

Pre-UNCTAD XII Civil Society Forum in Asia
Hanoi, Vietnam, 6-7 March 2008

Objective

Given the forthcoming quadrennial meeting of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XII) to be held in Accra, Ghana on 20-25 April 2008, this event, held under the project on Linkages between Trade, Development and Poverty Reduction (TDP), seeks to formulate a set of key messages to be fed into the UNCTAD XII.

Background

CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment (CUTS CITEE) is implementing a project on issues of linkages between trade, development and poverty reduction over a period of four years (January 2005 to December 2008). It is supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands and Department for International Development, UK. It manifests the policy relevance of international trade on poverty reduction and thus, helps in articulating policy coherence (in particular between the international trading system and national development strategies).

The project looks into the aspects of coherence that different stakeholders and departments need to accomplish in order to establish a positive linkage between trade and development, especially from the perspective of poverty reduction. The outcome of project will contribute to the policy debate for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, particularly examining, the aspects of partnership between the different stakeholders to achieve the MDGs.

Context

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's mandate is to promote development-friendly integration of developing countries into the world economy. It is a forum for inter-governmental deliberations, undertakes research, policy analysis and data collection and provides technical assistance. UNCTAD recognises that civil society plays an important role in efforts to achieve sustainable human development and alleviate poverty. Dialogue and interaction with civil society organisations (CSOs) promote UNCTAD's development role, impact and effectiveness.

The theme of UNCTAD XII is "addressing opportunities and challenges of globalisation for development". Four sub-themes are:

- Enhancing coherence at all levels for sustainable economic development and poverty reduction in global policy making, including the contribution of regional approaches;
- Key trade and development issues and the new realities in the geography of the world economy;
- Enhancing the enabling environment at all levels to strengthen productive capacity, trade and investment: mobilising resources and harnessing knowledge for development; and
- Strengthening UNCTAD – enhancing its development role, impact, and institutional effectiveness.

Agenda

Other than four thematic sessions on the sub-themes of UNCTAD XII meeting, the participants will be divided into four groups to discuss these issues at length and formulate recommendations to be placed in UNCTAD XII.

Expected Outcome

A set of key messages will be consolidated for discussion at the Civil Society Forum, which will be held during UNCTAD XII. Following that they will be submitted to the UNCTAD.

Participants

Participants will include civil society organisations, business associations, media, academics, government officials, representatives from international and inter-governmental organisations and the donor community.