



**Economic and Social
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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE “REDUCING BARRIERS TO
ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ENCOURAGING ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT:
POLICY OPTIONS”**

to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, 18-19 June 2007

INFORMATION NOTICE

Note by the Secretariat

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In accordance with the decisions* taken by the Economic Commission for Europe Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration at its first session held in Geneva on the 27-28 September 2006, the international conference on the above topic will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 18 to 19 June 2007.

2. This information notice gives details regarding the objectives, organization and participation in the International Conference “Reducing Barriers to Entrepreneurship and Encouraging Enterprise Development: Policy Options”, organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe at the Palais des Nations, Geneva (Switzerland) on 18 and 19 June 2007.

* ECE/CECI/2006/6, Annex II, Thematic area B.

3. Entrepreneurship can be defined as the stream of decisions related to profit-oriented economic activities undertaken under the conditions of risk and uncertainty. Entrepreneurship is closely related to innovation because entrepreneurs often aim to discover or introduce new products, new technologies to produce these products, new combinations of the factors of production or new forms of organization of the production process. Governments foster entrepreneurship and enterprise development because they increase the national wealth and benefit the consumers through bringing new and less costly products into the market. The use of new technologies and innovative solutions by entrepreneurs translates into the enhanced macroeconomic efficiency. When developing new markets, they increase the number of jobs available and improve employment opportunities thus contributing to the achievement of broad development objectives.

II. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

4. The Programme of work of the International Conference builds on the work accomplished in the area of entrepreneurship and enterprise development by a number of international organizations, in particular by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the World Bank. UNECE endeavours to facilitate the dissemination of information on and implementation of the outcomes of this work, in particular in the transition economies of the UNECE region. In the same way, it tries to make available to the Governments of member States the information on good practices and expertise accumulated in the area of enterprise development by its 56 member States.

5. The International Conference will discuss the major obstacles to enterprise development in the UNECE region with a special focus on countries with economies in transition. These obstacles include administrative and regulatory barriers, cumbersome taxation regulations and high taxation rates, underdeveloped financial markets and restricted access to enterprise finance, high tariff and non-tariff barriers to exports, inadequate entrepreneurial skills of managers, as well as corruption. The scope of the above-mentioned barriers varies among countries and there are no universally-applicable solutions to reduce them. At the same time, the exchange of opinions among Governments, entrepreneurs, as well as independent views from academic experts are expected to facilitate the dialogue on entrepreneurship and enterprise development among the major stakeholders and the identification of good practices of dealing with these obstacles.

6. The discussion at the Conference is expected to contribute to the drawing up of the relevant recommendations to government bodies in charge of enterprise development policies and regulations, and advance the agenda of the UNECE Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration. At the same time, the Conference will contribute to strengthening human and institutional capacity in the area entrepreneurship and enterprise development, in particular in countries with economies in transition. The outcome of the Conference is supposed to feed into the future UNECE capacity-building activities, and facilitate access of stakeholders to the relevant expertise and information on good practices, including those practiced in transition countries themselves.

III. VENUE

7. The International Conference will take place at the Palais des Nations, Geneva (Switzerland) at the following address: 8-14, Avenue de la Paix.

IV. ORGANIZATION

8. The International Conference will take place on 18 and 19 June 2007. The registration of participants will start at 8.30 a.m. on 18 June. The Conference will start on the same day at 10.00 and finish on 19 June at 18.00.

9. The Conference will be organized into the four working sessions, a Round Table and a concluding segment. The session's moderator will briefly introduce its topic; this will be followed by keynote presentations and a general exchange of views. The moderator will conclude by summing up the discussion. The concluding segment will be dedicated to the formulation of possible recommendations of the Conference to Governments.

V. PARTICIPATION

10. Participation is open to interested parties from UNECE member countries and other member States of the United Nations, representatives of United Nations specialized agencies, other international organizations and accredited non-governmental organizations interested in the activities of UNECE. Broad participation of government officials, business community and academia is expected.

11. Governments are invited to inform their national bodies, enterprise development agencies, business associations, academia and other relevant organizations on the International Conference so as to ensure the participation of competent experts dealing with various aspects of entrepreneurship and enterprise development.

