[2018]

ANNUAL REPORT

INTERNATIONAL THINK TANK FOR LLDC

Foreword

The International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries (ITTLLDC) is more important than ever. There has never been a greater need for independent, high-quality research for LLDCs that has a genuine impact on the most pressing matters concerning LLDCs.

We can fulfill this purpose because of our member states' firm commitments and the support of our many partner organizations. We are deeply grateful to them all.

The year 2018 has definitely been a year of firsts for us here, at the International Think Tank.

Among the multiple meetings, conferences, workshops and seminars, we have organized this year, the biggest highlights of this year were the First Meeting of the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC and the Inaugural Meeting of the ITTLLDC.

After the Multilateral Agreement for the establishment of an International Think Tank for LLDCs entered into force on October 6, 2017, the Board of Governors was established with representatives appointed by the member states of the ITTLLDC. The first meeting of the Board of Governors, which is the highest Authority of the International Think Tank, discussed key issues related to the operation of the ITTLLDC, such as core legal documents, finance, structure of the organization and staffing.

The Inaugural Meeting of the ITTLLDC was another big achievement for us, as it not only marked the historic inauguration of the ITTLLDC but this symbolic event also provided a platform for thematic multilateral discussions among LLDCs.

After the inaugural meeting the transition period of the ITTLLDC from its interim management scheme to its full operation as a fully independent intergovernmental organization has started. It is, therefore, my profound honor to lead the ITTLLDC to through its transition period as its first Executive Director.

Another big achievement for us this year was when the seventy third session of the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the resolution No. A/res/73/217 granting the ITTLLDC observer status to the General Assembly of the United Nations to promote cooperation between the International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries and the United Nations for the successful implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs and Sustainable Development Goals.

This year we held numerous bilateral meetings for networking and outreach purposes with not only landlocked developing countries like Afghanistan, Bhutan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Ethiopia, Azerbaijan, Paraguay, Niger, Burkina Faso, Uzbekistan and Mali but other development and research institutes like the World Bank in Washington DC, ADB in Manila, KIT Royal Tropical Institute and the Common Fund for Commodities in Amsterdam, and the Northeast Asian Transportation Corridor Promotion Network in Tokyo.

The Think Tank has always aimed to be a center of excellence for research and policy advice, and to strengthen the analytical capacities of LLDCs on issues of critical importance to their development. In doing so, the Think Tank will foster informed solutions, promote national ownership, and help accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Vienna Programme of Action.

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1. EVENTS ORGANIZED BY THE ITTLLDC

May 12 – Side-event with United Nations-ESCAP and Embassy of Mongolia in Bangkok

(Bangkok, Thailand)

United Nations ESCAP, Embassy of Mongolia in Bangkok and ITTLLDC hosted a side-event on day 2 of #CS74 to discuss the progress of regional integration among Asia, Pacific landlocked developing countries. In his opening address, ESCAP Deputy Executive Secretary Mr. Hongjoo Hahm said LLDCs continued to face challenges in economic diversification, particularly in boosting trade connectivity.

Joining the panel, Ambassador of Mongolia to Thailand H.E. Mr. Tumurkhuleg Tugsbilguun and Interim Director of ITTLLDC H.E. Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar, reaffirmed Mongolia's active role in supporting LLDCs to ensure success of the Vienna Programme of Action and the UN Global Goals.

From left: ESCAP Deputy Executive Secretary Mr. Hongjoo Hahm, Interim Director of ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar and Ambassador of Mongolia to Thailand H.E. Mr. Tumurkhuleg Tugsbilguun

Side-event to discuss the progress of regional integration

May 21-22 - The First Meeting of the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC

(UN House, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

The First Meeting of the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC was successfully organized on May 21-22, 2018 at the Conference hall of the UN House in Ulaanbaatar Mongolia.

After the Multilateral Agreement for the establishment of an ITTLLDC entered into force on October 6, 2018, the Board of Governors was established with the Governors appointed by the member states of the Multilateral Agreement.

This historic meeting was attended by the Board members from Afghanistan, Armenia, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Paraguay and Tajikistan.

At this inaugural meeting of the Board, the key issues related to the operation of the ITT, such as core legal documents, finance, structure of the organization and staffing, were discussed and members made decisions on all respective issues.

The Governor of Mongolia and Deputy Foreign Minister of Mongolia, H.E. Ms. Batmunkh Battsetseg and Mr. Juan Angel Delgadillo, Director General of the Department for Economic Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay, were elected as Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the first meeting of the Board in line with the article 6.3 of the Multilateral Agreement on the Establishment of the ITTLLDC.

Furthermore, Ambassador-at-Large and Interim Director Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar, who has been working as the Interim director of the ITT since 2012, was elected and appointed by the Board of Governors to serve as the first Executive Director of the ITTLLDC.

The Board also authorized the newly appointed Executive Director to sign a Host Country Agreement with the Government of Mongolia on behalf of the ITTLLDC representing all member states.

Group Photo

Chairperson of the Board of Governors, Deputy Foreign Minister of Mongolia, H.E. Ms. Battsetseg and Vice Chairperson Mr. Juan Angel Delgadillo, Director General of the Department for Economic Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay are chairing the inaugural Board meeting

Mongolia was elected as Chair of the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC

Ms. Beate Trankmann, UNDP Resident representative in Mongolia and Resident Coordinator of the UN in Mongolia

Ambassador-at-Large and Interim Director E.Odbayar introducing all Draft documents and answering questions of the Governors of the Board.

Ambassador-at-Large and Interim Director E.Odbayar after the election of Executive Director ....congratulations by the Vice Chair and members

June 11-12 - Inaugural Meeting of the ITTLLDC

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

This historic meeting, the inaugural meeting of the ITTLLDC, was organized for member states, observers, and supporters. It was a symbolic event, providing a platform for thematic multilateral discussion of LLDCs' special needs, challenges, and international development issues.

The main goal of this meeting was to provide all LLDCs with the possibility to attend the inaugural meeting of the ITTLLDC, and to open up an opportunity to express areas of interest for future collaboration with the ITTLLDC. This meeting also brought together all current and potential members of the ITTLLDC and other development partners and stakeholders.

This meeting not only marked the historic inauguration of the ITTLLDC, it also facilitated the exchange of information and experiences among LLDC government officials, donor countries, and international experts through its interactive discussions and thematic sessions.

http://land-locked.org/inaugural-meeting-of-the-international-think-tank-for-landlocked-developing-countries-was-successfully-organized-in-ulaanbaatar-mongolia/

You can also visit the meeting page at the United Nations' Office of High Representative for Landlocked Developing Countries here:

http://unohrlls.org/inaugural-meeting-international-think-tank-lldcs/

The Secretary-General of the United Nations Mr. Antonio Guterres congratulated the Governments of the landlocked developing countries for the inauguration of the International Think Tank for LLDCs that took place today in Mongolia.

In his congratulatory message delivered by Mr. Sandagdorj Erdenebileg, Chief, UN-OHRLLS, the Secretary-General commended the Government of Mongolia for hosting the Think Tank and for its leadership in operationalizing this important endeavour.

He said, "the establishment of the Think Tank as the first intergovernmental body dedicated to landlocked developing countries is a milestone in efforts to address their special needs".

Congratulatory message of UN Secretary-General was delivered by Mr. Sandagdorj Erdenebileg, Chief, UN-OHRLLS

"The Think Tank aims to be a centre of excellence for research and policy advice, and to strengthen the analytical capacities of LLDCs on issues of critical importance to their development. In so doing, the Think Tank will foster informed solutions, promote national ownership, and help accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Vienna Programme of Action."

