Thank you for all your support and cooperation throughout the past year -
The Vi team wishes you all the best for 2008!

NEWS

Vi welcomes the new year with 23 core university members
Makerere University Business School (MUBS) in Uganda, and the University of Nairobi in Kenya, became the latest core members of the Vi network in December, joining 21 universities from five continents, six of which in Africa.

Founded in 1991, MUBS is a business and management education and training institution in Kampala, preparing its 35,000 students for careers in accounting, finance, human resources management, and international business. MUBS also provides continuing education programmes that enhance their skills, and enable them to adapt to changing working conditions and challenges.

MUBS member coordinator, Geoffrey Bakunda, is the Dean of the Faculty of Marketing and Hospitality Management. Professor Bakunda (gbakunda@mubs.ac.ug) teaches courses related to global marketing strategy, international business operations, globalization and environment of international business, specialized market studies and multilateral trading system. His research interests include globalization, development strategies, FDI and trade logistics.

The University of Nairobi's School of Economics, our 23rd member, offers three undergraduate degrees and two postgraduate degrees, and plans to launch a Master in Multilateral Trading Systems, in association with the World Trade Organization.

The school's Vi member coordinator, Senior Lecturer Tabitha Kiriti-Nganga (tkiriti@mail.uonbi.ac.ke), teaches courses in international trade and economics, applied microeconomics, and poverty and development studies. Her research interests include Gender and Trade, Foreign Direct Investment, and Globalization Challenges.

The school plans to use and localize Vi teaching materials, and to actively participate in professional development activities, as well as in joint research projects with other network members.

For more information on the new members, visit the university profiles section of our website.

Vi members virtually launch UNCTAD flagship publications
Colombian and Russian members connected with UNCTAD experts and country representatives via video conference to launch the 2007 editions of UNCTAD's Trade and Development Report (TDR) and World Investment Report (WIR) in their respective countries.

The Colombian video conference webcast, held in November, allowed hundreds of students and professors from EAFIT University in Medellin and Universidad Jorge Tadeo Lozano in Bogotá to discuss the advantages for Latin American countries of regional cooperation advocated in the 2007 TDR.

In his presentation of the report, Alfredo Calcagno, from UNCTAD's Division on Globalization and Development Strategies, explained that the report did not only deal with regional developments in terms of trade, but also in terms of monetary integration and other issues like infrastructure and energy.

At the Russian video conference, held December 10, UNCTAD presented its World Investment Report 2007 to staff and students from two Vi member universities actively engaged in trade and investment training and research - the State University Higher School of Economics (HSE), Moscow, and the St. Petersburg State University.

Two of the report's authors, Jean-François Outreville and Astrit Sulstarova from the Division on Investment, Technology and Enterprise Development, provided an overview of the major trends and prospects in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) worldwide, and described specific trends in the
region, with an emphasis on investment in extractive industries - the core topic of this year's report.

"Students were very motivated and well prepared, and asked highly relevant questions," Macku said. "All parties expressed the hope that in the future there would be more opportunities for a similar kind of events."

**Member research feeds into UNCTAD project**

EAFIT University’s Vi member coordinator, Sascha Furst, lent his expertise on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to UNCTAD and the University of Fribourg during his stay in Geneva, October 17-19.

Furst presented findings of a study on domestic SMEs from the 3D-animation industry in the television international production chain in Colombia. The study was part of "Enhancing the participation of SMEs in Global Value Chains," a joint project of UNCTAD, OECD, and the University of Fribourg. The findings were presented during the Academic Summit of the project, and during an [UNCTAD expert meeting](#) on the subject.

The Vi established initial contact with the UNCTAD research coordinator, and facilitated Furst's participation in the project as part of the programme's goal to promote dialogue between the trade policy community and academia.

**Members from Mozambique and Tanzania complete fellowships at UNCTAD**

Four junior lecturers conducted research on agricultural exports, liberalization of financial services, regional integration and taxation in the mining sector, as part of the Vi fellowship programme in the last quarter of the year.

Adérito Notico (pictured, far left), of Vi core member Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo, prepared an outline for a study on "Options for Maximization of Mozambican Agricultural Exports Revenues," during his stay at UNCTAD from October 7 to November 16. Under the guidance of Aimable Uwizeye-Mapendano, from the Division on International Trade in Goods and Services and Commodities (DITC), Notico accessed data sources, and was introduced to international experts who helped him gain a better understanding of the complexity of agricultural sector problems.

