developing countries. In this respect, he welcomed the efforts undertaken by the OHRLLS to revitalize work related to landlocked developing countries.

10. He said the OHRLLS should be responsible for providing the overall coordination, advocacy and political support for the preparation and organization of the Ministerial Meeting. The substantive and technical resources of UNCTAD should be fully utilized. The World Bank and the regional development banks and regional commissions should also make active contribution to the preparatory process whereas participation of other relevant organizations such as WCO, WTO, ITC, ITU was also very important. He stressed the importance of mobilizing adequate extra-budgetary resources to support the preparatory activities and facilitate the participation of representatives of landlocked developing countries and their transit developing partners at the Ministerial Meeting and its preparatory meetings including those at the sub-regional and regional levels. To this end, he urged the Secretary-General of the United Nations, with the support of the Office of the High Representative and in close cooperation with UNCTAD, to launch a strong campaign for resource mobilization.

11. Speaking on behalf of H.E. Mr. Yukio Satoh, Permanent Representative of Japan to the

United Nations, Chairman of the Fifth Meeting of Governmental Experts of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Representatives of Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions, **His Excellency Mr. Yoshiyuki Motomura, Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations**, said that Japan paid special attention to geographically disadvantaged countries, such as landlocked developing countries. The purpose of the 2003 Ministerial Meeting was to formulate appropriate policy measures and action-oriented programmes aimed at developing efficient transit systems. He believed it would serve as a good opportunity for landlocked and transit developing nations to share their knowledge of development, and to learn from the experience of their fellow states. Highlighting the outcome of the Fifth Meeting of governmental experts, he said that the intergovernmental expert meetings underlined the importance of transport for development process, and it was generally recognized that most landlocked and transit countries were themselves developing nations and face serious economic problems, including inadequate transit transport infrastructure. It was recommended that governments should give high priority to the transport sector, and implement transit transport cooperation through bilateral and regional agreements in order to simplify, harmonize and standardize transport procedures. Great importance was also attached to the elimination of non-physical barriers such as regulatory problems, high tariffs, problematic border posts, and inefficient transport management. An increase in financial and technical assistance from donor countries, UNDP, and multilateral financial and development institutions was seen as a crucial step towards building and maintaining transport infrastructures/facilities. Finally, it was also suggested that a holistic approach be taken to the transit transport issue, including physical, policy, procedural and institutional considerations. He also underlined that landlocked nations were not yet in a position to fully reap benefits from the process of globalization. This situation was largely due to the high cost of transportation, which increased the risk of marginalization and placed constraints on the overall socio-economic development of landlocked nations.

### **III. Exchange of views on the issues related to the Ministerial Meeting**

12. The **representative of UNCTAD** stressed that mobilization of extra-budgetary resources was crucial to the success of the Ministerial Meeting. While emphasizing the importance of sub-regional and regional level preparations, he said that it was best to organize sub-regional meetings in their respective sub-regions to facilitate active involvement of all stakeholders at the sub-regional level. However, in view of the resources constraints, the UNCTAD secretariat could go along with suggestions to organize these meetings in the headquarters of the regional commissions to benefit from the existing mechanisms and initiatives. He also pointed out that the private sector should be seriously consulted as an important stakeholder, not “as a matter of courtesy as it was before”.

13. The **representative of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)** informed of efforts undertaken by his organization to develop viable transport sector in the African continent. In this context, he mentioned the outcome of the second and final review of the Second United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa. In particular, he pointed out “the Way forward” adopted by the meeting of Transport Ministers of Africa. He also referred to the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), which contained important elements of infrastructure development. While emphasizing the importance of the

Ministerial Meeting for African landlocked and transit developing countries, he expressed the flexibility of the ECA in terms of modalities of the sub-regional and regional level preparations. He said that ECA was prepared to organize a regional meeting as part of the preparatory process for the Ministerial Meeting. In this respect, he emphasized the need for extra-budgetary resources since these meetings have not been budgeted in the current programme budget.

14. The **representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** expressed the commitment of her organization to participate in the preparatory process both at headquarters and the field office levels. She informed that the UNDP Office in Kazakhstan was fully aware of the Ministerial Meeting and stood ready to provide necessary logistical and other support to the host Government. She emphasized the need to work within the existing transport development initiatives in the landlocked developing countries such as the regional project on transport and border crossing in Central Asia jointly implemented by UNDP, ECE and ESCAP. She also mentioned of a three-year project launched by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in the area of trade and transport. She also mentioned the need to give special attention to Afghanistan.