Mr. Guterres confirmed that the United Nations stands ready to work closely with the Think Tank and all landlocked developing countries as we strive together to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and a better future for all.

Opening ceremony:

From left: Mr. Damdinsuren Davaasuren, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia, Mr. Ulziisaikhan Enkhtuvshin., Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia, Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, Under Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

Opening ceremony - being moderated by H.E. Damdinsuren Davaasuren, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia

Opening remarks by
H.E. Mr. Ulziisaikhan Enkhtuvshin,
Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia

Opening remarks by H.E. Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, Under Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States,

Opening remarks by Ambassador Raul Silvero, Ambassador of Paraguay to Mongolia and Global Chair of the LLDC Group

Opening remarks and presentation by Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar, Executive Director of the ITTLLDC

Report of the first Meeting of the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC being presented to member states by H.E. Batmunkh Battsetseg, Deputy Foreign Minister of Mongolia and elected chair of the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC,

From left:

Mr. Ashot Kocharian, Director of the Multilateral and Bilateral economic cooperation department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia,

H.E. Mr. Azer Huseyn, Ambassador at Large of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan,

Mr. Eric Yemdaogo Tiare, Ambassador Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso to United Nations,

H.E. Mr. Lyonpo Damcho Dorji, Foreign Minister of Bhutan,

Dr. Khiane PHANSOURIVONG, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Lao PDR to the United Nations,

Joint Press Conference:

From left: Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar, Executive Director of the ITTLLDC, H.E. Mr. Raul Silvero, Ambassador of Paraguay to Mongolia and Chair country of the Group of LLDCs H.E. Ms. Batmunkh Battsetseg, Deputy Foreign Minister of Mongolia and Chairperson of the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC and H.E. Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, Under Secretary-General and High Representative for LLDCs,

Thematic session 1: Foreign Direct Investment and Economic diversification of LLDCs

Presentation by UNOHRLLS

Ms. Gladys Mutangadura,
Senior Programme Officer,

Presentation by ESCAP
Economic Diversification and Foreign Direct Investment in Asia-Pacific LLDCs

Mr. Hamza Ali Malik
Director of Macroeconomic Policy and Financing for Development Division

Launching the paper on FDI and trade connectivity in LLDCs - Case LAO PDR by Professor Sandra Seno-Alday, University of Sydney and ITTLLDC

H.E. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal (left on the Picture)

Foreign Direct Investment and Economic Diversification of LLDC's Presentation by Ms. B.Lakshmi, Director of EPCRC

Mr. Mussie Delelegn Chief, Landlocked Developing Countries' Section Division for Africa, LDCs and Special Programmes

Thematic Session 2 - ICT Connectivity and LLDCs

ICT connectivity and LLDCs

"Launching of the paper Technology Leapfrogging -Case Azerbaijan"
Ms. Evelyn Ng, Expert of the University of Sydney and ITTLLDC

"The Role of Intellectual Property and Innovation in Development and Economic Diversification, and WIPO's Development Cooperation Activities"

Presentation by the representative of the World Intellectual Property Organization
Mr. Purevdorj Vaanchig, Senior Counsellor, Division for Least-Developed Countries, WIPO (right on the photo/, at the Inaugural Conference of the ITTLLDC

Siope Vakataki 'Ofa
ICT and Development Section
ICT and Disaster Risk Reduction Division, ESCAP

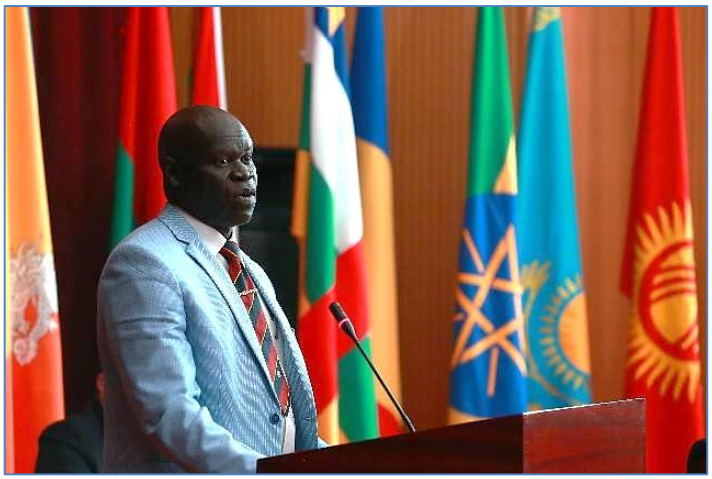
"Enterprise Information Technology Status"

Mr. Avind Joshi
Chief Information Officer
Khas Bank Mongolia

Thematic session 3: Infrastructure Development, Transit Transport Corridors and trade facilitation: Challenges and opportunities of LLDCs

Presentation by UNOHRLLS

Ms. Gladys Mutangadura, Senior Programme Officer, OHRLLS



Transit Corridors in Africa and African LLDCs Presented by:

Mr. Elias L. Leonardo, Northern Corridor Transit and Transport Coordination Authority

"Launching of the paper on Modelling the Potential for Aviation Liberalization in Central Asia - Market analysis and implications for the Belt and Road initiative"
Professor Dr Xiaowen Fu,
University of Sydney and ITTLLDC

"Transport and Trade Facilitation for Development: Scaling-up Public Finance and Investments"
presented by
Mr. Mussie Delelegn, Chief,
LLDCs' Section, Division for Africa,
Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes, UNCTAD

Presenting the WTO TFA and the TIR CARNET
Presented by
Mr. J.Ayush, Executive Director
National Road Transport Association of Mongolia

Wrapping up the Inaugural meeting

Statement by Hon'ble Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali,
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal

Discussing the Adoption of the Ulaanbaatar Declaration of the Inaugural Conference of the ITTLLDC

Closing Ceremony of the Inaugural meeting

Closing remarks by
H.E. Mr. Raul Silvero, Ambassador of Paraguay, Global Chair of the Group of LLDCs,
H.E. Mr. Damdin Tsogtbaatar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia,
H.E. Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, USG and High Representative for LLDCs,
Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar, Executive Director of the ITTLLDC

June 12 - Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony of the ITTLLDC

(UN House, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

Announcement and words of appreciation by Executive Director Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar

From left: H.E. Mr. Damdin Tsogtbaatar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia
H.E. Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, Under Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

Cutting the Ribbon for LLDCs

From left:
Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar, Executive Director of the ITTLLDC,
H.E. Mr. Damdin Tsogtbaatar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia,
H.E. Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, USG and High Representative for LLDCs,
H.E. Ms. Beate Trankmann, United Nations Resident Coordinator and UN Development Programme Resident Representative, Mongolia

Unveiling the Inaugural Plaque by
Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar, Executive Director of the ITTLLDC,
H.E. Mr. Damdin Tsogtbaatar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia

October 16-17 - Sub-regional Workshop with UNCTAD

(UN House, Ulaanbaatar)

Sub-regional Workshop on "Fostering Structural Transformation and Export Diversification in Selected Asian Landlocked Developing Countries" was jointly organized in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, from 16 to 17 October 2018 by the ITTLLDC, UN Conference on Trade and Development and the Government of Mongolia.

During the workshop, the ITTLLDC, in cooperation with UNCTAD, introduced research results on structural economic transformation and export diversification, which was identified as Priority 5 in the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs.

Government representatives from Mongolia, Lao PDR, Bhutan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan made presentations on the challenges, policies and best practices to diversify their economies.

The outcome of the workshop helped to guide trade policy formulation and implementation at the national and sub-regional levels and it contained a synthesis of the identified areas of trade potential, local gaps and limitations, together with policy recommendations aimed at addressing the challenges facing countries of the sub-region.

