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NOTIFICATION

Short courses on key international economic issues for delegates from permanent missions in Geneva First semester 2008

Following the successful experience in 2007, the UNCTAD secretariat is pleased to announce a series of short courses on key international economic issues for delegates and staff from permanent missions in Geneva for the first half of 2008.

The aim is to give permanent missions an opportunity to follow a shorter, more focused version of the regional three-week course on key issues on the international economic agenda. Delegates attending the course will become better acquainted with the most topical issues in the main areas of UNCTAD's work. More detailed information on the content and schedule of individual courses can be found in the attached programme.

The secretariat has planned three courses, to be held on Friday 29 February, Friday 28 March and Friday 27 June 2008 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Palais des Nations (rooms to be announced at a later stage).

The courses will be delivered in English, with simultaneous interpretation into French.

The secretariat invites permanent missions to nominate staff members who follow both UNCTAD and WTO matters in Geneva to attend one of the courses, using the attached application form, which should be submitted at least one week before the date of the course. The courses will begin promptly at 10 p.m. to allow sufficient time for debate after the presentations.

Any queries about the programme should be addressed to:

Ms. Vlasta Macku, *e-mail*: vlasta.macku@unctad.org; *tel*: 022 917 6227 or
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Supachai Panitchpakdi
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

18 January 2008

Short courses on key international economic issues

First semester 2008

Programme

29 February 2008: Trade and environment

The presentation will focus on contemporary issues that are being debated within WTO and the United Nations. It will examine the interplay between environmental, health and safety requirements, on the one hand, and, on the other, market access for developing countries. It will also look at the importance of private standards for market access. The liberalization of trade in environmental goods and services will be illustrated and the role of organic agriculture as a dynamic economic and export sector, and its role in pro-poor agricultural development, will be highlighted.

Delivered by: Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities

28 March 2008: Explaining the capital flow paradox

The presentation aims to provide explanations for the capital flow paradox, examining factors both in the international environment for development (the United States current account deficit, growth and productivity dynamics in some large developing countries, commodity price developments, and changed behaviour of international investors) and in national macroeconomic and financial policies (shifts in monetary strategies, foreign borrowing, exchange-rate management, reserve accumulation in middle-income countries, and reduced official borrowing of low-income countries). It will analyse the relative importance of national and international factors in explaining changes in different groups of countries. With regard to official flows, it will highlight the fact that multilateral financing has not contributed to net financing of developing countries over many years, as net transfers at the IBRD and IMF have been negative and developing countries are increasingly shying away from borrowing from these sources on account of cumbersome conditionalities and other factors.

Delivered by: Division on Globalization and Development Strategies

27 June 2008: SMEs in the global value chain

In the new global economy, companies now have the ability to source products and services from a variety of vendors at various stages of their operations. “Global value chains” refer to the interrelated production activities performed by firms at different geographic locations. Although several aspects of global value chains are now largely understood, notably its main drivers and governance structure, their impact on SMEs in both developed and developing countries has not yet been thoroughly researched. A recent project conducted by UNCTAD, OECD and the universities of Fribourg and Geneva entitled “Enhancing the role of SMEs in global value chains” aims to shed light on these issues. Based on the findings of case studies, the session will contribute towards raising awareness and sharing best practices on policies that favour the integration of SMEs into global value chains.

Delivered by: Division on Investment, Technology and Enterprise Development