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Working Party on International Trade in Goods and Trade in Services Statistics

**IMPLEMENTATION OF IMTS 2010 AND WORLDWIDE DATA COLLECTION OF
INTERNATIONAL MERCHANDISE TRADE STATISTICS**

To be held on 22-24 October 2012
OECD Headquarters

This contribution is for information and discussion under item 2 of the agenda.

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UNITED NATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

STATISTICS DIVISION
TRADE STATISTICS BRANCH

IMPLEMENTATION OF IMTS 2010 AND WORLDWIDE DATA COLLECTION OF INTERNATIONAL MERCHANDISE TRADE STATISTICS

Working Party on the Trade in Goods and Services, 22-24 October 2012
Item 2 on the Provisional Agenda

Note by UNSD (in cooperation with OECD)

Adoption of IMTS 2010 and its implementation

1. *Decisions of the Statistical Commission.* The United Nations Statistical Commission at its forty-first session held on 23-26 February 2010 adopted *International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions, 2010* (IMTS 2010)¹ containing the revised and new recommendations for trade statistics and endorsed an outline of the IMTS 2010 implementation programme including the preparation of the revised IMTS Compilers Manual. In this context, the Commission recognized the importance of the UN Commodity Trade Statistics Database (UN Comtrade) as the global database and information platform on international merchandise trade and requested UNSD to enhance its features and metadata.²

2. *IMTS 2010 - updated and new recommendations.* While maintaining continuity of the conceptual framework for international merchandise trade statistics, IMTS 2010 provides updated or new recommendations and clarifications of the key concepts. In particular, new recommendation were created for four additional data items, namely

- Compile or estimate imports on the FOB basis in addition to the standard CIF valuation (encouragement).

¹ Available at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/pubs/gesgrid.asp?id=449>.

² See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2010, Supplement No. 4 (E/2010/24)*, chap. I, sect. B, decision 41/103.

- Record in import and export statistics the country of consignment, in addition to country of origin and country of final destination. For the exports statistics, compilation of the country of consignment is encouraged only as such a recording is more difficult to implement.
- Compile and disseminate international merchandise trade statistics by mode of transport at the most detailed commodity level possible.
- Record information about the customs procedures applied to individual transactions.

3. *Questionnaire on IMTS 2010 implementation.* In May 2010 UNSD informed countries about the newly adopted international recommendations contained in IMTS 2010 while strongly encouraging them to establish implementation plans including efficient and coordinated institutional arrangements. UNSD attached a short survey on the IMTS 2010 implementation, to which a total of 100 countries replied. Almost a third of countries expected to implement most of the new recommendations for the reporting of data for the year 2011 and another third for the year 2012. Countries pointed out that in particular cooperation with other national agencies and guidance on how to implement the recommendations are critical factors for a successful implementation. The importance of the revised Compilers Manual was stressed.

4. *IMTS 2010 Compilers Manual.* The revision of the IMTS Compilers Manual was a cornerstone of UNSD's action plan for the implementation of IMTS 2010. The revised version of the manual titled *International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Compilers Manual, Revision 1* (IMTS 2010-CM) was prepared during less than two years after adoption of IMTS 2010 and endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission at its forty-third session (28 February – 2 March 2012).³ The Manual contains further and more detailed explanation of certain recommendations and provides practical guidance for compilers by describing country practices applicable under different circumstances, in particular in respect to the compilation of the new data fields.⁴

5. *Further implementation activities.* The national compilation and international collection of the new data fields and the upgrade of UN Comtrade (see below for more information) are the core elements of the implementation of IMTS 2010. In addition, UNSD is committed to continue its technical assistance activities which entail a series of regional workshops and seminars for developing countries focusing on the contents of the new recommendations and on practical approaches to their implementation.⁵ Also, as resources allow, UNSD will pursue its research agenda related to IMTS on issues such as imbalances in partner statistics, ways to assess trade in terms of value added, good practices in the compilation of the trade indices and finding possibilities for providing better quantity information, among others.

6. *Increasing the usefulness of international merchandise trade statistics.* The focus of the implementation of IMTS 2010 is not only to continue to provide international comparable high quality merchandise trade statistics, but also to increase the relevance of trade statistics as a central data source for the analysis of globalization. A first step towards achieving these objectives will be the implementation of the new data items of IMTS 2010. The second step will be the linking of trade with business statistics,

³ Available in its draft version at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/EG-IMTS/EG-IMTS%20web%20announcement.htm>.

