

STAT 442/3(1)

29 July 2008

Dear Colleagues,

Re: Worldwide consultation on the provisional draft of the revised recommendations for international merchandise trade statistics

In my letter of 23 April 2008 I informed you about the request of the United Nations Statistical Commission that the draft revised recommendations for international merchandise trade statistics be submitted to the Commission for adoption at its forty-first session in February 2010 and asked for your comments on the key issues relevant for setting the scope of the future recommendations. I am pleased to inform you the received comments and suggestions were fully used to guide the revision process and that the provisional draft of the revised recommendations is now available on the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) website at:

<<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/EG-IMTS/EG-IMTS%20web%20announcement.htm>>.

The preparation of the provisional draft benefited also from three virtual meetings of the Expert Group on International Merchandise Trade Statistics (EG-IMTS) conducted by UNSD in November-December 2008, March-April 2009 and May-June 2009. The reports of these meetings can be found at the above indicated website.

In accordance with the decision of the Commission at its thirty-ninth session (February 2008) the draft revised recommendations cover all main stages of the statistical process and provide an updated conceptual framework for international merchandise trade statistics as well as new recommendations on data compilation, quality assurance and dissemination policy. Additional guidance on more technical matters and description of good practices relevant to the implementation of the revised and new recommendations will be provided in the revised compilers manual.

The purpose of this letter is to invite you to review the provisional draft recommendations and to send us your comments/ suggestions in order to assist UNSD in the finalization of the draft recommendations prior to their submission to the Commission for adoption.

I would appreciate it very much if you provide your comments and suggestions by returning the completed questionnaire (available on the same website) to the following e-mail address (comtrade@un.org) by 25 September 2009. For any questions regarding the revision process as well as the content of the provisional draft of the recommendations please contact Mr. Vladimir Markhonko, Chief of Trade Statistics Branch (e-mail: markhonko@un.org).

Yours sincerely,



Director
Statistics Division/DESA