In addition to Notico, three young lecturers from Vi member, University of Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania, also conducted research under the mentoring of UNCTAD’s DITC experts:

The first fellow, Mesia Ilomo, worked on a research assignment on "The economic impact of financial liberalization within the context of GATS: a case of sub-Saharan Africa."

"Sub-Saharan Africa is one of the most protected regions with regard to financial services. There is therefore a need to assess the economic impact of liberalization on this sector", he said.

"A major value-added of Mesia's research was the construction of a financial liberalization index," added his mentor, Lucian Cernat.

The second fellow, Msafiri Njoroge (pictured, far right), conducted an economic analysis of reasons for a country to enter into a particular regional integration grouping. With support from his mentor, Samuel Munyaneza, he made considerable progress on the gathering and analysis of data for his study on "Potential trade creation and trade diversion considerations in deciding on a regional trade integration partner: the case of Tanzania in the East African Community."

In light of the current commodity boom, the third fellow, George Gandye, envisages undertaking PhD studies on the topic of "The relationship between FDI inflows and government revenue in the Tanzanian mining sector".

"The important issue", said Gandye, "is to find an optimal fiscal regime for the country that will strike a balance between the wish to maximize the government revenue and the need to attract foreign direct investment." Gandye was supported in his research by Olle Ostensson, UNCTAD's principal expert on the mining sector.
**Update on the localisation of teaching materials**

In 2007, the membership agreed to 11 adaptations of existing Vi teaching materials, of which several are now in final or first draft stage.

Localisation of material on competitiveness by Jordan and on commodities by Senegal is now finished and available for use in those members' universities, respectively. The material will also be available for use by other Vi members in early 2008. In addition, the Vi has also received first drafts of material on negotiations from Colombia and on investment and commodities from Mauritius.

With the publication of new generic teaching material this December and in the New Year, it is hoped that more material can be adapted to members’ specific teaching needs.

**UNCTAD State Members support Vi capacity building activities**

UNCTAD's New Technologies, Training and Capacity Building Branch (NTTCB) - the Virtual Institute's home within UNCTAD - organized the fifth meeting of the "UNCTAD Advisory Group on the Strengthening of Training Capacities and Human Resources Development" on 26 November in Geneva.

This year the experts (among them Phil Rourke, Director of Vi's Canadian member, the Centre for Trade Policy and Law) shared with UNCTAD experiences in the field of building and sharing knowledge, while UNCTAD presented the activities of the Vi, TrainForTrade and the Course on Key International Economic Issues. The pedagogical expertise of these three programmes is at the heart of UNCTAD's training and capacity-building activities, which was underlined in the opening by UNCTAD's Secretary-General Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi.

As part of the afternoon session, Vi's Chief, Vlasta Macku, presented the network and the services it provides to member universities. She concluded with listing some of the challenges facing the programme, i.e. human and financial resource constraints, offering differentiated services catering to the needs of the individual members, the need for a decision to provide personalized services to few or standard services to many, finding the right partners and securing predictable funding for the future. The responses to her presentation showed strong support for the programme by several Member State missions in Geneva.

Meeting documents are available on the Vi website.

**Vi members take part in regional course for Africa**

As part of the efforts to integrate the content of UNCTAD's Course on International Economic Issues into academic programmes in developing countries, a number of university teachers and lecturers from Africa participated in the most recent regional course held in Dakar, Senegal, October 22 - November 9.

Twenty-four participants (17 policy makers and 7 academics) attended the course. Six out of the 7 academics were associate members of the Virtual Institute. At the end of the course, the participants stated that they were satisfied with the course’s curriculum and the pedagogic approach to raise awareness and deepen their understanding of the complexities of the multilateral trading system. For instance, Nafiou Malam Maman, from the Abdou Moumouni University in Niger, said that “the course is distinguished by its unique program and its approach to the analysis of contemporary issues. The simulation exercise was particularly poignant in advancing an understanding of the legal issues involved, as well as the negotiating process at the WTO”.

Pam Zahonogo, from the University of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, said that the course has been beneficial with regard to the context and mechanisms of the negotiations at WTO, the impact of transport and infrastructure on trade, and the issue of financing for development. He felt that the content of the course would be very useful in his work and research at the university.

Johan Fourie, Lecturer from the Stellenbosch University in South Africa said, “I intend to use the modules in my postgraduate lectures on international trade as I have started working on a new program for 2008. Issues such as new areas of international trade, negotiations, trade facilitation and the information economy will be part of this new work program and will provide students with an up-to-date insight into the field of international trade.”
UPCOMING EVENTS

**Egyptian member to host videoconference on World Investment Report**

Cairo University will join Geneva experts and country representatives at a presentation of UNCTAD's World Investment Report 2007. The event will be held via videoconference on 15 January 2008.

The authors of the report, from the Division on Investment, Technology and Enterprise Development, will discuss the causes and consequences, as well as policy implications, of the recent upsurge in foreign investment in extractive industries. The Permanent Mission of Egypt in Geneva will also contribute to the discussions during the presentation.

The video conference, the third sponsored by the Vi, will allow Egyptian counterparts to pose questions and discuss issues of national importance with UNCTAD experts.

TEACHING RESOURCES

**New CD-Rom from Trade and Poverty Workshop**

Following the workshop on the teaching and research of trade and poverty held in Tanzania, November 19-23, a CD-Rom is now available for our members.

The workshop, which was attended by 20 African academics, mainly from the least developed countries, presented UNCTAD's empirical findings on trade and poverty and discussed some of the methodological and data issues in researching the topic as well as how to communicate research findings to policymakers.

The CD-Rom contains presentations, papers and useful background documents on research methods, poverty measurements and other topics discussed during the week-long workshop. The CD-Rom also contains several UNCTAD analytical tools as well as links to trade and poverty databases and other research resources.

The recently produced teaching material on trade and poverty is available to workshop participants and Vi Core and Affiliate University members on this CD-Rom. The workshop material can be found online.

**New training package on Regional Trade Agreements**

This new training package, consisting of five modules, deals with various aspects of Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs) ranging from economic theory and its application to regional trade issues, to the practical issues of analysing regional trade data empirically.

WTO negotiations also feature prominently, as WTO's most-favoured nation principle at first sight contradicts the idea of regional trade preferences. How both principles interact and are reconciled, as well as other key issues and features of trade negotiations is examined in this training package that originated as a request from Vi member universities during last year's membership meeting.

The resources of the training package can be used as the basis of a series of activities or classes on RTAs and could thus be used by anyone teaching subjects related to RTAs, e.g. regional integration, trade negotiations, assessments of the impacts of RTAs or negotiations leading to RTAs.

**International economic issues course materials available to members**

The autumn series of short courses on Key International Economic Issues for Permanent Missions in Geneva examined aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs), Debt and Regional Trade Agreements.

The September course, "Development dimensions of Intellectual Property Rights," examined the developmental, economic and legal ramifications of intellectual property. The session also looked at how developing countries can achieve a better balance between exclusive rights and the public domain, in pursuit of important development objectives.

In October, the course "How to make debt safer," demonstrated how the structure of public debt may matter more than the debt level, looking at the risks of public debt and policies that can
reduce those risks.

The November course, "The development interface between the multilateral trading system and regional trade agreements," examined the developmental implications of Regional Trade Agreements and their interface with the Multilateral Trading System.

**Achieving Debt Sustainability - New UNCTAD e-learning course on the Vi website**

As part of UNCTAD's research and technical cooperation activities on management of external debt of developing countries, the UNCTAD Virtual Institute and the Division on Globalization and Development Strategies have launched a new e-learning module on debt sustainability analysis (DSA).

The new e-learning module is the most comprehensive and in-depth analysis of debt sustainability issues freely available to the general public. The course consists of four stand-alone modules which will be updated regularly and can thus be used as a reference point for both policy makers and applied researchers. The state of the art e-learning course is supplemented with online resource materials.

**New resources on FDI and LDCs online**

A package of four presentations by senior UNCTAD experts on Foreign Direct Investment and Least Developed Countries given at a Geneva meeting are now online.

The Training and Capacity Building workshop "FDI Trends and Policy Options in LDCs," held September 25, was organized by UNCTAD's Division on Investment, Technology and Enterprise Development, in cooperation with the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA), with the financial support of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA).