⁴ The provisional draft of IMTS 2010-CM was prepared by the United Nations Statistics Division, in cooperation with members of the Expert Group on International Merchandise Trade Statistics and the Inter-Agency Task Force on International Merchandise Trade Statistics (TF-IMTS). It incorporates inputs from national statistical offices, customs administrations and other governmental agencies of various countries as well as from international, supranational and regional organizations.

⁵ Since adoption of IMTS 2010 UNSD conducted workshops in Lusaka, Zambia (2010), Vilnius, Lithuania (2011), Johannesburg, South Africa (2012) and San Jose, Costa Rica (2012).

which opens up the possibility to obtain trade-related information on many new dimensions without increasing the burden on data providers.⁶

Collection of annual and monthly data

Collection and dissemination of monthly data

7. *Collection of monthly data.* The impact of the recent financial crisis on global trade flows highlighted the need for detailed monthly trade data to allow short term analysis of the global economy. Detailed monthly trade data are made available by many countries. However, unlike the annual data these data are not readily accessible at the global level. To meet this user demand UNSD initiated the collection, storage and dissemination of detailed (6-digit level of HS) monthly data as part of its regular work programme.⁷

8. In April 2010, UNSD requested countries to inform if their office will be able to (i) make available to UNSD for testing purposes the detailed (6-digit level of HS) monthly and quarterly trade statistics for the first three months of 2010 and (ii) supply such statistics on a regular basis beginning with data for January 2011. A large number of countries responded positively to this request and made their data available. Some member countries of the European Union indicated that the data for their country should be sourced from Eurostat, which is what UNSD is doing now for those countries that do not provide the data directly.⁸ UNSD is very grateful to all countries that made their data available.

9. *Regular Collection and Dissemination of Monthly Trade Data.* Based on the data received, UNSD has completed the development of a processing and dissemination system (beta version) for monthly international merchandise trade statistics. In January 2012 UNSD informed countries about this development, expressed its appreciation to those who had already provided their detailed trade data, requested additional countries to start the monthly submissions of their detailed (6-digit level of HS) trade data and informed about the upcoming release of UN Monthly Comtrade. Given the high frequency of the data (and the increase in work load), countries were made aware that UNSD is seeking additional efficiencies in data transmission and verification mechanisms to allow a quick upload and dissemination of the data. This implies that for the monthly data UNSD will rely mostly on the quality assurance procedures of the offices providing the data. Whereas for annual trade data UNSD aims to have full coverage of all UN member states, for monthly trade data, UNSD will initially cover only major economies and some regional representation, based on the availability of monthly data in countries.

10. *Release of UN Monthly Comtrade (beta version) in February 2012.* This monthly data system was released to the public for further testing during the 43rd session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, which took place from 28 February to 2 March 2012. Special access, including bulk

⁶ A larger vision for trade statistics which aims at increasing its relevance was developed as part of the preparations for the Global Forum on Trade Statistics in February 2011 when several members of the TF-IMTS agreed on a joint background note titled International Trade Information Systems in 2020 (also called Vision 2020), which formulates concrete goals for the future of trade statistics (see http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/s_geneva2011/outcome.htm).

⁷ OECD is collecting monthly merchandise trade values by SITC section and by partner country, and, as available, volume, price, and unit value indices as part of its short term statistics. These data are then presented in the OECD Monthly Statistics of International Trade database (1) for total flows by partner countries, 2) for SITC sections with partner world and 3) for volume, price and unit value indices.

⁸ It is preferable that European Union Member States provide their detailed merchandise trade data directly to UNSD following the so called national concept which is usually more in line with the international recommendations than the community concept which is to be followed in the data provision to Eurostat.

download, is given to all data providers.⁹ Dissemination of the monthly trade data with the same quality and functionality as users are accustomed to from the UN Comtrade regarding annual data is expected to become available to the general public through the upgraded UN Comtrade by 2014.

Cooperation of UNSD and OECD on annual data

11. *Collection and processing of annual data – cooperation between UNSD and OECD.* The data collection for detailed annual merchandise trade statistics is since many years coordinated between UNSD and OECD, with the OECD requesting the data from its Member States and forwarding it to UNSD upon receipt. Also, UNSD and OECD agreed on the processing standard for the annual data. Overall, the goals of this cooperation were to avoid duplicate data requests and to publish identical data at UNSD and OECD to the maximum extent possible. The cooperation between UNSD and OECD, which was guided by a MOU dating from 2001 and which culminated in the establishment of a joint UNSD-OECD processing system, was successful in achieving these goals for many years.

