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ASSOCIATIONS' AFFAIRS

REMINDER - FIATA World Congress 2018

The 2018 FIATA World Congress has been launched. India, fourth largest economy in the world is looking forward for the FIATA World Congress 2018 to offer its take on purchasing power. FIATA World Congress 2018 shall take place in the capital city of New Delhi, (Aerocity) at Pullman Hotel from the 26th - 29th September, 2018.

Federation of Freight Forwarders' Associations in India (FFFAI) has already begun assembling a diverse agenda full of engaging policy topics and interesting night activities.

For more details please visit: <http://www.fiata2018.org/index.php>

REMINDER - Participate in the 2017/2018 Logistics Performance Index (LPI) Survey

The World Bank wants to hear from FIATA's members as part of the ongoing LPI 2017/8 survey. The LPI is based on a survey among international freight forwarders who share their experience in moving goods and organizing international supply chains for their customers. FIATA is the World Bank's most important partner in the LPI survey and it is thanks to the participation of FIATA's members that the LPI can be published every two years.

If you are working at a freight forwarding company dealing with international shipments, we cordially invite you to take the survey at <https://lpiurvey2018.worldbank.org/?comp=FEE>

Completing the survey should only take around 20 minutes. The survey does not seek any confidential company-specific information. Responses are anonymous. All responses are kept confidential and anonymous.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Saudi Arabia's Big Logistics Play

Saudi Arabia is wasting no time in diversifying its economy away from oil by embarking on an ambitious path to become the go-to logistics hub for the region. The Kingdom plans to exploit its natural advantages-economic strength and central location-to compete for a piece of the global logistics market, predicted to reach \$15.5 trillion by 2024.

Early efforts are encouraging, including reducing average declaration clearance times at Saudi seaports to just 2.2 days and at airports to just 1.2 days. KSA's long-term logistics strategy, part of "Vision 2030," is to improve processes, infrastructure, governance, and regulatory systems, while opening markets and encouraging privatization.

For more details please visit: <https://www.mot.gov.sa/en-us/AboutUs/Pages/KSALogisticHub.aspx>

WTO - New Initiatives on Electronic Commerce, Investment Facilitation and MSMEs

Three proponent groups announced new initiatives to advance talks at the WTO on the issues of electronic commerce, investment facilitation and micro, small and medium size enterprises (MSMEs). The announcements were made on 13 December during the final day of the WTO's 11th Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires.

Seventy-one members said they would initiate exploratory work towards future WTO negotiations on trade-related aspects of electronic commerce, with participation open to all WTO members. Proponents said a first meeting will be held in the first quarter of 2018. Together, the group accounts for around 77 per cent of global trade. For more details please visit:

https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news17_e/minis_13dec17_e.htm

WCO Promotes Digital Customs and Knowledge Management in Budapest, Hungary

WCO participated in the Customs-Tax Conference on "Innovation, Digitalization, Knowledge Management" in Budapest, Hungary on 22 and 23 November 2017. 120 Participants from twelve neighbouring countries participated in the Conference.

WCO suggested that in addition to the development of ICT capabilities, Customs and Tax organizations should develop the capacity of the people through knowledge management. The use of ICT could enable the implementation of modern risk management, big-data analytics and digital interoperability.

For more details please visit: <http://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2017/december/the-wco-promotes-digital-customs.aspx>

WCO and GCC Sign a Memorandum of Understanding

The Secretary General of the World Customs Organization (WCO), Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, and the Secretary General of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC), H.E. Dr. Abdullatif Bin Rashid Alzayani, signed on Friday 15 December 2017 a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at the WCO Headquarters in Brussels to enhance cooperation based on mutual support.

This agreement is aimed at enhancing their cooperation and consultation mechanisms on matters of common interest in order to coordinate their efforts on trade facilitation and improvement of Customs regulations each within their own competence, as well as to enhance regional integration and economic development. Read more:

<http://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2017/december/wco-and-gcc-sign-a-memorandum-of-understanding.aspx>

UNECA - Update On the Continental Free Trade Area Negotiations

In 2012, the African Union Summit made a decision on boosting intra-African trade and fast-tracking the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA). To achieve the objective, the decision provided that the CFTA negotiations were to be tentatively completed by 2017.

After several rounds of discussion, during the 8th meeting of the CFTA-NF and 4th meeting of the STO, the framework agreement of the CFTA and the protocol on trade in services were recommended for adoption by the African Ministers of Trade (AMOT). The latter endorsed the recommendation. The AMOT also tasked the negotiating institutions to complete the outstanding negotiations on trade in goods and on dispute settlement by March 2018. Read more at: <https://www.uneca.org/stories/update-progress-being-made-continental-free-trade-area-negotiations>

ICAO - Priorities and Targets in New ICAO Global Aviation Security Plan

ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu welcomed the endorsement yesterday of a new Asia and Pacific (APAC) Aviation Security Roadmap, one which will now align national and regional programmes and targets with the UN aviation agency's new Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP).

The GASeP includes an ambitious framework for enhancing international aviation security over the coming years, and through the 32 actions and 94 tasks identified in its Roadmap, the aviation security community will now be much better prepared and more effectively aligned with Security Council Resolution 2309.