The results of the workshop also fed into the mid-term review of the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs in 2019.

From left:
Mr. Andrey Kuleshov, Strategy and Development Advisor, Common Fund for Commodities,
Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar, Executive Director, ITTLLDC,
H.E. Ms. Batmunkh Batstetseg, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia, Chairperson of the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC,
Mr. Erdenebileg Sandagdorj, Chief, UN-OHRLLS

Mr. Paul Akiwumi, Director, Landlocked developing countries, Division for Africa, Least developed countries and Special Programmes UNCTAD

Mr. Patrick Osakwe, Chief, Trade and Poverty Branch, Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries, and Special Programmes, UNCTAD

Mr. Mussie Delelegn, Chief, Landlocked Developing Countries Section, UNCTAD

Ms. Meyer Kumenova, Investment Promotion and Protection Agency of Kyrgyz Republic

Mr. Anvar Khakimov, Ministry of Foreign Trade, Uzbekistan

Mr. Andrzej Bolesta, Economic Affairs Officer, Landlocked Developing Countries' section, UNESCAP

Ms. T.Battsetseg, Deputy Director, Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia

Question and Answer session

Mr. Ugyen Dorji, Chief of Division, Department of Multilateral Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bhutan

November 29 – National consultation on "Challenges of trade facilitation and transportation and logistics sector"

(UN House, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

The ITTLLDC jointly organized the national consultation on "Challenges of trade facilitation and transportation and logistics sector" with Mongolia Maritime Administration under the Ministry of Road and Transport Development of Mongolia on November 29, 2018 in the United Nations House in Ulaanbaatar.

The consultation was attended by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia, the Ministry of Road and Transport Development, National Development Agency, Customs General Administration, Mongolian Freight Forwarder Association and business entities, non-governmental organizations and scientists in transportation and logistics sector.

The main objective of the consultation was to listen to the problems faced by the logistics sector in Mongolia and the everyday complications faced by companies operating in the sector, and to provide information on international treaties, laws and regulations of the logistics sector, policies and measures implemented by governmental organizations.

During the consultation, presentations were made by followings:

- the ITTLLDC on the development and economic status of LLDCs, activities and significance of ITTLLDC,
- the Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia on the activities of the National Committee for the Promotion of Trade Facilitation and the WTO,
- the Customs General Administration of Mongolia on the Program on Accreditation for Customs Accredited Enterprises,
- the Mongolia Maritime Administration on exporting goods to third countries through neighbouring countries.

Mr. B.Munkhbat,
Maritime Administration of Mongolia

Dr. J.Chimgee,
Customs of Mongolia

Ms. B.Nergui,
3rd Secretary, Department for Foreign Trade and
Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia

December 10 - Conference on "FinTech-Unlocking Asian Landlocked Countries"

(Brussels, Belgium)

First outreach of the ITTLLDC to the EU community in Brussels.

Conference on "FinTech-Unlocking Asian Landlocked Countries" was successfully organized for the Supporters of LLDCs.

ITTLLDC in cooperation with the European Institute for Asian Studies jointly organized this event on December 10, 2018 in Brussels, Belgium.

The conference was attended by countries such as Mongolia, Nepal, Uzbekistan and several other international organizations based in Brussels, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Service Forum and Febelfin and other stakeholders.

The purpose of the Conference was to explore how European FinTech can contribute with expertise and collaborate in the FinTech development in the Asian Landlocked developing countries. This can help them leapfrog and bring the Asian landlocked countries at the forefront of innovative technologies.

At the meeting, Executive Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar held a presentation on potential cooperation modalities with different stakeholders and highlighted the importance of high quality research in each and every development effort.

Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar, Executive Director of the ITTLLDC

Mr. Axel Goethals, Director of the European Institute for Asian Studies

H.E. Mr. Dilyor Khakimov,
Ambassador of Uzbekistan in Brussels

H.E. Mr. Lok Bahadur Thapa,
Ambassador of Nepal in Brussels

H.E. Mr. Od Och, Ambassador of Mongolia in Brussels

EXPLORING CONNECTIVITY IN LLDCs
ICT CONNECTIVITY
REGIONAL

2. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES & PARTICIPATION

September 14 – GIZ biannual Symposium on Economic and Social Development

(Bad Neuenahr, Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany)

On the invitation of the GIZ the ITTLLDC participated in the GIZ biannual Symposium on Economic and Social Development.

Executive Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. E.Odbayar participated in two panels in GIZ's biannual Symposium on Economic and Social Development.

1. "Globalization – revisited"
2. "China 's Increasing Role in the Extractives and Infrastructure" on September 11-13, 2018, in Bad Neuenahr, Germany.

The goal of the symposium was to assemble a panel of diverse participants to discuss the current developments in global trade policy and implications for economic development ranging from German political representatives, to international academia/think tanks, development country perspectives from Africa and Asia, as well as the private sector.

During the Plenary Panel session titled "Globalization's Next Top Model – Can trade integration still work for development?" Mr. Odbayar spoke on Asian Trade Integration, representing the perspective of Asia from a think tank as well as policy point of view, specifically with regards to the Belt and Road Initiative.

Donald Trump is delivering on
threats. That's bad for Brexit
Sceptics need to be convinced about
benefits of globalisation

Panel discussion with you and:

September 18-19 - Expert Group Meeting on Midterm review of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDC

(Almaty, Kazakhstan)

The ITTLLDC participated in the Expert Group Meeting on Midterm review of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDC on the invitation of the UN-ESCAP on September 18-19, 2018 in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

The meeting was successfully concluded having addressed challenges to implement the VPoA, assessed progress and sharing success stories in implementing the Vienna Programme of Action in Asia-Pacific LLDCs.

During the meeting, Mr. Odbayar, Executive Director of the ITTLLDC, held a presentation on the experience of LLDCs and principal challenges that LLDCs are facing to implement the priorities of the VPoA and how the ITTLLDC can support and strengthen the capacity of LLDCs in addressing their challenges and implementing the VPoA through analytical work.

September 20-21 - Economic Forum of United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA)

(Almaty, Kazakhstan)

On the invitation of the Government of Kazakhstan, the ITTLLDC participated in the Economic Forum of United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) on September 20-21, 2018 in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

SPECA was launched in 1998 to strengthen subregional cooperation in Central Asia and its integration into the world economy and this year SPECA was celebrating its 20th anniversary.

Some of SPECA countries e.g. Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are already parties to the Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of an ITTLLDC and are represented in the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC.

Executive Director of the ITTLLDC, Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar was invited as a panellist of the session on Structural economic transformation of the forum.

At the forum, Executive Director Odbayar presented the role and potential support of the ITTLLDC for the development of SPECA countries and highlighted the importance of high quality analysis and how research products of the ITT can be effectively used to mobilize financial and intellectual resources to overcome challenges that SPECA Countries are facing on their way to implement the Vienna Programme of Action and SDG 2030.

September 28 - Annual Foreign Ministers' meeting of LLDCs

(UN Secretariat Building, New York, United States)

On the invitation of the Chair of LLDC Group in New York, the ITTLLDC participated in the Annual Foreign Ministers' meeting of LLDC on September 28, 2018 in New York, USA.

At the ministerial meeting Executive Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar had the opportunity to meet member states and learn about their specific research needs and challenges.

Speech by H.E. Mr. Damdin Tsogtbaatar, Foreign Minister of Mongolia

October 3 - Meeting of the Group of Friends of LLDCs

(Permanent Mission of Austria to the United Nations, New York, United States)

On the invitation of the Permanent Mission of Austria to the United Nations the ITTLLDC participated in the meeting of the Group of Friends of LLDC on 3 October 2018 in New York, USA.