12. *Centralization of the collection and processing of detailed annual and monthly data at UNSD starting 2013.* In July 2012, OECD and UNSD agreed that starting from 2013 onwards UNSD will take over from OECD the collection of the detailed annual merchandise trade data for the OECD countries. The data request from UNSD will cover both annual and monthly data, hereby also removing a source of confusion with, previously, OECD requesting the detailed annual and UNSD requesting the detailed monthly data. However, OECD will retain its monthly collection of aggregated data according to SITC for its monthly publication on trade statistics. This data will be shared with UNSD for the quality assurance of UNSD's detailed monthly data. A new MOU is being drafted to reflect these changes in the cooperation.

13. In the past, the annual data for OECD Member States was processed at UNSD and at OECD. In the future it will only be processed at UNSD. However, OECD will retain full access to the raw data files for annual data provided by countries via a data repository maintained by UNSD. Further, the OECD will be able to synchronize its own database on trade statistics with UN Comtrade as well as to access the more detailed tariff line data.¹⁰

Development of the new data fields

14. *Data collection - updated data request in February 2011.* Following the adoption of IMTS 2010, UNSD and the OECD revised their data request to countries to include the following four new data items (i) country of consignment as second partner country or area, (ii) imports FOB as second value for imports, (iii) mode of transport and (iv) customs procedure code (or applicable transaction code) if such data is available. The revised data request sent by UNSD in February 2011 (see Annex the latest data request for 2012) is asking for annual and monthly data.

15. *New data fields - data availability.* Information on mode of transport and on the customs procedures applied to individual transactions should be available, at least in principle, to the data compiling agencies in most countries. However, information on the second partner country, in particular for exports, and imports valued FOB are expected to require stronger compilation efforts.

⁹ The application is available at: <http://comtrade.un.org/monthly/Public/ReleaseInfo.aspx> and a new data release takes place on the last Tuesday of each month. Currently the data for about 54 countries (or areas) is available on a regular basis with a timeliness of t+3 or t+4 months.

¹⁰ Tariff line data is the raw data provided by countries only normalized regarding certain data dimensions such as trade flow and partner country and converted to U.S. dollar.

16. *Development of the new data fields.* The regular compilation and dissemination by UNSD of the new data fields for most countries and the generation of useful information on the global level will require several years. In particular, the development of the information on customs procedures into relevant and internationally comparable data will be a challenge as country practises vary widely. The minimum goal for the near future would be that all countries (or areas) would be able to identify in their trade data importation for home use, direct exports, re-exports, re-imports, imports for inward processing, exports after inward processing, exports for outward processing and imports after outward processing, and that they make this information available to all users. The new IMTS Compilers Manual contains separate chapters on mode of transport (chapter 17) and customs procedure code (chapter 18), providing additional guidance and examples for their compilation.

17. *Dissemination and presentation of the new information.* One important aspect will be on how the new data fields can and should be presented for dissemination at the global level in UN Comtrade. Information on the second partner, imports FOB (in addition to imports CIF) and customs procedure codes pose particular challenges in this respect as users are expected to require guidance on how the information should be used. This issue will be raised with the Expert Group on International Merchandise Trade Statistics (EG-IMTS)¹¹ and also the Task Force has been requested to provide its input to ensure that both national and international concerns are taken into account and that the enhanced UN Comtrade continues to serve as an efficient global database.

Upgrade of UN Comtrade

18. *Upgrade of UN Comtrade.* Acting on the Statistical Commission's decision in 2010 and based on users' feedback, UNSD decided to undertake a special effort to upgrade UN Comtrade. The main objectives of the upgrade include: (i) inclusion of new data items recommended in IMTS 2010, (ii) adding monthly trade data and (iii) significant enhancement of metadata. Also the technology behind UN Comtrade requires to be upgraded. The upgrade of UN Comtrade is a major undertaking and during 2012 UNSD therefore established a dedicated IT team for this purpose. It is expected that the upgraded UN Comtrade will become available gradually throughout 2014.