To read more please visit:

<https://www.icao.int/Pages/PageNotFound.aspx?requestUrl=https://www.icao.int/Newsroom/Pages/Priorities-and-targets-in-new-%20ICAO-Global-Aviation-Security-Plan-endorsed-by-Asia-and-Pacific-States-.aspx>

Egypt: New E-commerce Strategy Aims to Double Online Businesses

Egypt launched its new e-commerce strategy in the presence of President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi during Cairo ICT 2017 - a trade fair for information and communications technology (ICT) organized in North Africa's most populous city. <http://unctad.org/en/pages/PublicationWebflyer.aspx?publicationid=1956>

The ancient nation has the potential to be one of the Arab-speaking world's biggest e-commerce markets. Some 60% of the population is aged under 30 and increasingly tech savvy. And more than one-third of the country's 90 million inhabitants is connected to the Internet.

To read more please visit:

http://unctad.org/en/pages/newsdetails.aspx?OriginalVersionID=1649&Sitemap_x0020_Taxon%20omy=UNCTAD%20Home;#1450;#Technology

Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) Makes Further Steps in Implementing Single Window

The Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) made further steps on 7-8 December in its broad initiative on Single Window implementation in the Eurasian Economic Union - whose members include Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and the Russian Federation - at an international conference on cross-border paperless trade called "Single Window in the Context of the New Technological Wave".

UNESCAP, through a Russian-funded project, and UNECE assisted the organization of this conference, hosted by the Moscow State University Lomonosov.

To read more please visit: <https://www.unece.org/info/media/news/trade/2017/the-eurasian-economic-union-eeu-makes-further-steps-in-implementing-single-window-with-support-from-unece-and-escap/doc.html>

SUSTAINABLE LOGISTICS & CONNECTIVITY

ESCAP and COMSATS Sign Agreement Promoting Advances in SDGs

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the South (COMSATS) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Islamabad, Pakistan to promote science, technology and

innovation (STI) as a key means of implementation to meet the ambitions of the Sustainable Development Goals.

For more details please visit: <http://www.unescap.org/news/escap-and-comsats-sign-agreement-promoting-science-technology-and-innovation-advance>

UNESCAP - First Asia-Pacific Climate Week

Finance and sector ministers and high-level officials from more than 30 countries in Asia-Pacific joined private sector leaders to identify ways to scale up climate action and find innovative financing solutions for the transition to low-carbon, climate-resilient economies.

Participants at the three-day event, organized by ESCAP, in partnership with UNFCCC, UNDP, UNEP-DTU, ADB, IETA, IGES, and TGO, also underscored the need to provide low-income, climate vulnerable countries with targeted international support to access capital markets, in order to finance the transition to low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development through enhanced regional collaboration and awareness-raising.

Read more at: <http://www.unescap.org/news/first-asia-pacific-climate-week-brings-together-governments-and-private-sector-scale-climate>

UNCTAD - Trade is the Missing Element in Climate Change Response

Trade is the missing element in the policies that countries are devising to reduce greenhouse gases and bolster preparedness for the economic effects of climate change, UNCTAD Deputy Secretary-General Isabelle Durant said at event during the World Trade Organization's Eleventh Ministerial Conference (MC11) in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

But better data and analysis is required to make the link between trade policies and emissions-curbing plans, which under the globally agreed Paris Agreement are known as nationally determined contributions, Ms. Durant said. http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9485.php

To read more please visit: http://unctad.org/en/pages/newsdetails.aspx?OriginalVersionID=1644&Sitemap_x0020_Taxon%20om y=UNCTAD%20at%20MC11;#20;#UNCTAD

UNECE Supports Countries' Sustainable Transport Transition

Transport can be a powerful driver of sustainable development, but this requires balancing its economic and social value with environmental and health considerations. In order to help meet this challenge, UNECE's Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs) assist countries in taking an integrated approach to promoting sustainable transport systems, addressing a broad range of transport-related development issues and identifying possible solutions. <https://www.unece.org/env/epr.html>

Countries unanimously identified sustainable transport as a prerequisite to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in a cross-cutting manner. Given the central role of transportation in contemporary society, countries recognized the importance of ensuring the active participation of actors in all areas and at all levels in this transition.

To read more please visit: <https://www.unece.org/info/media/news/environment/2017/unece-supports-countries-sustainable-transport-transition-through-environmental-performance-reviews/doc.html>

UNFCCC - Efforts to Promote Sustainable Transport Gain Momentum at COP23

UITP signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UN Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the International Union of Railways (UIC) to advance sustainable public transport options such as

the clean shuttle bus service, underscoring the benefits of investing in low carbon solutions and creating infrastructure for sustainable public transport.

"We can take the opportunity to fight climate change or lose it and with the UITP Declaration, the public transport sector is here to work with the Parties to help the development and implementation of low carbon solutions with quality public transport. That will be the key to meeting the two-degree goal," said Alain Flausch, UITP Secretary General.

To read more please visit: <https://cop23.unfccc.int/news/efforts-to-promote-sustainable-transport-gain-momentum-at-cop23>

UNFCCC - China to Launch World's Largest Emissions Trading System

China has detailed plans for the world's largest emissions trading system covering more than 1,700 power companies and 3 billion tonnes in total greenhouse gas emissions. The market will be set up to "control and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote green low-carbon development," said National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) Deputy Director Zhang Yong at a press conference in Beijing.

Trading will begin after a period of "preparatory work" and will "gradually expand market coverage" to include "other high-energy-consuming and high-emission industries," said Li Gao, Director, Climate Department, NDRC.

To read more please visit: <https://cop23.unfccc.int/news/china-to-launch-world-s-largest-emissions-trading-system>