The meeting was attended by countries such as Norway, Sweden, Italy, Canada, Tanzania and several other transit countries as well as LLDCs and more.

The participants discussed how to further advance the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs and how to better coordinate the interaction between LLDCs and the group of friends of LLDCs.

At the meeting, Executive Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar held a presentation on potential coordination needs among different stakeholders and highlighted the importance of high quality research in each and every development effort.

From left: Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar, Executive Director of the ITTLLDC,
His Excellency Jan Kickert, Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations and Chair of the Group of Friends of LLDCs

October 3 - Briefing for the Group of LLDCs

(Permanent Mission of Paraguay, New York, United States)

Permanent Mission of Paraguay, in its capacity as the global Chair of the LLDC Group at the UN, convened an informal meeting of the Group of LLDC on 3 October 2018 in New York, USA.

At the meeting, Executive Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar briefed the Group of LLDCs about the upcoming events and workshops of the ITTLLDC and exchanged views on further collaboration with member states.

Niger confirmed that they have concluded its internal procedures regarding their accession to the multilateral agreement on the establishment of an ITTLLDC.

November 15 - 7th Inter-Agency Consultative Group Meeting of the United Nations system and international organizations on the implementation of the VPoA for LLDC for the Decade 2014-2024

(United Nations Secretariat Building, New York, United States)

On the invitation of the High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS of the UN, the ITTLLDC participated in the 7th Inter-Agency Consultative Group Meeting of the United Nations system and international organizations on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 on November 14, 2018 in New York, USA.

The consultative meeting addressed challenges and activities towards implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and discussed the intergovernmental preparations for the midterm review of the implementation of the VPoA. Participating organizations consulted on substantive preparations for the midterm review, including thematic pre-conference events and side events in the lead up to and during the midterm review.

At the meeting Executive Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar had the opportunity to meet UN system and international organizations and discussed potential joint events to be organized in 2019.

December 6-7 - 30th Annual Meeting of the Governing Council of the Common Fund for Commodities

(Hague, Netherlands)

On the invitation of the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC), the ITTLLDC participated in the 30th Annual Meeting of the Governing Council of the Common Fund for Commodities being held in the Hague from 6-7 December, 2018.

At the Meeting of the Governing Council Executive Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar had the opportunity to meet representatives of LLDCs, UN system organizations and international organizations and discussed potential collaboration with the Governors of the Board in the fields of research, workshops and capacity building training.

3. RESEARCH

➢ The ITTLLDC conducted a comprehensive study on Economic diversification of LLDCs, which consists of four separate research papers on cases of four landlocked developing countries, Bhutan, Mongolia, Nepal and Paraguay, to analyse the trends, opportunities and obstacles of economic, export and market diversification in above mentioned countries and to recommend policy options for further structural transformation with the kind funding of the Group of 77 at the UN and Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund.

The objective of the research on "Economic diversification of LLDCs: Case of Bhutan, Mongolia, Nepal and Paraguay" was to support the implementation of the VPoA, Priority 5 on Structural economic transformation, by determining and analysing the trends, opportunities and obstacles of economic, export and market diversification in these countries, and recommending policy options for structural transformation. This study could also be beneficial for the governments of other LLDCs in formulating their national policies on structural transformation.

The Secretariat of the ITTLLDC and its expert group including officials from each targeted countries reviewed the final draft reports on four countries' cases and the final report will be introduced in 2019.

➢ The ITTLLDC jointly conducted a research project on "The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): Prospects for International Trade in continental Asia", which explores the prospects for international trade among countries in continental Asia within the context of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) with the ITTLLDC partner University of Sydney.

The significant geographic constraint increases vulnerability to political and economic conditions of immediate neighbours. This in turn intensifies international business risk, limits international economic engagement, and decreases business competitiveness. From a network perspective, this study investigates patterns in the development of trade networks in the continent over time and explores the possible impact of the BRI on the international competitiveness of landlocked developing country firms.

The research findings will be introduced to the public in 2019.

4. OTHER

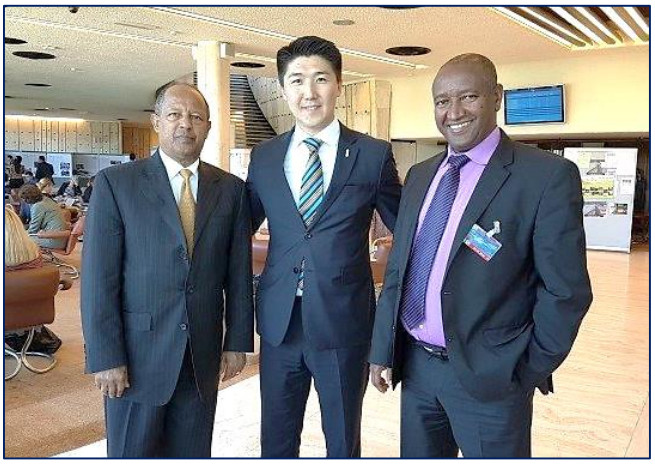
January 11 - Welcoming newest member state Ethiopia

In 2018, The ITTLLDC welcomed Ethiopia to the ITTLLDC.

The House of Peoples' Representatives of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has ratified the Multilateral Agreement on the Establishment of an ITTLLDC on 2nd of November 2017 and submitting its instrument of ratification to the UN Treaty section on January 9, 2018 therefore becoming the 11th member state of the ITTLLDC.

Meeting with the Ethiopian Ambassador in Beijing 2016

Over the past 5 years, the ITTLLDC reached out to the Government of Ethiopia and held several meetings around the globe on Ethiopia´s participation in the activities of the ITTLLDC and the advantages and benefits for the country.

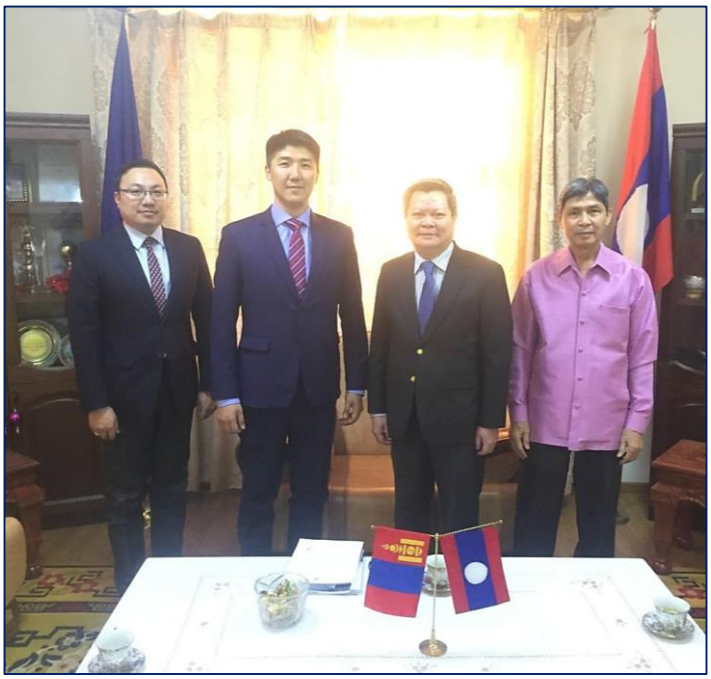


Meeting with the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia and Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials in Geneva 2016

Recent meeting with the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia in Geneva 2017

January 16 - Meeting the Ambassador of Lao PDR

(Embassy of Lao PDR, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)



Ambassador at-Large Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar held a bilateral meeting with H.E. Sialounkone Seng-Outhone Ambassador of Lao PDR to Mongolia.

Mr. Odbayar informed the Ambassador about the progress of the transition period the ITTLLDC undergoing transitioning from its interim management scheme to full operation.

During the meeting H.E. Odbayar handed over the Ministerial letter of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia H.E. Damdin Tsogtbaatar addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lao PDR calling on Lao PDR to appoint its representative to the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC at its earliest convenience.

Ambassador Odbayar also informed the Lao Ambassador about the first meeting of the Board of Governors, to be organized in the first half of 2018 and the inaugural meeting of the ITTLLDC to be held in June 2018.

January 17 - Meeting the Ambassador of Kazakhstan

(Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

Ambassador at-Large Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar held a bilateral meeting with H.E. Kalybek Koblandin, Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Mongolia.

Mr. Odbayar informed the Ambassador about the progress of the transition period the ITTLLDC undergoing transitioning from its interim management scheme to full operation.

During the meeting Ambassador Odbayar handed over the Ministerial letter of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia H.E. Damdin Tsogtbaatar addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan calling on Kazakhstan to appoint its representative to the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC at its earliest convenience.

Ambassador Odbayar also informed the Kazakh Ambassador about the first meeting of the Board of Governors, to be organized in the first half of 2018 and the inaugural meeting of the ITTLLDC to be held in June 2018.

April 3 - Ambassador of Afghanistan visits the ITT

(ITTLLDC Office, UN House, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

Ambassador at-Large and Interim Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar welcomed the Ambassador of Afghanistan, His Excellency Janan Mosazai at the ITTLLDC in Mongolia on April 3, 2018.

Afghanistan acceded to the Multilateral Agreement on the Establishment of the ITTLLDC on 20 February 2013.
Mr. Odbayar briefed H.E. Mr. Janan Mosazai on overall activities of the ITTLLDC and handed over publications of the ITTLLDC.

During the meeting Mr. Odbayar also thanked the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on appointing its representative to the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC.

Ambassador Odbayar also informed the Ambassador of Afghanistan about the first meeting of the Board of Governors, to be organized in May 2018 and the inaugural meeting of the ITTLLDC to be held in June 2018.

H.E. Janan Mosazai expressed his gratitude to the ITTLLDC for its firm commitment to the LLDC community.

April 3 - Ambassador of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg visits the ITT

(ITTLLDC Office, UN House, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

Ambassador at-Large and Interim Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar welcomed the Ambassador of Luxembourg, His Excellency Hubsch Marc Pierre at the ITTLLDC in Mongolia on April 3, 2018.

Mr. Odbayar introduced the goals and objectives of the International Think Tank to H.E. Mr. Hubsch Marc Pierre and both sides have agreed to jointly explore potential cooperation modalities in the areas of capacity building, research planning, trade and transportation sector and many more.

Ambassador Odbayar expressed his willingness to establish close partnerships with the Government of Luxembourg and the research community in Luxembourg as Luxembourg is also a landlocked country but a highly developed one.

Ambassador Odbayar also emphasized that the ITTLLDC would be standing ready to share the experience of Luxembourg with fellow landlocked countries within the framework of the North-South, South-South as well as triangular cooperation.

H.E. Hubsch Marc Pierre expressed his congratulation to the ITTLLDC for its achievements and entry into force of the multilateral agreement and reiterated his willingness to determine possible areas of support as well as to further explore the scope of a mutually beneficial cooperation.

April 4 - Ambassador of Uzbekistan visits the ITT

(ITTLLDC Office, UN House, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

Ambassador at-Large and Interim Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar welcomed the Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan, His Excellency Bakhtiyor Saeedov at the ITTLLDC in Mongolia on April 4, 2018.

Mr. Odbayar informed H.E. Mr. Bakhtiyor Saeedov about the overall activities of the ITTLLDC and introduced recent publications of the ITTLLDC.

Mr. Odbayar also introduced potential benefits of the accession of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Multilateral Agreement for the establishment of an ITTLLDC and called on Uzbekistan to ratify the Multilateral Agreement at its earliest convenience.

Ambassador Odbayar also informed the Ambassador of Uzbekistan about the upcoming inaugural meeting of the ITTLLDC to be held in June 2018.

H.E. Bakhtiyor Saeedov congratulated the ITTLLDC for its achievements and entry into force of the multilateral agreement while underscoring the significance of the Think tank to all LLDCs.

April 4 - Ambassador of Azerbaijan visits the ITT

(ITTLLDC Office, UN House, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

Ambassador at-Large and Interim Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar welcomed the newly accredited Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Mongolia His Excellency Ramzi Teymurov at the ITTLLDC in Mongolia on April 4, 2018.

Mr. Odbayar briefed H.E. Mr. Ramzi Teymurov on the overall activities of the ITTLLDC and handed over publications of the ITTLLDC.

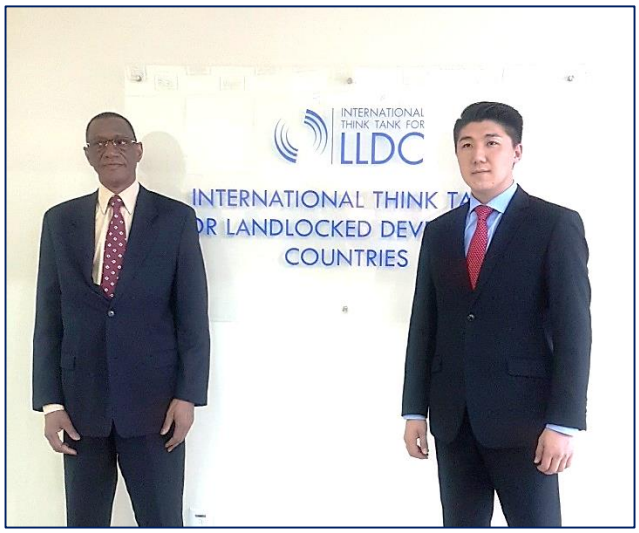
Mr. Odbayar also highlighted potential benefits of the membership of Republic of Azerbaijan in the ITTLLDC.

H.E. Ramzi Teymurov extended his best wishes to the entire team of Ambassador Odbayar and expressed his willingness to follow up on the topics discussed during the meeting.

April 4 - Ambassador of Mali visits the ITTLLDC

(ITTLLDC Office, UN House, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

Ambassador at-Large and Interim Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar welcomed the newly accredited Ambassador of the Republic of Mali to Mongolia, His Excellency Tiefing Konate at the ITTLLDC in Ulaanbaatar on April 4, 2018.



Ambassador Odbayar highlighted the importance of African voices in the International Think Tank and called on Mali to ratify the Multilateral Agreement in order to become a full member of the ITTLLDC.

H.E. Tiefing Konate expressed his gratitude to the ITTLLDC for its firm commitment to the LLDC community.

April 4 - Ambassador of Burkina Faso visits the ITT

(ITTLLDC Office, UN House, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

Ambassador at-Large and Interim Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar welcomed the Ambassador of Burkina Faso, His Excellency Antoine Somdah at the ITTLLDC in Mongolia on April 4, 2018.

Burkina Faso acceded to the Multilateral Agreement on the Establishment of the ITTLLDC on 10 November 2016.

Mr. Odbayar briefed H.E. Mr. Antoine Somdah on overall activities of the ITTLLDC and handed over the newest publications of the ITTLLDC.

