



Arab Transport Ministers Discuss Document with ESCWA Input

Arab ministers of transport have discussed a document on Transport and Trade Facilitation that was co-produced by Jordan's Transport Ministry and ESCWA. The document presents the goals, mission, framework and work mechanism of the technical committee for transport and trade facilitation among Arab countries.

The meeting showcased the experience of ESCWA in facilitating transport and trade between its member countries, and looked into the European Union's experience in the same field. Representing the Regional Commission, Chief of the Economic Development and Globalization Division Nabil Safwat presented the main activities it has carried out in the field of transport and trade facilitation and in setting up national committees for this purpose in the Arab region. Safwat said ESCWA welcomes the establishment of a transport and trade facilitation committee among Arab countries, upon the decision of the Council of Arab Ministers of Transport in its exceptional session on 7 May 2009.



The ministers agreed on setting up a technical committee, chaired by Jordan and comprising Kuwait, Oman, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia and United Arab Emirates, in addition to the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States (LAS) and ESCWA, in order to examine the draft terms of reference of the Transport and Trade Facilitation Committee that were prepared on the basis of ESCWA's Guide on Establishing Transport and Trade Facilitation Committees, and to submit the final version of the ToR to the coming meeting of the Arab Ministers of Transport.

The committee will increase the competitiveness of the transport industry. It is a cost-effective and time-efficient tool that will [▶](#)



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First Meeting of the Thematic Working Group on Arab MDGs

The joint UN-League of Arab States regional report on the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the Arab region 2010 will bear the theme of "impacts of, and responses to, the international financial crisis (IFC) in the Arab region." That was a decision made by the first meeting of the Thematic Working Group (TWG) on the MDGs in the Arab Region. The report will be titled "attainment of the millennium development goals in the Arab region within the context of the international financial crisis."

ESCWA convened on 23 July the first TWG on MDGs in the Arab region with [▶](#)

Arab Transport Ministers Discuss Document with ESCWA Input (Cont.)

serve as an Arab platform to facilitate and mainstream practices and procedures and unify documents used for transportation and trade. Ministers and representatives of 12 Arab countries were present at the meeting, which also gathered representatives of the European Union, LAS and ESCWA. ■



First Meeting of the Thematic Working Group on Arab MDGs (Cont.)



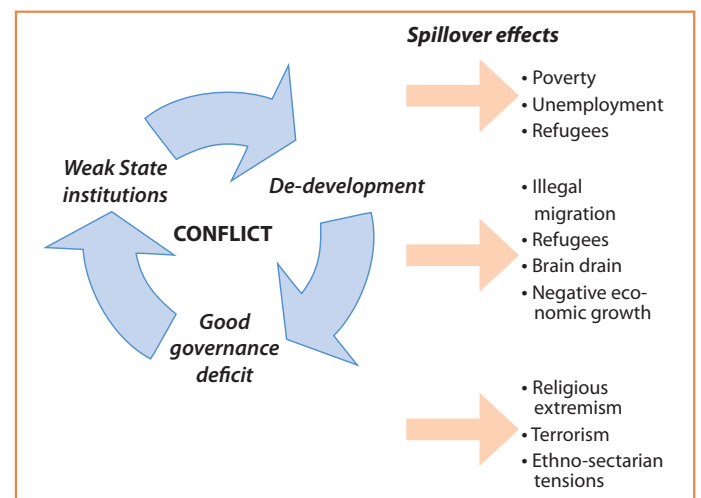
the participation of a host of regional and local offices of UN agencies, as well as representatives of LAS to discuss many issues, namely membership in the TWG, the main theme of the “Joint LAS-UN Regional Report on MDGs in the Arab Region, 2010;” draft Terms of Reference (TOR) of the TWG; the draft Action Plan of TWG; and preparations for the forthcoming Expert Group Meeting on the Arab MDGs Report to be held 8-10 December 2009, and other matters.

Participants in the meeting recommended that the drafting group of the Arab MDGs report 2010 be initially composed of five agencies: ESCWA (chair), UNDP, LAS, UNICEF and UNFPA. The TWG on Arab MDGs was established by the 12th meeting of the Regional Cooperation Mechanism held in September 2008 at the UN House, Beirut. It designated ESCWA to be the convener of the TWG on Arab MDGs, and called for holding a meeting to discuss and agree on an action plan for the TWG. ■

FACTS & FIGURES

The Spillover-Producing Cycle of Conflict

The figure demonstrates conflicts at the national level, and the spillover effects associated with these are not confined to one particular country or a specific geographical area, but are interrelated. ■



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