VI. CONFERENCE FEE AND OTHER EXPENSES

12. No conference fee is charged for the participation in the International Conference. Travel and accommodation expenses are borne by the participants.

VII. PASSPORTS AND VISAS

13. All participants should be in possession of a valid passport, with an entry visa (if required), which can be obtained from the diplomatic representation of Switzerland in their country of residence. It is advisable to make such visa applications well in advance of the date required. The UNECE secretariat will provide letters to the Swiss authorities (i.e. consulates) confirming the Conference attendance for those participants who need such a letter and request it directly from the secretariat.

VIII. PRELIMINARY REGISTRATION

14. Interested parties are invited to fill out the attached Registration Form (Annex II) and return it by **8 June 2007** at the latest to the following address:

Mr. Iouri Adjoubei
Room 447, UNECE
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
Fax: (+41 22) 917 01 78
E-mail: iouri.adjoubei@unece.org

IX. DOCUMENTATION

15. The UNECE member Governments, intergovernmental and accredited non-governmental organizations, companies and individual experts are invited to prepare papers for the International Conference. Topics for such papers are presented in the preliminary Programme of the Conference (see Annex I).

16. By 15 May 2007, the secretariat should receive papers for presentation in one of the UNECE working languages (English, French or Russian). The secretariat encourages the submission of papers in electronic format, preferably by e-mail. These will be distributed to registered participants by e-mail approximately two weeks before the Conference, and the participants are encouraged to bring their own paper copies. Restricted number of paper copies also will be available in the meeting room during the International Conference.

X. INTERPRETATION AND VISUAL AIDS

17. Simultaneous interpretation in English, French and Russian, facilities for projecting slides, as well as computer facilities for computer-aided presentations (e.g. Power Point) will be provided.

XI. TRAVEL AND HOTEL RESERVATIONS

18. Participants are requested to make their own hotel and travel arrangements to and from Geneva (Annex III).

XII. FURTHER INFORMATION

19. Further information on the International Conference can be obtained from:

Mr. Iouri Adjoubei
Economic Affairs Officer
UNECE Secretariat
Tel.: +41 22 917 24 88

or

Ms. Ljiljana Stancic
Associate Economic Affairs Officer
UNECE Secretariat
Tel.: +41 22 917 18 79

or

Ms Victoria Goudeva
Programme Assistant
UNECE Secretariat
Tel.: +41 22 917 27 53

Annex I

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME OF WORK

Monday, 18 June 2007

10.00 – 10.30 OPENING SESSION

Chairperson: to be nominated

Welcoming addresses:

Chairperson
UNECE

10.30 - 13.00 **SESSION 1. DRIVERS AND OBSTACLES TO ENTREPRISE DEVELOPMENT: THE EXPERIENCE OF DEVELOPED MARKET AND TRANSITION ECONOMIES**

Moderator: to be nominated

Keynote presentations:

(a) **The role of enterprise development in the modern economy.** Discussion could focus on the contribution of SMEs to job creation, aggregate output and outputs of individual sectors; contribution of research-based enterprises to the generation and diffusion of innovation in the knowledge-based economy; indicators of enterprise development and performance.

(b) **Factors influencing enterprise development.** Discussion could focus on the general environment for entrepreneurship, including the status of property rights; the regulatory conditions for entry and exit from the market, as well as conditions for enterprise operation and competition; capacity of innovating enterprises to translate the results of R&D into commercial products; conditions of access to finance required to start and operate an enterprise; the level of entrepreneurial skills as well as the related education and training capacity, and opportunities for training of would-be and operational entrepreneurs; conditions for enterprise expansion abroad, including exports, subcontracting, cross-border investment, etc.

(c) **Major barriers to enterprise development – an overview.** Discussion could focus on the main bottlenecks in enterprise development, including inefficient bureaucracy and regulatory obstacles related to the establishment and operation of new enterprises; cumbersome taxation regulations and high taxation rates; underdeveloped financial markets and restricted access to enterprise finance; inadequate entrepreneurial skills of managers and corruption. The discussion could

also briefly review and compare the existing entrepreneurial barriers in developed market and transition economies, as well as major problems encountered by entrepreneurs in individual countries of South-East Europe and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, and outline policy options and priorities for action.

