**UNSD-SACU workshop
on the implementation of the new recommendations
for International Merchandise Trade Statistics (IMTS 2010)
in SACU Member States**

12 – 15 June 2012, Johannesburg, South Africa

15 June - item 2:
UN Comtrade database and
(incl. update)
IMTS Analytical Outputs

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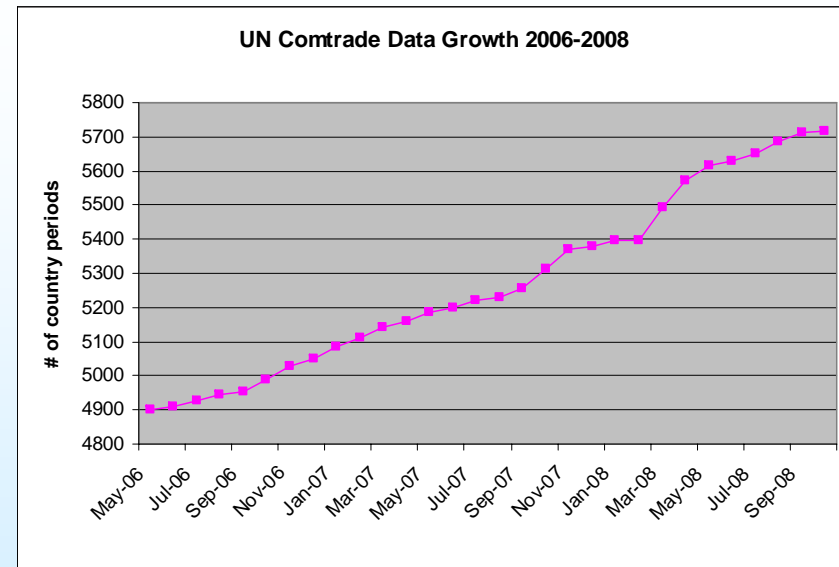**E-mail: reister@un.org**

What is UN Comtrade

- The United Nations Commodity Trade Statistics Database

- Maintained by UN Statistics Division / Trade Statistics Branch

- Contains detailed imports and exports statistics reported by statistical authorities of close to 200 countries or areas since <u>year 1962</u>

- Considered the most <u>comprehensive trade database</u> available in Internet with more than 1.5 billion records.
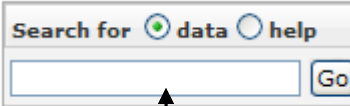
Coverage

- A typical record is – for instance – the exports of cars from Germany to the United States in 2007 in terms of value (US dollars), weight and supplementary quantity (number of cars).

- Only up to HS 6-digits

- <u>The database is continuously updated</u>. Whenever trade data are received from the national authorities, they are standardized by the UN Statistics Division and then added to UN Comtrade.

UN Comtrade Data Growth 2006-2008

(# of country periods — chart showing growth from ~4900 in May-06 to ~5720 in Sep-08)

Main Features

Data Extraction

Search for ⊙ data ○ help

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- Various basic extraction methods: Text search, Short Cut Query, Basic Selection, Express Selection
  - Download up to 20 millions records per query
- Comtrade data also disseminated in UNdata →

UNdata
A world of information

[Enter search terms] [Go]

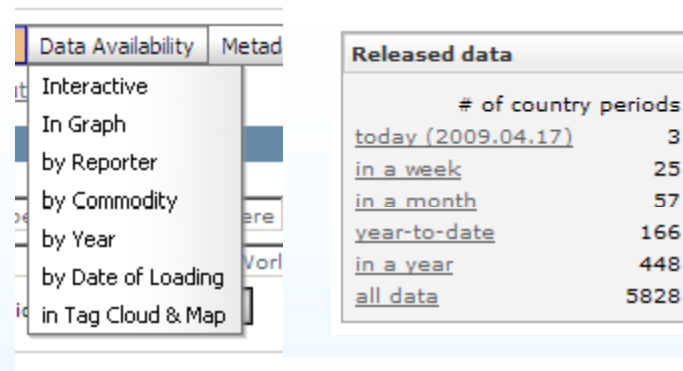- Advanced data extraction via Web Service for large unattended data transfer

Personalization

- Save frequently used query; Set new data alert; Automated data extraction
- Create country or commodity groupings; Set frequently used countries / commodities
- Customize download/output format

UNITED NATIONS
International Merchandise Trade Statistics

Main Features (cont.)