15. The **representative of the International Labour Organization** said his organization has undertaken studies on urban transport systems in the framework of the First and Second UN Transport and Communications Decade in Africa. He also mentioned that the ILO tripartite consultations involving workers, governments and employers could be used as a modality to involve all stakeholders in the preparatory process for the Ministerial meeting.

16. The **representative from the World Bank** said that the Bank's global facilitation partnership could serve as a building block in the preparatory process for the Ministerial Meeting. He said technical assistance and infrastructure development financing alone might not solve the problems faced by landlocked developing countries. He suggested that the Ministerial Meeting should consider setting some form of standard in transit services. He said that such standard would help both landlocked and transit developing countries.

17. The **representative of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs** mentioned the need for fully utilizing existing initiatives and mechanisms in addressing the specific needs and problems of landlocked developing countries. In particular, she mentioned NEPAD. She also emphasized the importance of deliverables, such as specific projects and programmes designed to improve transit transport systems.

18. The **representative of United Nations Human Settlements Programme** expressed the willingness of her organization to provide technical support with regard to transport infrastructure.

19. Speaking on behalf of both the ECE and ESCAP, the **representative of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)** informed of ESCAP work in the area of transport and trade facilitation. In this context, she mentioned of the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway initiatives. These programmes have relevant

components of transit systems, which would link landlocked developing countries with regional transport and communication network. She said that the forthcoming annual meeting of the Special Body of ESCAP might be an appropriate forum to consider the issues related to the Asia Pacific regional level preparations for the Ministerial Meeting.

#### **IV. Summary of the Chairman**

20. In his summing up, the Chairman highlighted the following aspects:

- a. It was evident that the establishment of efficient transit systems is widely considered to be an area where the United Nations could bring a tangible and measurable progress. The Ministerial Meeting should be seen as a UN system-wide joint undertaking with the purpose of fashioning a new action agenda to develop efficient transit systems in various regions of the world. Consequently, efforts will be made to ensure that UN entities and other relevant organizations have a sense of ownership of the preparatory process as well as the outcome of the Ministerial Meeting. In this respect, the importance of establishing a mechanism of focal points in the relevant UN entities, regional commissions and international financial and development institutions was emphasized.
- b. The preparatory process should be designed in such a way that it would achieve the expected outcome with minimum resources. Sub-regional and regional level preparations should deserve special attention. The existing intergovernmental mechanisms and initiatives at the sub-regional and regional levels should be utilized as fully as possible. The regional commissions are expected to take a lead in this process with the support of the OHRLLS, and the UNCTAD Secretariat.
- c. The importance of the mobilization of voluntary resources was widely emphasized. The resources mobilization should start as soon as possible.
- d. The Ministerial Meeting must be built on well-coordinated and well-planned preparatory work. The Office of the High Representative would assume the responsibility for overall coordination for the preparation and organization of the Ministerial Meeting in close cooperation with all relevant UN agencies and the regional commissions, particularly with the UNCTAD Secretariat. The UNCTAD Secretariat, the regional commissions, the World Bank would take a lead in substantive and technical preparations for the Ministerial meeting. The UNDP will extend cooperation and support at the headquarters and field levels, as appropriate.

**Attendance**

**Invitees**

1. H.E. Mr. Alounkeo Kittikhoun  
Permanent Representative of Lao People's Democratic Republic to the United Nations; Chairman of the Group of LLDCs and Vice-Chairman of the Fifth Meeting of Governmental Experts on Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Representatives of Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions.
2. H.E. Mr. Mwelwa Musambachime  
Permanent Representative of Zambia to the United Nations; Vice-Chairman of the Fifth Meeting of Governmental Experts on Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Representatives of Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions.
3. Mr. Yoshiyuki Motomura  
Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations; representing Chairman of the Fifth Meeting of Governmental Experts on Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Representatives of Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions.
4. Mr. Mischeck Muchetwa  
Deputy Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe to the United Nations, representing Rapporteur of the Fifth Meeting of Governmental Experts on Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Representatives of Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions.
5. Mr. Sidney L. Romeir  
Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations, representing Vice Chairman of the Fifth Meeting of Governmental Experts on Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Representatives of Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions.

**Agencies**

6. The Secretariat of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination
7. Economic Commission for Africa
8. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
9. Food and Agriculture Organization
10. International Labour Organization
11. Liaison Office for Regional Commissions in New York
12. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

13. United Nations Development Programme
14. United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
15. United Nations Environment Programme
16. United Nations Industrial Development Organization
17. United Nations Human Settlements Programme
18. The World Bank
19. World Food Programme
  
20. Department of Economic & Social Affairs
21. Department of Public Information
22. Office of Legal Affairs/Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea