**NEWS**

**Ukraine University becomes 16th Vi member**

The Faculty of International Economics and Management of the Vadym Hetman Kiev National Economic University this month joined the Virtual Institute network of universities.

The Faculty of International Economics and Management, with approximately 2700 students, provides undergraduate and graduate degree programmes in a large gamut of themes in international trade, and runs a PhD programme in World Economy and International Economic Relations. The main areas of research currently are competitiveness of the country in the globalized world economy, and resources and models for economic development.

The university would like to share its experience in building international economics training programs from the Bachelor to the PhD level, and foresees to cooperate with other members by exchanging new ideas and course outlines; collaborating on course development and course delivery; undertaking joint research; and organizing workshops, round tables and other events.

For more information, take a look at the university's member profile at [vi.unctad.org](http://vi.unctad.org), or visit their website at: [http://www.kneu.kiev.ua](http://www.kneu.kiev.ua).

**Vi member contributes research to international SME project**

Sascha Furst, Vi member coordinator from EAFIT University (Colombia), is participating in a joint project on "Enhancing the Role of Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Global Value Chains" between the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the University of Geneva and the University of Fribourg.

Professor Furst has undertaken a case study to assess the participation of domestic SMEs in the television international production chain in Colombia.

The major findings of the study will be discussed at the OECD Global Conference on "Enhancing the Role of Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises in Global Value Chains" (31 May - 1 June) in Tokyo this year.
**UNCTAD course benefits from Vi member’s expertise**

Vi member Francis Matambalya from the University of Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania contributed to a number of training sessions of the UNCTAD Course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda held in Cairo, Egypt, in February.

Professor Matambalya intervened in modules dealing with the use of information and communication technologies (ICT), investment and enterprise, and trade and development. He was also able to attend the entire three-week course, containing six modules.

"I personally was particularly impressed by the scholarly calibre of the facilitators, quality of hand-outs, engagement of the participants, and logistic arrangements of the course. They made the course come closest in terms of making training interventions of this kind pedagogically relevant," he said.

**UNCTAD Commission endorses Vi’s capacity-building approach**

Convinced that building capacities for trade would increase the competitiveness of developing country enterprises, member states at the meeting of the Commission on Enterprise, Business Facilitation and Development last month asked for the continuation and strengthening of activities of the UNCTAD Virtual Institute and other UNCTAD capacity building programmes.

Delegates commended the Vi for building synergies between UNCTAD’s capacity-building programmes -- by integrating Vi university members as resource persons in regional UNCTAD courses, for example -- and encouraging South-South cooperation by building "a network of mutually supporting academic institutions."

**EAFIT students successfully play USA role in Model OAS General Assembly**

The XXIV edition of the Model OAS General Assembly (MOAS) was held during October 22nd to 26th for the first time in the city of Barranquilla, Colombia.

The Model OAS General Assembly Program (MOAS) is a simulation of the proceedings of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States, where through role-playing, participating students represent the OAS member countries.

**CTPL hosts first WTO simulation in Ottawa**

Fifty students from several Canadian universities took on the role of delegates from 10 countries in the first Ottawa Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, held at Vi member Carleton University's Centre for Trade Policy and Law (CTPL) March 8-9.

The simulation, which recreated a Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO), encouraged students to engage in dialogue over issues surrounding the Doha Development Round, and to gain a better understanding of the multilateral negotiation process.

Following opening speeches from each country’s Minister, the delegation was addressed by acting Director-General Howard Wilson, former member of the Canadian Foreign Service and former Director General of Trade Relations.

The participants then broke off into working groups to discuss the issues on the agenda -- agriculture, non-agricultural market access, services, and special and differential treatment. The students, who had been preparing for their roles for weeks prior to the event, engaged in heated yet diplomatic debates as they attempted to advance their countries’ interests. Supported by their coaches, the
teams reconvened from time to time to reposition themselves as new developments emerged.

The major sticking point in the negotiations was agriculture, and, although not all issues were resolved in the end, the agriculture delegates finally struck a deal at the eleventh hour, true to WTO form.

> _UPCOMING EVENTS_

**Accepting applications for next UNCTAD course in Lima, Peru**

Virtual Institute members from Latin America and the Caribbean are invited to apply for admission into the next UNCTAD Course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda (http://p166.unctad.org) to be held in Lima, Peru, 18 June to 8 July.

Recent courses held in Beirut, Bangkok and Cairo benefited from the expertise of several professors from Vi members member universities, who contributed to the programme as resource persons. A number of other lecturers from these universities, as well as Vi associate members attended as participants.

Deadline for applications, which should be submitted to UNCTAD through Permanent Missions of the applicants’ countries in Geneva, is **April 13**. However, potential resource persons from Vi universities in the region are asked to contact vlasta.macku@unctad.org by **April 6**.

> _TEACHING RESOURCES_

**Localisation of Vi training materials gathers pace**

Seven Vi member universities have made 10 proposals for the localization of training materials. Most proposals are for the localization of the investment and commodities material, with the exception of Colombia's, which also proposes material on negotiations. Several universities have already expressed interest in localizing other material when it becomes available, notably Tanzania (Regional Trade Agreements) and Ukraine (Transfer of Technology and Trade Data Analysis).

Mauritius' proposal for the investment material includes adding examples and data from a national and regional context, and contributing to a case study on the interaction between international investment agreements and other areas, such as competition and intellectual property.

Senegal's proposal on commodities includes providing case studies on the marketing of mangoes from the Casamance region, technological innovation in the Shea butter sector, and a comparison of standards for Senegalese and international commodities.

Universities have also expressed interest in translating material into their own language and adding pedagogical features, such as discussion questions.

All current localization projects will start as of June this year, and finish within six months of their start date.
Short courses for Geneva delegates material available

The UNCTAD Course on Key Issues on the International Agenda and the Vi are organizing short courses on trade issues for delegates working at Geneva-based Permanent Missions. The objective is to provide participants with an opportunity to follow a shorter and more focused version of the programme that is otherwise only accessible through three-week courses on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda organized by UNCTAD at the regional level.

More than 50 participants attended the first session, Managing Global Integration and Interdependence, held February 26.

The second, Building Productive Capacities in LDCs as a Means to Reduce Poverty, was held March 26.

The next session will deal with using Information and Communication Technologies to promote growth, and will be take place April 23.

Vi members can access the material -- expert presentations, suggested reading, participants list and other documents -- online, or order a CD by sending your mailing information to susana.olivares@unctad.org.

_MEETINGS

FDI expert meeting resources available online

UNCTAD, in cooperation with Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, brought together colleagues of the late economist Sanjaya Lall to discuss issues pertaining to his research work on FDI, technology, innovation and competitiveness.

Vi members can access the papers presented during the two-day meeting online, or request a CD-Rom by contacting susana.olivares@unctad.org.

_LINKS

African Technology Development Forum

The site of a Non-Govermental Organization focussing on technology, innovation and entrepreneurship in Africa gathers articles and news, and publishes a quarterly journal, which is open to submissions. The Forum facilitates networking and communication between governments, universities and inventors. It also promotes innovation and investment through its challenge award scheme and certificate of best practices. There are awards of upto $50000 for companies in Zambia and $5000 for individuals who have an idea they would like to realise and market. They are currently running a competition for designing a website for university students in Africa.

The Latin American Trade Network (LATN)

LATN has been supporting research-based policy-making in the area of trade since its inception in 1998. The network aims at increasing the amount, policy-relevance and quality of trade-related research relevant to the Latin American region, and disseminates analytical findings to scholars, negotiators, government officials and the civil society. It cooperates with a large number of individual researchers, universities and research institutions in Latin America and elsewhere. The website provides access to working papers, policy briefs directed
in particular at negotiators and policy-makers, reports on aspects of the FTAA negotiations, and other publications such as authorized journal reprints. You can also subscribe to a weekly review summarizing international trade news by sending an e-mail with the subject "subscribir" to newsletter@latn.org.ar.

In addition to research on trade, LATN has been also looking into the issue of research-policy links and the extent to which academic research can influence, directly or indirectly, policy decisions. You can find several papers presented at a conference organized by the network in cooperation with IDRC under the "agenda" link on the menu.

>_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

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

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

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