Data Availability and Metadata

- Multiple way to view available data
- Each data release accompanied by Explanatory and Publication notes
- Individual footnote records also available

Data Availability | Metad
Interactive
In Graph
by Reporter
by Commodity
by Year
by Date of Loading
in Tag Cloud & Map

Released data

	# of country periods
today (2009.04.17)	3
in a week	25
in a month	57
year-to-date	166
in a year	448
all data	5828

Support and Help

- Browse Knowledge Base for any questions
- Use Community Forum for peer support
- Chat during business hours | Live Help ●
- Email to comtrade@un.org

▶ **Most Popular Articles...**

▶ Q10062 - INFO: First Time User
▶ Q10173 - INFO: Commodity Trade Statistics Publications
▶ Q10102 - INFO: UN Comtrade Reference Tables
▶ Q10104 - INFO: Comtrade: Manuals & Documentations
▶ Q10146 - INFO: Data Query & Extraction Manual

▶ **Latest Additions...**

▶ Q10259 - INFO: Areas NES codes redefined
▶ Q10050 - INFO: UN Comtrade SDMX
▶ Q10102 - INFO: UN Comtrade Reference Tables
▶ Q10256 - INFO: Areas not elsewhere specified (Areas, NES)
▶ Q10255 - FAQ: Values on different levels of HS/SITC Classification

Useful FAQ

- Why our data are needed?
  - To have a complete world or regional coverage (for various analytical outputs); otherwise your data will be estimated

- How's about data confidentiality?
  - It is usually sufficient to protect confidentiality in HS 6-digits. If not, data can be suppressed as long as the chapter can still be identified (see presentation on data confidentiality)

- What are the benefits for data providers?
  - Visibility for your trade data, as UN Comtrade is used / referenced by many users, such as trade negotiation in WTO
  - Free unlimited access, can be used as a starting point in reconciliation study

Useful FAQ (cont.)

- When do you need the data?
  - Initial request is sent in February. It is preferable to have data within 6 months after the end of the reference year

- Final data is not ready within 6 months, but the preliminary data is available, do you accept it?
  - Yes, of course. If it is a preliminary data, please mention it explicitly so that the data set will be clearly flagged / noted as provisional data

- What are the required data items?
  - Annual trade by partners and detailed commodities with value, net weight and supplementary quantity. Data in HS 6-digits are required, tariff line level are preferred

- Is there any special requirement for data format?
  - No. It can be in any electronic format that can be easily transformed, such as text, excel, dbase, etc

IMTS Analytical Outputs

- Three working areas:
  - Total trade: values, indices and conversion factors
  - Trade in manufactured goods and fuel: values, unit values and volume indices
  - Trade matrix data: complete world coverage

- Publications:
  - Tables on Monthly Bulletin of Statistics (MBS)
  - International Trade Statistics Yearbook, Vol. I: Trade by Country and Vol. II: Trade by Commodity (new design for 2008 edition)
  - Annual Totals Table (Country totals compared)

IMTS Analytical Outputs (cont.)

- Frequency:
  - Total trade: monthly, quarterly and annual
  - Trade in manufactured goods and fuel: quarterly and annual
  - Trade matrix: generated in May, July, Sept, Nov, and Dec

- Data Source:
  - Total trade: IMF, MBS Questionnaire, country websites
  - Trade in manufactured goods and fuel: MBS Questionnaire, country websites, and UN Comtrade
  - Trade matrix: UN Comtrade

Thank you for your attention!