19. *History and use of UN Comtrade.* UN Comtrade was established in the early sixties and for almost fifty years has provided a wealth of information to policy makers, business community, research institutions and the general public. It stores standardised official annual statistics reported by countries and reflecting international merchandise flows in terms of the Harmonised Description and Coding System (HS), the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) and the Classification by Broad Economic Categories (BEC) detailed by partner country with coverage reaching up to 99 percent of world trade. UN Comtrade is an essential data source for numerous commercial and non-commercial databases on international trade. It allows free access to any data record to any user worldwide. Power users with additional needs are offered data streaming services and customization features. UN Comtrade is hugely popular and its usage has been steadily growing. In 2011 it had 232,000 users which submitted queries (10 percent increase over 2010) and over 62 billion records were downloaded (26 percent increase over 2010). UNSD will make every effort to serve the global user community even better in the future.

20. *Core requirements from the substantive side.* The following six core requirements for the upgraded UN Comtrade have been specified: 1) inclusion of new data fields (second partner country, import value FOB, mode of transport and customs procedure code) and flexibility for potential later additions; 2) inclusion of monthly data through appropriate integration with annual data in collection and processing but with separate (although aligned) dissemination; 3) further development of the concept of

¹¹ The EG-IMTS consists of merchandise trade experts from developed and developing countries and from international organizations.

tariff line data; 4) streamlining of data processing and ‘upstream’ integration of pre-processing including use of SDMX; 5) implementation of a new concept of data conversion (of the original data into different or older versions of trade classifications) based on correlations between the classifications leading to better information for users and potentially to a reduction of existing redundancies in data storage¹² and 6) establishment of a new dissemination interface and tools (including webs service, use of advanced SDMX and potentially basic graphing and mapping).

21. *Use of SDMX in data collection and dissemination.* The processing and dissemination of high frequency data requires the establishment of streamlined processing routines and a standardized transmission of data from national data providers. SDMX provides a standard for the development of such standardized data transmissions. OECD, Eurostat and UNSD cooperate on a development of an SDMX coding structure (or Data Structure Definition – DSD) for merchandise trade statistics that will incorporate the new data items according to IMTS 2010. For data dissemination the existing UN Comtrade has implemented SDMX version 1.0. The latest version of SDMX should be used to take advantage of better data and metadata integration.

22. *Communication strategy and user feedback.* In order to inform users and ensure that their requirements are accommodated to the best possible extend UNSD will shortly establish a for this purpose dedicated user forum. Further, UNSD will engage in a special information and communication/feedback process with the members of the Expert Group on International Merchandise Trade Statistics (EG-IMTS) and countries as data providers, as well as with the members of the Task Force on International Merchandise Trade Statistics (TF-IMTS).

¹² See note of UNSD “Data conversion in UN Comtrade - Current and future implementation”, which has been provided as a background document.

ANNEX

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
Statistics Division (UNSD)**

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REFERENCE: Stat 242/2(5)

2 February 2012

Dear Mr. xx,

Re: Request for 2011 Annual and 2012 Monthly Trade Data

The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) maintains a detailed merchandise trade statistics database as mandated by the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC). This database (called UN Comtrade) contains annual trade data (imports and exports) by reporting country or area, commodity and partner country, for most countries of the world. These data are regularly used by the UN member states, various UN organizations, and other international agencies for economic and policy analysis including identification of market access opportunities.

UN Comtrade is available on the UNSD Web site (<http://comtrade.un.org>). Basic access to UN Comtrade is free. Offices of data providers are given premium access free-of-charge¹³. The annual editions of the *International Trade Statistics Yearbook* prepared on the basis of UN Comtrade are also regularly sent free-of-charge to each national statistical office or other national office providing the trade data.

Users of trade data are urging UNSD to systematically update UN Comtrade and to improve its coverage and timeliness. In this connection we are requesting your office to forward to us the 2011 annual and the 2012 monthly data for imports and exports of your country by commodity and partner countries, including any revisions, as soon as it becomes available¹⁴. The data should be at the most detailed level of the national commodity and partner country classifications compiled following the recommendations of the UNSC to the largest extent possible. The UNSC recommendations are published in *International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions 2010* (IMTS 2010), which is freely available on the UNSD Website¹⁵. Please find the details of this data request in the Annexes 2 and 3 to this letter.

¹³ Please contact us for your User ID and Password (comtrade@un.org).

¹⁴ For further details on the collection of detailed monthly data please see Annex 1.

¹⁵ See <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/EG-IMTS/EG-IMTS%20web%20announcement.htm> (pre-edited version).