During the meeting Mr. Odbayar also thanked Burkina Faso for appointing its representative to the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC and informed the Ambassador of Burkina Faso about the first meeting of the Board of Governors, which was planned to be organized in May 2018 and the inaugural meeting of the ITTLLDC to be held in June 2018.

H.E. Antoine Somdah expressed his gratitude to the ITTLLDC for its firm commitment to the LLDC community and promised that he will inform the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso soon.

April 26 - Meeting with LLDC representatives

(Blue Sky Hotel, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

During the "International Conference on Improving Foreign Policy Decision Making-Mechanism: Example of Mongolia", which was organized at the Blue Sky Hotel, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, Mr. Damdin-Od Dulguun, Research Coordinator of the ITTLLDC, took this as an opportunity to meet officials from **Afghanistan, Bhutan, Kyrgyz Republic and Lao PDR**, that are member states of the ITTLLDC.

He briefly introduced the mission of the ITT to the LLDC representatives and informed them about the upcoming Board of Governors Meeting on 21-22 May 2018 and the Inaugural Meeting of the ITT on 11-12 June, 2018.

He also provided necessary information of above mentioned events, including copies of official invitation and other related materials. Mr. Dulguun also handed out the newest research publications of the ITT.

September 21 - Meeting our board member from Kazakhstan

(Almaty, Kazakhstan)

On the side lines of the Economic Forum of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) in Almaty, Kazakhstan Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar, Executive Director of the ITTLLDC, met Mr. Kairat Torebayev, member of the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC and Director of the Department of International cooperation of the Ministry of National Economy of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Kairat Torebayev represents his country in the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC, which is the highest authority of the ITTLLDC as manifested in the Multilateral Agreement on the Establishment of an ITTLLDC.

Both parties discussed the role of Kazakhstan in the ITTLLDC and exchanged views on potential ways of better implementation of the VPoA in Kazakhstan and in Central Asian LLDCs

September 29 - Bilateral meeting with UN-Office of the High Representative for LLDCs

(UN-OHRLLS Office, New York, United States)

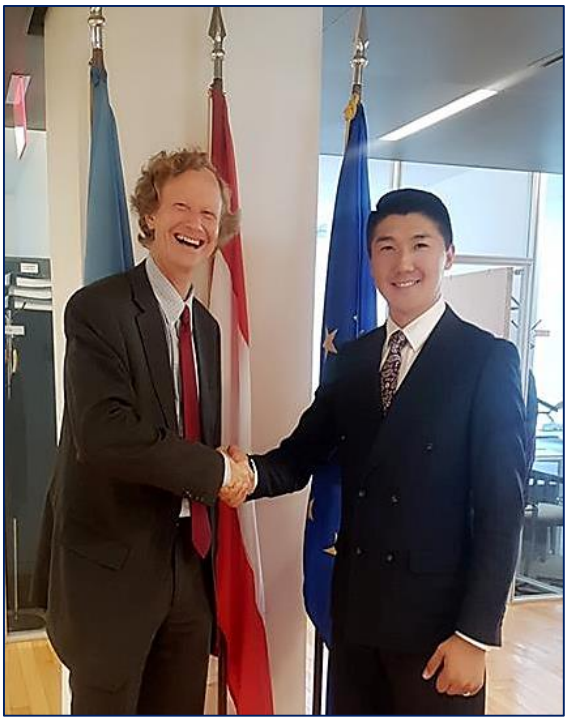
On the sidelines of the Annual Foreign Ministers Meeting of Landlocked Developing Countries, Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar, Executive Director of the ITTLLDC, held a bilateral meeting with H.E. Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, Under Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States on September 28, 2018 in New York.

The parties exchanged their views on potential ways of collaboration and coordinating efforts to support LLDCs in their endeavour to successfully implement the VPOA and SDGs.

Both sides also agreed to establish a Memorandum of Understanding in the near future and agreed to start working on the details of the documents.

October 4 - Meeting up with a friend of the ITTLLDC

(Permanent Mission of Austria to the United Nations, New York, United States)



Executive Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar met His Excellency Jan Kickert, Permanent representative of Austria to the United Nations and Chair of the Group of Friends of LLDCs.

His Excellency Jan Kickert has supported the ITTLLDC from the early stages of the International Think Tank.

Executive Director Odbayar thanked H.E. Kickert for his continuous support to the ITTLLDC and to the LLDC community in general and both parties exchanged views on potential fields of cooperation in the near future.

October 10 - Meeting with partner organization

(JETRO Office, Minato-ku, Tokyo, Japan)

Executive Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar met Mr. Osamu Mizui, Executive Vice President of Japanese External Trade Organization (JETRO) on 10 October 2018 in Tokyo, Japan.

The meeting was also attended by the Director General of the Research Planning Department as well as senior Director for Global Strategy North East Asia Planning Department of JETRO.

JETRO supported the ITTLLDC from the early stages of its operation.

Executive Director Odbayar thanked Mr. Mizui for the continuous support of JETRO to the ITTLLDC.

Both parties exchanged views on joint planning of potential cooperation in 2019 in the fields of research, workshops, capacity building seminars and promoting the engagement of private sector in the future cooperation of the two organizations.

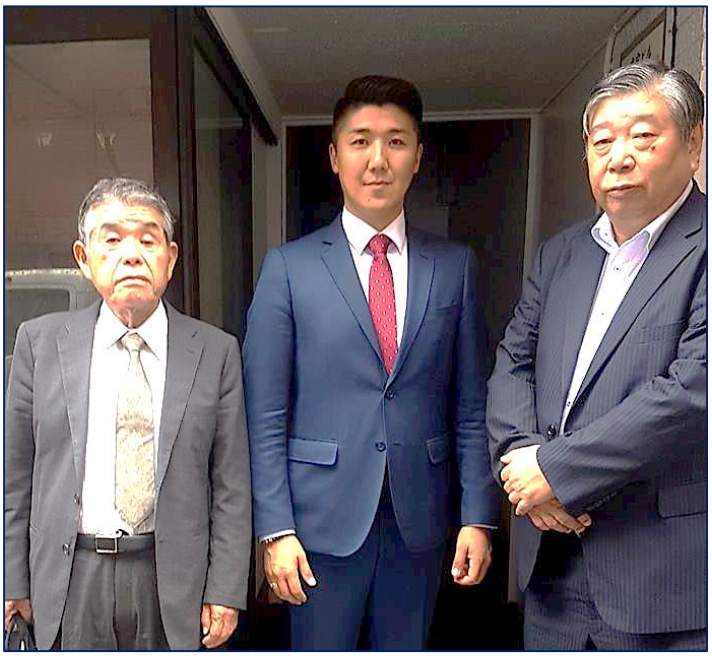
For more on ITTLLDC -JETRO cooperation in the past please go to the following links.

http://land-locked.org/economic-development-in-a-land-locked-country-the-case-of-lao-pdr/

http://land-locked.org/joint-workshop-on-ide-gsm-potential-benefits-and-prospect-for-collaboration-in-mongolia/

October 11 - First Meeting with the NEANET

(Minatoku Tokyo, Japan)



Executive Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar met Mr. Kunioki Homma, Chairman of Northeast Asian Transportation Corridor Promotion Network (NEANET) on 11 October 2018 in Tokyo, Japan.

The meeting was also attended by Mr. Ikuo Mitsuhashi, the Vice Chairman of NEANET.