The presentations give an overview of UNCTAD's work in the field of investment promotion and can spark ideas about UNCTAD services in the area and other issues of relevance to officials concerned with investment promotion in LDCs. They might also be useful as background material for any course dealing with issues of investments in developing countries, particularly in LDCs.

> **PUBLICATIONS**

**UNCTAD publishes two new investment reports**

This year's World Investment Report (WIR) from UNCTAD focuses on the role of transnational corporations (TNCs) in the extraction of oil, gas and metals. It emphasises the need for coherent and well-designed host country policies that involve all stakeholders in order to maximize development gains from such industries. As in previous years, the WIR07 presents the latest data on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and traces global and regional trends in FDI and in international production by TNCs.

The main finding is that the growth of FDI has been the largest in 2006 since 2000, and occurred in all three groups of economies: developed countries, developing countries, and the transition economies. Despite the general positive prospects for global FDI, it is predicted that the world economy will face several challenges and risks, which may have implications for FDI flows in 2007 and 2008. These include global current account imbalances causing exchange rate shifts, volatile oil prices, and a potential tightening of financial market conditions.

In addition to the WIR, the World Investment Prospects Survey 2007-2009 (WIPS) was released October 4. The most recent in a series begun in 1995, the survey aims to provide an outlook on future trends in FDI based on responses from the largest TNCs in the world.

**Developing Countries in International Trade 2007: Trade and Development Index**

The Trade and Development Index (TDI), the second in a series after its inaugural presentation in 2005, is an innovative analytical tool that allows policy makers and practitioners to identify possible constraints to using trade as a vehicle for social and economic development. The Index identifies strengths and weaknesses of a country's institutional and policy environment, including all key indicators that affect the trade and development performance.

This year's edition is enlarged by a series of country profiles for each of the 123 countries represented in the analysis, which offers the reader a tool for comparative studies among countries and regions of their trade and development performance.
**UNCTAD publication wins magazine award**
The latest of UNCTAD's Blue Books, *Best Practice in Investment Promotion and Facilitation of Zambia*, has won Africa Investor Magazine's 2007 award in the category of "Smart Regulation." The award represents an important endorsement of UNCTAD's Blue Book programme, which assists African governments to strengthen their investment environment by developing action plans of clearly detailed and practical measures that can be implemented within a year. Zambia's Blue Book is the seventh produced by UNCTAD with financing from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation.

Blue Books have been produced for five countries in Africa (Ghana, Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia) and two in South-East Asia (Cambodia and Lao PDR).

**WTO - International Trade Statistics 2007**
The WTO International Trade Statistics 2007 provides a comprehensive collection of statistical data on trade in merchandise and commercial services relevant for an assessment of world trade flows by country, region and main product groups or services by category.

This year's report provides a more user-friendly presentation of statistical tables, and covers new fields, in particular to satisfy the increasing demand for data on international trade in services. The report, furthermore, provides for the first time information on sales of foreign affiliates relating to trade in services.

>_LINKS_

**International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization**
www.itcilo.org
Based in Turin, Italy, the Centre works to enhance the capacity of governments, employers' and workers' organizations and other social and economic actors to play an effective role in the economic and social development of their countries and regions. To do so, the Centre offers a range of on campus and online courses, many of which are available on this website.

Particularly interesting is a trainer's package on business entrepreneurship education (http://kab.itcilo.org). Although not designed for tertiary education, the programme can be adapted for such purposes. Course materials are not available online, but can be requested from the Centre.

Also of interest is information on the background, issues, objectives and methodology of a Master programme on Management of Development (http://www.itcilo.org/masters/mandev) provided in cooperation with the University of Turin.

>_FEEDBACK_

The Virtual Institute welcomes any feedback, both positive and critical, about the Vi Newsletter. Is it clear? Are the links helpful? Do they work? Equally, if there is any aspect of UNCTAD's work that you would like to see reported in the newsletter, please make suggestions and we will try to cover it. We would also welcome any news items from member universities about their current activities. Send all comments to: susana.olivares@unctad.org

Previous issues are available on the website.

ALSO, if you haven't already, please have a look at our website and familiarise yourself with its structure and content.

The UNCTAD Virtual Institute on Trade and Development is a capacity-building and knowledge-sharing programme designed to strengthen the capacities of academic institutions, particularly in developing countries, to teach and research trade issues.

***NOT A MEMBER? Sign up as an associate member by clicking here.***

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