13.00 – 15.00 Lunch break

15.00 – 18.00 SESSION 2. REDUCING THE REGULATORY AND ADMINISTRATIVE BARRIERS TO ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

Moderator: to be nominated

Keynote presentations:

(a) Discussion could focus on the ways and means of improving **the rules and regulations related to enterprise establishment and registration** (obtaining an operational permit from the relevant government authorities, registering with the statistical bureau and/or other registration agencies, notarizing company deeds, registering for various taxes, etc.). The number of procedures, time required and costs incurred to comply with them in developed market and transition countries. Minimal capital requirements. Ways and means of reducing the existing barriers.

(b) Discussion could focus on ways and means of improving **the regulations pertaining to enterprise operation and related government supervision** (inspections related to work safety, building, fire, sanitation, hygiene, environment protection, etc.). Raising the efficiency of government supervision. The experience of developed market and transition economies in reducing the red tape for entrepreneurs and lessons learned.

Tuesday, 19 June 2007

10.00 - 11.30 SESSION 3. REDUCING THE FINANCING AND TAX-RELATED BARRIERS TO THE EMERGENCE AND GROWTH OF ENTERPRISES

Moderator: to be nominated

Keynote presentations:

(a) Discussion could focus on ways and means of improving the **access to finance by new entrepreneurs**. Sources available to would-be entrepreneurs (own and family savings, business angels, venture capital, bank lending); the role of government-sponsored SME support structures and schemes. Financing problems encountered by growing SMEs; ways and means of addressing these problems. Major financial instruments facilitating the new enterprise financing in developed market and transition economies (discussion under this session will benefit from the

outcome of the UNECE Expert Meeting on Financing for Innovative Development to be held on 3 – 4 May 2007).

(b) Discussion could focus on the potential of **tax-related policy instruments** to foster enterprise development and the growth of SMEs. It could review the existing practices of enterprise taxation, including the taxation schemes fostering entrepreneurship, and assess their costs and benefits with the view of identifying good practices in this area.

11.45 – 13.00 SESSION 4. FACILITATING THE CROSS-BORDER EXPANSION OF SMEs

Moderator: to be nominated

(a) Discussion could focus on ways and means of reducing the existing **impediments to the cross-border expansion** of SMEs. It will address policy measures related to the reduction of both **internal** (shortage of working capital, lack of appropriate expertise, insufficient language skills, inadequate information on foreign markets) and **external** (shortage of credit facilities, regulations unfavourable to exporting, tariff and non-tariff barriers, inadequate IP protection) impediments to companies.

(b) Discussion could focus on Government action aimed at **facilitating exports and cross-border cooperation by SMEs**. Experience of developed market and transition economies.

13.00 – 15.00 Lunch break

15.00 – 16.30 ROUND TABLE: GOOD PRACTICES IN FIGHTING CORRUPTION RELATED TO ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT: THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENTS

Moderator: to be nominated

Topics to be discussed:

Discussion could focus on possible approaches to making the **regulatory and administrative procedures related to enterprise establishment and operation less conducive to corruption**. It will also address ways and means to strengthen the enforcement of anticorruption regulations – the experience of developed market and transition economies. The role of public-private partnership in fighting corruption. Cross-country sharing of good practices in anti-corruption policy action.

**16.45 – 18.00 CONCLUDING SEGMENT: TOWARDS AN EFFICIENT
REGULATORY REGIME FAVOURING ENTERPRISE
DEVELOPMENT**

To be moderated by the Chairperson

The session will be dedicated to the exchange of views between government bodies in charge of economic and enterprise development policies, private companies, international organizations and representatives of academia on ways and means to facilitate the development of entrepreneurship and enterprises, with a special focus on transition economies. This exchange of views will aim at developing practical recommendations to government agencies dealing with relevant policies to be submitted to the UNECE Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration.

