

**Launching of the UN-CEB Trade and Productive Sectors Cluster
Accra, Ghana, 20 April 2008**

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Your Excellency, UN Secretary-General Mr. Ban,
Your Excellency, UNCTAD Secretary-General Dr. Supachai,
Distinguished Heads of other UN Organizations,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to join you all today on behalf of our Director-General, Dr. Kandeh Yumkella, who has asked me to convey his sincere regrets at not being here. Indeed, he is currently traveling to strengthen the UN system's collective response to another major global challenge – energy and climate change – in his capacity as Chair of UN Energy.

On his behalf, I would like to express UNIDO's gratitude to Dr. Supachai for his leadership in forming the Trade and Productive Sectors Cluster and for bringing us together today around this vitally important theme. UNIDO fully embraces this initiative and commits its technical capacities to support its effective implementation.

This Cluster is our common effort to bring the collective expertise of the UN system to bear on an important development challenge: Making Trade Work for the Poor. We all know that in recent years, there has been a sharp increase in manufactured exports of developing countries. Collectively, they now account for 32% of the world total. However, we also observe that most of this increase keeps occurring in a handful of fast-growing, mostly Asian countries, thus creating a growing industrial divide.

The vast majority of developing countries, and certainly the Least Developed Countries, are in need of targeted support: from developing private sector supply capacities that can produce high-quality exportable goods; to ensuring conformity to the requirements of ever more competitive markets; to actually entering into world markets through efficient transport, customs, and marketing systems. In a nutshell: developing countries need to compete, to conform and to connect.

Without any doubt, the UN system can provide all the specialized services it takes to rise to this challenge. What has been lacking is precisely the coherence and coordination to bring these services to bear in a way that would generate synergies and would allow developing countries to easily access a consolidated support package.

Bridging this gap has been the rationale for us in UNIDO, to put together the “Trade Capacity Building Inter-agency Resource Guide”. This Resource Guide is designed especially for UN Country Teams who want to deliver targeted trade support.

UNIDO itself is currently engaged in four activities in this Cluster: the joint training of RCs on trade issues, and joint programme development in Albania, Cape Verde and Viet Nam. It is noteworthy that UNIDO, in leading the joint programme in Viet Nam as a resident UN agency, has served as a conduit for the participation of both UNCTAD and ITC as non-resident agencies.

In conclusion, UNIDO welcomes the renewed spirit of cooperation, coherence and reform in the UN system and the leadership of UNCTAD in the Trade and Productive Sectors Cluster. We see the launch of this Cluster as a clear manifestation of what the UN Deputy Secretary-General underlined in her summary of the recent GA debate on the MDGs: “the return of the growth agenda to the development discourse”.