We would like to receive the provisional 2011 annual and 2012 monthly data as soon as they are available, as well as any subsequent revisions and final data when these are ready. We prefer to receive the data electronically, either as e-mail attachment (please send to comtrade@un.org), per FTP (please contact comtrade@un.org for details) or on CD-ROM. You may use the facilities of the UNDP office in your country to send the data to our office in New York.

Moreover, in order to improve the accuracy of our database, we kindly ask you to send us:

- (i) a table with the **official annual totals** of imports (CIF) and exports (FOB) of your country for the years 2000 to 2011, and the respective monthly totals for 2012,
- (ii) **confirmation of the following metadata** on file for your country:¹⁶
 - a. trade system: General
 - b. statistical value of imports: CIF
 - c. statistical value of exports: FOB
 - d. partner country for imports: Origin
 - e. partner country for exports: Last Known Destination
- (iii) the reference to **your country's publication and website**, where such totals and metadata are normally made available.

If your office is not responsible for publication of the official country totals of the external trade, please let us know whom to contact on this matter.

The received data will be processed at the most detailed level available. The processing includes, whenever necessary and possible, the following conversions: (a) commodity codes to codes used in the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS) and in the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC), (b) country codes to UN 3-digit standard codes, (c) values expressed in terms of national currency to values in US dollars, (d) reported quantities to quantities in terms of net weight and standard quantity units recommended by the World Customs Organization. The processing may include certain adjustments to achieve a better compliance with UNSC recommendations. The processed annual 6-digit HS data are aggregated to all higher levels of HS, converted to SITC and added to UN Comtrade¹⁷. The processed data at all levels of the provided commodity/partner breakdown are made available to all UN agencies and other international organizations working in the field of international trade statistics, if so requested for specific purposes, unless a country disagrees.

Your cooperation in providing the requested data is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Ronald Jansen
Chief, Trade Statistics Branch
United Nations Statistics Division

¹⁶ Available at: <http://comtrade.un.org/db/mr/daExpNotebyRepYear.aspx>.

¹⁷ The monthly data will be made available, for the time being, in a simplified format in only the original classification and only including net weight.

ANNEX 1: COLLECTION OF DETAILED MONTHLY DATA

In May 2010 UNSD requested countries to (i) make available to UNSD for testing purposes the detailed (6-digit level of HS) monthly and quarterly trade statistics for the first three months of 2010 and (ii) supply such statistics on a regular basis beginning with data for January 2011. A very large number of countries responded positively to this request and provided their data for testing purposes.

Based on the data received, UNSD has completed the development of a processing and dissemination system (beta version) for monthly international merchandise trade statistics which will be released to the public for further testing shortly.

Numerous countries are providing their monthly data already on a regular basis and other countries are requested to submit their monthly data on regular basis as well.

ANNEX 2: REQUIREMENTS FOR DATA TRANSMISSION:

Supply of detailed Commodity by Partner trade data

Part I. Required data fields plus associated metadata information to accompany the data files

<i>Field Name</i>	<i>Recommended Field Content</i>
Reference Year	Gregorian calendar (January through December) – in YYYY format (e.g., 2010, 2011)
Period	Annual or monthly period identification (e.g., M01, M02,..., A00)
Trade Flow	“Imports”, ”Re-imports”, “Exports” and “Re-exports”
Commodity Code	According to the Harmonized System (HS) at the most detailed commodity level available (6-digit HS)
Partner country or area	In national nomenclature; country of origin (for imports) and country of last known destination (for exports)
Value	Monetary value (in national currency or US dollars); CIF for imports and FOB for exports
Net weight	Physical quantity (in kilograms)
Supplementary Quantity	Physical quantity (in the WCO recommended standard units of quantity)
Supplementary Quantity Unit	Description of units of quantity employed for supplementary quantity data (e.g., “Number of items”)
New data fields following the adoption of IMTS 2010 (include if already available)^a	
Second partner country or area	In national nomenclature; country of consignment for imports and country of consignment (destination) for exports
Second value for imports	Monetary value (in national currency or US dollars); FOB for imports
Mode of transport	The means of transport used when goods enter or leave the economic territory (in the encouraged nomenclature provided in IMTS 2010, para. 7.2 or national nomenclature)
Custom procedure code (or applicable transaction code)	Code of the customs procedure applied to individual transactions by customs; any applied procedure or transaction code if customs procedure codes are not available or if additional codes are used

If any of the recommendations cannot be met, please submit that information as well as any other metadata with the data files. Specifically:

- (i) Coverage: Except for the inclusions and exclusions as listed in *International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions 2010^b* (IMTS 2010), do you include or exclude other categories of goods? If yes, please list.
- (ii) Trade system: The General trade system is recommended for all flows; if you apply the Special trade system, please indicate which trade flows are excluded.
- (iii) Commodity Classification: Please indicate the edition of the HS commodity classification used to report the data (e.g., “HS2007” or “HS2012”). Please provide descriptions of codes, which are not based on the HS system.
- (iv) Valuation: If valuation is other than CIF (imports) and FOB (exports and imports), please specify.
- (v) Quantity Measurement: Use of the WCO standard units of quantity is recommended. If these units are not used, please describe used national units, indicate them in the Supplementary Quantity Unit field and provide conversion factors to the recommended WCO standard units of quantity.
- (vi) Partner Country: Country of origin (for imports) and country of last known destination (for exports) are recommended. In addition, countries are recommended/encouraged to provide the country of consignment for imports and for exports as second partner country. If other definitions of partner country are used, please describe. Please provide the name of the international nomenclature for country and area codes (e.g., “3-alpha-ISO”) used or provide the full list of the national nomenclature used.
- (vii) Mode of transport: Countries are recommended to clearly indicate the definition and contents of the categories used.
- (viii) Customs procedure code: Countries should provide in their metadata the nomenclature and description of the procedure codes applied by customs and the nomenclature and description of any additional procedure or transaction codes.
- (ix) Confidentiality: If confidentiality is used, please provide information about the special commodity and partner country codes used for that purpose. It is recommended that any information deemed confidential (suppressed) be reported in full detail at the next higher level of commodity aggregation that adequately protects confidentiality.
- (x) Currency unit: Description of currency unit (e.g., “National currency”, “US dollars”, or the corresponding ISO 4217 currency code)

Part II. Required metadata

All data transmissions should be accompanied with the following metadata elements and information:

- (i) Official or preliminary import and export totals for each period where data are provided;
- (ii) Sufficiently clear field names in the data file;
- (iii) For each abbreviation used, a full description of its meaning;
- (iv) Sufficient indication of quantity units and weight (in particular if not provided in kilograms of net weight), currencies, and scaling factors (thousands, millions, etc.) used.
- (v) Type of file format chosen, as well as the total number of records included in the data set.

Part III. Requested data structure and format

Our preferred file formats are flat files, for instance comma-separated value (CSV) files, or database files such as Access, dBase, or Stata. We request to send complete trade records (see Part I. above) and to avoid splitting them across several lines/ rows. Please do not send data structured in many tables or sub-tables. Also, please avoid the use of Word files or PDF files.

Countries are encouraged to contact us (at comtrade@un.org) regarding the structure, format and mode of transmission of the monthly data so that arrangements for regular transmission can be established.

^a The UNSC approved the new recommendations in 2010 (see *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2010, Supplement No. 4 (E/2010/24)*, chap. I, sect. B, decision 41/103).

^b An electronic copy of this UN publication (pre-edited version) is available at:
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/EG-IMTS/EG-IMTS%20web%20announcement.htm>.

ANNEX 3: CHANGES IN COUNTRY NOMENCLATURE

Please see below the following changes regarding partner country coding.

1) Netherlands Antilles: The federation of the Netherlands Antilles was formally dissolved on 10 October 2010. The former Dutch Caribbean dependency ceased to exist with a change of the five islands' constitutional status. Under the new political structure, Curaçao and Sint Maarten (Dutch part) have become autonomous countries within the Kingdom of the Netherlands, joining Aruba, which gained the status in 1986 (see <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49chang.htm>).

For purposes of Comtrade data processing and dissemination, both with annual and monthly frequency, the use of code 530 (Netherlands Antilles) will end in 2010. Starting with the 2011 data, the following codes will be used instead:

- 531 - Curaçao
- 534 - Sint Maarten (Dutch part)
- 535 - Bonaire, Saint Eustatius and Saba

2) Sudan: On 9 July 2011 South Sudan became an independent State and a Member of the United Nations on 14 July 2011 (see <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49alpha.htm>).

For purposes of Comtrade data processing and dissemination, both with annual and monthly frequency, the use of code 736 (Sudan, now 729) will end in 2011. Starting with the 2012 data, the following codes will be used instead:

- 728 - South Sudan
- 729 - Sudan

Countries are requested to incorporate those changes in their recording of partner information in due time, preferably maintaining consistency of recording on calendar year basis.