

## **Nepal hosts Asia workshop to help poorest countries make most of world trade**

The Government of Nepal is hosting on 21 June 2010 a three-day workshop, in partnership with UNDP and the Integrated Framework Executive Secretariat in the WTO, which aims to help Asia's poorest countries benefit more from world trade and help lift more people across the region out of poverty.

The trade and development regional workshop in the capital, Kathmandu, brings together representatives from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Maldives and Yemen. The international community is supporting the event with participation from ITC, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNIDO, UNOPS, the World Bank, the WTO, bilateral donors and the Asian Development Bank.

The workshop forms part of a wider trade and development programme (known as the 'Enhanced Integrated Framework') that is currently assisting 47 Least Developed Countries worldwide. The programme aims to give these countries the tools they need to tackle major obstacles to trade so as to promote economic growth, sustainable development and bring greater prosperity to the wider population.

Purushottam Ojha, Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Supplies, states, "the Government of Nepal thanks all agencies who are providing support to the programme and requests them to continue to make trade an instrument of economic growth thereby making the world free of poverty. We are fully committed to implementing the programme in Nepal. We hope that the experiences we share during the workshop will help mainstream trade into the national development agenda and define our path of export-led growth."

UNDP Country Director for Nepal, Anne-Isabelle Degryse-Blateau, says, "UNDP has supported the government in accessing this programme. The workshop serves as a platform to share Nepal's experience with other countries on how the programme supports the Aid for Trade agenda and as an opportunity for countries to learn from each other. I would like to congratulate the Government of Nepal for the upcoming launch of the Nepal Trade Integration Strategy 2010, at the time of this Asian Regional Conference."

Dorothy Tembo, Executive Director of the Integrated Framework Secretariat comments, "I am proud to be here to represent the Enhanced Integrated Framework. Our programme is about creating a genuine partnership between Least Developed Countries, international agencies and donors to show results on the ground. This workshop will highlight the progress Asia has made but also help countries use the programme to tackle some of the challenges ahead for trade to unlock future regional prosperity for all."