Panel: moderators from the previous sessions

ANNEX II

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

International Conference “Reducing Barriers to Entrepreneurship and Encouraging Enterprise Development: Policy Options”

Date 18-19 June 2007

Participant	Family Name	First Name
Mr. <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Name <input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/>	First Name <input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/>
Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/>		
Ms. <input type="checkbox"/>		

Participation Category

Head of Delegation <input type="checkbox"/>	Are you based in Geneva as a representative of your permanent mission ? YES NO (delete non applicable)	Observer Organization <input type="checkbox"/>
Delegation Member <input type="checkbox"/>		NGO (ECOSOC Accred.) <input type="checkbox"/>
Observer Country <input type="checkbox"/>		Other (Please Specify Below) <input type="checkbox"/>
Participating From / Until		

Document Language Preference	English <input type="checkbox"/>	French <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____
Official Occupation (in own country)	Passport or ID Number	Valid Until	
<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	
Official Telephone N°.	Fax N°.	E-mail Address	
<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	

Permanent Official Address

Address in Geneva

Accompanied by Spouse Yes No

Family Name (Spouse)	First Name (Spouse)
<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>

On Issue of ID Card Participant Signature Spouse Signature Date	Participant photograph if form is sent in advance of the conference date. Please PRINT your name on the reverse side of the photograph	Spouse photograph if form is sent in advance of the conference date. Please PRINT your name on the reverse side of the photograph	Security Use Only Card N°. Issued Initials, UN Official
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Annex III

LIST OF HOTELS

relatively well placed with regard to the Palais des Nations

[ENGLISH ONLY]

Pax**	Price in CHF/single room
68, Rue du 31 décembre CH -1207 Geneva Tel.: (+4122) 787 50 70 Fax: (+4122) 787 50 80	105
Strasbourg-Univers***	Price in CHF/single room
Rue Pradier 10 1201 Geneva Tel.: (+4122) 906 58 00 Fax: (+4122) 738 42 08	140
Mon-Repos***	Price in CHF/single room
131, Rue de Lausanne 1202 Geneva Tel.: (+4122) 909 39 09 Fax:(+4122) 909 39 93	155
Capitole***	Price in CHF/single room
15 Rue de Berne CH -1201 Geneva Tel.: (+4122) 909 86 26 Fax:(+4122) 741 22 45	139
Nations***	Price in CHF/single room
62, Rue du Grand-Pré 1202 Geneva Tel. 022/748 08 08 Fax 022/734 38 84	170
Montana***	Price in CHF/single room
23, Rue des Alpes CH -1201 Geneva Tel. 022/732 08 40 Fax 022/738 25 11	125
Moderne***	Price in CHF/single room
1, Rue de Berne	80/130

CH -1201 Geneva Tel. 022/732 81 00 Fax 022/738 26 58	
Ramada Encore Genève***	Price in CHF/single room
12, Route des Jeunes (La Praille) CH -1227 Carouge/GE Tel. 022/309 50 00 Fax 022/309 50 05	130
Hotel Montbrillant****	Price in CHF/single room
2, Rue Montbrillant CH -1201 Geneva Tel.: (+4122) 733 77 84 Fax:(+4122) 733 25 11	139
Manotel Edelweiss****	Price in CHF/single room
2, Place de la Navigation CH -1201 Geneva Tel.: (+4122) 544 51 51 Fax:(+4122) 544 51 99	195
Grand Pre****	Price in CHF/single room
Rue du Grand Pré, 35 1202 Geneva Tel.: (+4122) 918 11 11 Fax: (+4122) 734 76 91	169
Manotel Chantilly****	Price in CHF/single room
Rue de la Navigation 27 Geneva CH-1202 Tel.: (+4122) 544 40 40 Fax: (+4122) 544 40 99	129
Intercontinental****	Price in CHF/single room
7-9 chemin du Petit-Saconnex 1211 Genève 19 Tel. (+4122) 919 32 61 Fax (+4122) 919 38 38	250
Crowne Plaza*****	Price in CHF/single room
34, Route François Peyrot CH -1218 Geneva Tel. (+4122) 747 02 63 Fax (+4122) 747 03 03	190