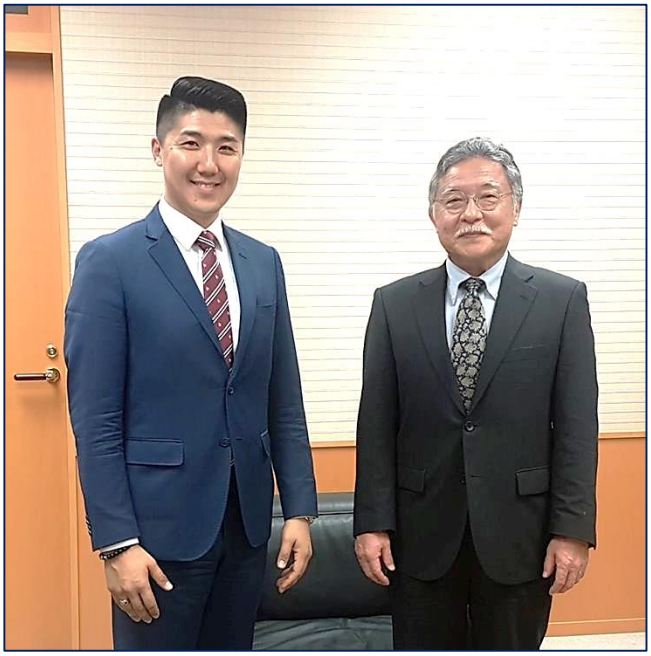
Both parties exchanged views on potential cooperation in the fields of research on LLDC transportation related issues and information sharing.

Both parties agreed to collaborate in research related to the Belt and Road Initiative with the NEANET team on BRI.

October 11 - Meeting with partner IDE-JETRO

(Chiba, Japan)

Executive Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar meets Dr Hirano Katsumi, Executive Vice President of Institute of Developing Economies (IDE-JETRO), on 11 October 2018 in Chiba, Japan.



The partnership between ITTLLDC and the Institute of Developing Economies started back in 2012.

Executive Director Odbayar thanked Dr Hirano for the continuous support of IDE to the ITTLLDC and to the LLDC community in general.

Both parties exchanged views on their plans for 2019 and potential areas of cooperation in 2019 regarding different fields of research, workshop, capacity building activities.

Both sides agreed to continue their cooperation in the field of Geographical Simulation Model (GSM) and decided to extend the project on other LLDCs.

October 16 - Director of Division of UNCTAD visits the ITTLLDC

(ITTLLDC Office, UN House, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

The meeting with Mr. Paul Akiwumi, Director of Division for Africa, Least developed countries and Special Programmes of UNCTAD, was held at the office of the ITTLLDC at the UN House on October 16, 2018.

Executive Director Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar discussed long-term cooperation plans with Director Paul Akiwumi from UNCTAD. Both sides further discussed the possibilities of future collaboration on not only joint research and studies for the year 2019 but also organizing more workshops and seminars for LLDCs and LDCs within the framework of the Vienna Programme of Action.

From left: Mr. Odbayar Erdenetsogt, Executive Director, ITTLLDC, Mr. Paul Akiwumi, Director, Landlocked developing countries, Division for Africa, Least developed countries and Special programmes, UNCTAD, Mr. Mussie Delelegn, Chief, Landlocked Developing Countries Section, ALDC Division, UNCTAD, Mr. Patrick Osakwe, Chief, Trade and Poverty Branch, Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries, and Special Programmes, UNCTAD

October 22 – Trilateral meeting between ITTLLDC, UNDP and UNCTAD

(UNDP Office, UN House, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

On the sidelines of the sub-regional workshop on "Fostering Structural Transformation and Export Diversification in Selected Asian Landlocked Developing Countries", which was co-organized by ITTLLDC and UNCTAD in Ulaanbaatar, Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar, Executive director of the ITTLLDC, took the opportunity to organize a trilateral meeting with Ms. Beate Trankmann, Resident Coordinator of the UN System in Mongolia and Resident Representative of UNDP in Mongolia.

During the meeting, Ms. Trankmann was briefed on the findings of the workshop and they explored potential ways of collaboration for joint efforts to support Mongolia in achieving the SDGs.

October 25 - Coordinating meeting with the Resident Mission of ADB in Mongolia

(ADB Mongolia Resident Mission, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

Coordinating meeting was held with the Resident Mission of Asian Development Bank in Mongolia.

The ITTLLDC' Executive Director Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar met with Ms. Yolanda Fernandez Lommen, Country Director of the Resident Mission of Asian Development Bank in Mongolia on 25 October, 2018.

Two parties discussed 2019 joint activities and the upcoming November visit of the ITTLLDC to the ADB headquarters in Manila, Philippines.

The ITTLLDC was granted an observer status of the ADB in 2015.

October 29 - Executive Director of the ITC visits the ITTLLDC

(ITTLLDC Office, UN House, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

Executive Director of the International Trade Centre /ITC/ visits the ITTLLDC.

During her visit to Mongolia, Ms. Arancha González, Executive Director of the International Trade Centre visited the ITTLLDC and was received by Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar, Executive Director of the ITTLLDC.

Both parties discussed the upcoming visit of Mr. Odbayar to Geneva and agreed to hold talks on cooperation modalities with the ITC for LLDCs in Geneva.

November 2 - Coordinating meeting with the Country Office of World Bank in Mongolia

(The World Bank Mongolia Office, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

Coordinating meeting was held with the Country Office of World Bank in Mongolia.

The ITTLLDC Executive Director Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar met with Mr. Jean-Pascal N. Nganou, Acting Country Manager of the World Bank in Mongolia on 2 November, 2018.

The two parties discussed potential ways of collaboration regarding joint activities, exchanging knowledge on LLDC related issues and the upcoming November visit of the ITTLLDC to the World Bank Headquarter in Washington DC.

November 7 - Meeting top executives of ADB

(Asian Development Bank Headquarters, Manila, Philippines)

➢ Executive Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar met Mr. Ayumi Konishi, Special Senior Advisor to the President of Asian Development Bank on 7 November 2018 in Manila, Philippines.

Executive Director Odbayar thanked Mr. Konishi for the continuous support of ADB to the ITTLLDC and LLDCs in Asia.

Both parties exchanged views on joint planning of potential activities in 2019 in the fields of research, workshops and capacity building seminars.

➢ Executive Director Odbayar met an old friend of the ITTLLDC Mr. Arjun Goswami, Chief of Regional Cooperation & Integration Thematic Group Office of the Chief economist and Director General Economic Research and RCI Department.

Updated each other on recent publications of the ITT and ADB and discussed a joint research in 2019 for LLDCs.

Mr. Ayumi Konishi, Special Senior Advisor to the President of Asian Development Bank

Mr. Arjun Goswami, Chief of Regional Cooperation & Integration, ADB

November 7 - Coordinating and brainstorming meeting with Asian Development Bank officials

(Asian Development Bank Headquarters, Manila, Philippines)

Executive Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar was invited to the brainstorming meeting and discussed possible modalities of cooperation between two organizations in 2019 in the fields of research, workshops and capacity building seminars.

The meeting was attended by representatives of Departments of ADB, such as Transport Sector Group of Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department, Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division of Central and West Asia Department, Transport and Communications Division of Central and West Asia Department, South Asia Department, Southeast Asia Department, Sustainable Infrastructure Division of East Asia Department, Public Management, Financial Sector, & Regional Coop Division of East Asia.

November 14 - Meeting with Manager and Special Representative of the World Bank to the UN

(New York, United States)

Executive Director Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar thanked Mr. Bjorn Gillsater, Manager and Special Representative of the World Bank to the UN for the continuous support of the World Bank to the LLDCs' Group at the UN in New York.

Mr. Odbayar informed Mr. Gillsater about the successful inauguration of the ITTLLDC in June 2018 and highlighted the fact that the ITTLLDC is the first and only Intergovernmental Organization of the LLDC Group at the UN.

Both parties exchanged views on how to coordinate efforts towards the LLDC community in 2019 and explored possible financial and technical assistance to the ITTLLDC in the fields of research, workshops and capacity building efforts.

November 14 - Meeting with Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs of the UN

(United Nations Secretariat Building, New York, United States)

Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar informed Mr. Stephen Mathias, Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs of the UN about the legal status of the International Think Tank and consulted on the affiliation of the ITTLLDC with the United Nations system.

Furthermore, both sides discussed the observer status of the ITTLLDC at the General Assembly and Director Odbayar expressed his willingness to get technical assistance from the Office for Legal Affairs of the UN in the future.

Mr. Odbayar also consulted with Mr. Mathias on the privileges and immunities of the ITTLLDC and legal issues related to the ITTLLDC.

November 14 - Meeting with the Global Chair of the LLDC Group Paraguay

(Permanent Mission of Paraguay to the UN, New York, United States)

Executive Director of ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar visited the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Paraguay to the United Nations and met Permanent Representative of Paraguay to the UN, H.E. Ambassador Julio Cesar Arriola Ramirez.

Mr. Odbayar briefed H.E. on the latest developments and activities of the International Think Tank. H.E. Ramirez informed Mr. Odbayar that the Government of Paraguay will continue to support the activities and initiatives of the ITTLLDC. H.E. Ramirez also highlighted that Paraguay in its capacity as the global Chair Country of the Group of LLDCs in the UN, has called on all system organizations of the UN and other international organizations as well as donors to support and collaborate with the ITLLDC.

Taking this opportunity, Mr. Odbayar informed H.E. Ramirez that the newest research paper of the ITTLLDC on Economic diversification of LLDCs covering Mongolia, Nepal, Bhutan and Paraguay will be printed soon.

November 15 - Meeting with the World Bank officials

(World Bank Headquarters, Washington DC, United States)

Executive Director Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar visited the Headquarter of the World Bank in Washington DC, USA and met Mr. Michael Joseph Ferrantino, Lead Economist and Global product specialist from the Trade Policy and Integration, Global trade and regional integration Unit.

During his visit Mr. Odbayar officially informed the World Bank that the ITTLLDC was officially inaugurated in June 2018 becoming the first ever and only Intergovernmental organization of the Group of LLDCs.

While highlighting the latest developments and activities of the International Think Tank Executive Director Odbayar has called on the World Bank Group to support the International Think Thank in the spirit of the General Assembly Resolution 64/214. Para 19.

The representatives of the WB congratulated the ITTLLDC for becoming an Intergovernmental Organization and agreed to inform its relevant branches and representative offices in LLDCs about the activities of the ITTLLDC with the view to seek possibilities of mutually beneficial cooperation.

November 28 - Ambassador of Niger visits the ITT

(ITTLLDC Office, UN House, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

Executive Director of the ITTLLDC, Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar, welcomed the Ambassador of the Republic of Niger accredited to Mongolia His Excellency Inoussa Moustapha to the ITTLLDC on 28th of November, 2018.

The Republic of Niger has signed the Multilateral Agreement on the Establishment of an ITTLLDC on 26th September 2011 and submitted its instrument of ratification to the UN Treaty section recently on 17th October 2018 therefore becoming the 13th member state of the ITTLLDC.

Mr. Odbayar congratulated the Republic of Niger for becoming a full member of the ITTLLDC. Then he briefed H.E. Moustapha on the overall activities of the ITTLLDC and handed over samples of the newest publications of the ITTLLDC.

During the meeting Mr. Odbayar also urged Republic of Niger to appoint its representative to the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC.

H.E. Inuossa Moustapha expressed his gratitude to the ITTLLDC for its firm commitment to the LLDC community and reiterated his intention to duly inform the President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Niger about his fruitful meeting at the ITTLLDC reaffirming the willingness of Niger to actively participate in the work of the ITTLLDC.

December 5 - Meeting with Managing Director of the CFC

(Common Fund for Commodities Headquarters, Amsterdam, Netherlands)

The Executive Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar met with Mr. Parvindar Singh, Managing Director of the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC), on 5 December, 2018 at the CFC Headquarters in Amsterdam.

Executive Director Odbayar thanked Mr. Parvindar Singh for the kind invitation to attend the 30th annual meeting of the Governing Council of CFC and opportunity to discuss potential cooperation modalities between the two organizations.

Mr. Odbayar informed Mr. Singh about the successful inauguration of the ITTLLDC in June 2018 and highlighted the fact that the ITTLLDC is the first and only Intergovernmental Organization of the LLDC Group at the UN.

The two parties discussed potential ways of collaboration regarding joint activities such as exchanging knowledge on LLDC related issues, conducting joint research and organizing workshops and capacity building seminars.

December 9 - Meeting CEO of the KIT

(KIT Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam, Netherlands)

The Executive Director of the ITTLLDC Mr. Erdenetsogt Odbayar met with Mr. Mark Schneider, CEO of KIT Royal tropical institute, on 9 December, 2018 in Amsterdam.

KIT Royal Tropical Institute is an independent centre of expertise, education, intercultural cooperation and hospitality dedicated to sustainable development.

Mr. Odbayar informed Mr. Schneider about the nature of the ITTLLDC and expressed his willingness to establish close ties with KIT given the extensive experience of KIT in African countries.

Both parties exchanged views on collaborating to support the LLDC community in 2019 and explored possible financial and technical assistance to the ITTLLDC in the fields of research, workshops and capacity building efforts.

December 19 - Bilateral meetings with members of the Board of Governors

(Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan)

- Meeting #1. Kazakhstan

Desk officer for Central Asian LLDCs of ITTLLDC Mr. Sansar Sosorbaram visited the Ministry of National Economy of Republic of Kazakhstan and met with Director General of Department of International cooperation and Representative of Kazakhstan to the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC, Mr. Kairat Torebayev.

Mr. Sansar briefed Mr. Torebayev on the latest developments and activities of the International Think Tank and requested from Kazakhstan to make voluntary financial contributions to the ITTLLDC according to the article 8.2 of the multilateral agreement of the ITT. Mr. Torebayev informed Mr. Sansar that the Government of Kazakhstan will support the activities and initiatives of the ITTLLDC. Mr. Torebayev also highlighted that Kazakhstan is ready to share its experience and practice of cooperation between Kazakhstan and People`s Republic of China in utilizing capacities of Chinese sea ports by Kazakhstan and Korgas Dry port and Special Economic zone.

- Meeting #2. Kazakhstan

Desk officer for Central Asian LLDCs of ITTLLDC Mr. Sansar Sosorbaram visited the Embassy of Tajikistan in Astana, Kazakhstan and met Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Republic of Tajikistan to Republic of Kazakhstan and Representative of Tajikistan to the Board of Governors of the ITTLLDC, H.E. Nazirmad Alizoda.

Mr. Sansar briefed H.E. Alizoda on the latest developments and activities of the International Think Tank and requested from Tajikistan to make voluntary financial contributions to the ITTLLDC according to the Article 8.2 of the multilateral agreement. H.E. Alizoda informed Mr. Sansar that the Government of Tajikistan will support the activities and initiatives of the ITTLLDC. H.E. Alizoda also informed that Tajikistan is successfully implementing structural transformation of its economy by constructing Hydro-power plant and exporting electricity to the neighbouring Countries.

December 24 - ITTLLDC granted Observer Status at the UN General Assembly

Seventy third session of the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the resolution granting the ITTLLDC the observer status to the General Assembly of the United Nations. The ITTLLDC is the first and only Intergovernmental organization of the Group of LLDC s at the United Nations.

https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/73/217

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