



Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
of the Republic of Armenia



## THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL HEALTH CRISIS ON LEGAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR TRADE

### *Background*

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia and the Secretariat of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) are pleased to organise an event on the “Impact of the international health crisis on legal infrastructure for trade”, in Yerevan, Armenia in a hybrid format.

This event is generously hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia and will bring together experts from government agencies, the judiciary, academia, legal practice and the private sector to discuss disruptions to international trade, contractual arrangements and enterprises following Covid-19 and exchange legislative practices on responses and resilience by States to support international trade and enterprises. Further, it will be a unique opportunity to advance the UNCITRAL exploratory work on the impact of COVID-19 on international trade law by presenting the main components of an emergency tool kit for economies and public and private stakeholders in the event of a future health crisis that could similarly impact supply chains and trade flows. The results of the event will be presented orally to the fifty-sixth Session of the Commission in July 2023.

In 2020, at its fifty-third session, the Commission considered a proposal by Armenia, the Russian Federation and Viet Nam to update the UNCITRAL agenda in the light of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) (A/CN.9/1039/Rev.1). This proposal suggested that the Commission might wish to investigate whether those measures had exposed gaps or obstacles to cross-border trade and investment that could be overcome through efforts put in place by UNCITRAL in harmonising cross-border rules. After discussion, the Commission requested the Secretariat to explore this proposal further (A/75/17, part two, para.89).

In 2021, at its fifty-fourth session, the Commission expressed its appreciation to States that shared best practices and experiences through their responses to the questionnaire circulated by the secretariat. In 2022, at its fifty-fifth session, it was noted by the Commission that there was still a residual constraint and impact of the pandemic upon international trade law, thus seeing a further need for UNCITRAL instruments in aiding States in developing effective policy and legislative responses to unforeseen global crises, in an effort to minimise the harmful disruptions to trade, business and investment, as well as in the recovery efforts thereafter.

After discussion, the Commission requested the secretariat continue its exploratory work on the impact of COVID-19 on international trade by holding expert group meetings and

other events with interested stakeholders to further advance such work. It was said that the exploratory work should ultimately result in an emergency kit that could be useful at the outset of any crisis and that would provide information to States, as well as businesses, especially MSMEs, on the effective use of UNCITRAL instruments in case of a crisis.

The UNCITRAL secretariat has organised meetings worldwide while discharging its exploratory work mandate. In particular, in February 2023, the UNCITRAL secretariat collaborated with Viet Nam in the first in-person meeting of the APEC Economic Committee in organising a Policy Dialogue entitled “Impact of International Health Crisis on Legal Infrastructure for Trade and Implications for Structural Reform”. This Policy Dialogue contributed to set the scene for the development of the draft emergency tool kit for economies and public and private stakeholders in the event of a future health crisis that could similarly impact supply chains and trade flows.

## PROGRAMME

**13 June 2023:** Hybrid event on the Impact of international health crisis on legal infrastructure for trade from 11:00-16:00 Yerevan time (09:00-14:00 CEST)

**Venue:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, Yerevan

**Online:** Zoom meeting link (provided separately)

Translation into Armenian-English-French

TIME	AGENDA ITEM
10:30-11:00	Arrival and registration of in-person participants Connecting by online participants
	<b>Morning session</b>
11.00-11.10	<p><b>Opening and greeting participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr. Yeghishe Kirakosyan</b>, Representative of the Republic of Armenia on International Legal Matters</li> <li>• <b>Ms. Anna Joubin-Bret</b>, the Secretary of UNCITRAL</li> </ul>
11:10-11:30	<p><b>Keynote presentation</b></p> <p>Moderated by: <b>Mr. Yeghishe Kirakosyan</b>, Representative of the Republic of Armenia on International Legal Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The impact of the global pandemic on dispute resolution and investment disputes, by <b>Mr. Salim A.H. Moollan</b>, Barrister, KC, Brick Court Chambers (online)</li> </ul>

11:30-11:40	<p><b>Disruptions to international trade, contractual arrangements and enterprises (1)</b></p> <p>Moderated by: <b>Mr. Yeghishe Kirakosyan</b>, Representative of the Republic of Armenia on International Legal Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief presentation of the exploratory work on overcoming the consequences of the global COVID-19 pandemic, and other large-scale emergencies, on international trade, by <b>Ms. Anna Joubin-Bret</b>, the Secretary of UNCITRAL</li> </ul>
11:40-12:45	<p><b>Legislative response by States to support international trade and enterprises followed by responses from international organizations</b></p> <p>Moderated by: <b>Ms. Anna Joubin-Bret</b>, the Secretary of UNCITRAL</p> <p>Exchanging legislative practices on responses and resilience in particular regarding cross-border paperless trade; e-procurement; business reorganization (movable collateral and simplified insolvency regimes); international transport, international sale of goods, and dispute settlement by State representatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr. Lev Gershanok</b>, Director of the Legal Department, Ministry of Economic Development, Russian Federation</li> <li>• <b>Mr. Nguyen Anh Duong</b>, Director of the Department for General Economic Issues and International Studies, Central Institute for Economic Management, Viet Nam (online)</li> <li>• <b>Ms. Karin L. Kizer</b>, Attorney-Adviser, U.S. Department of State (pre-recorded video)</li> <li>• <b>Mr. Fumiyasu Miyazaki</b>, Attorney, International Affairs Division, Minister's Secretariat, Ministry of Justice of Japan (online)</li> <li>• <b>Mr. Ren Yuh Kay</b>, Assistant Director, TradeTrust, Digital Utilities, Sectoral Transformation Group, INFOCOMM Media Development Authority, Singapore (online)</li> </ul> <p><u>Responses by international organisations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ms. Kamola Khusnutdinova</b>, Acting Secretary of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT), United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) (online)</li> <li>• <b>Ms. Dorina Jitaru</b>, Acting Counsel, Legal Transition Programme, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) (online)</li> <li>• <b>Mr. Yann Duval</b>, Chief of Trade Policy and Facilitation Trade, Investment and Innovation Division, UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) (online)</li> <li>• <b>Ms. Tianmi Stilphen</b>, Lead, Regulatory Affairs of International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Digital Standards Initiative (online)</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Open discussion</b></p>
13:00-13:20	<p><b>Disruptions to international trade, contractual arrangements and enterprises (2)</b></p>

	<p>Moderated by: <b>Mr. Yeghishe Kirakosyan</b>, Representative of the Republic of Armenia on International Legal Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The aftermath of Covid: measuring the impact on international trade (brief introduction) by <b>Mr. Jan Hoffmann</b>, Chief, Trade Logistics Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD (online)</li> </ul>
13.20-15.00	Lunch break
	<b>Afternoon session</b>
15.00-15.20	<p><b>A legal toolkit on the effective use of UNCITRAL instruments</b></p> <p>Moderated by: <b>Mr. Liparit Drmeyan</b>, Head of the Office of the Representative of the Republic of Armenia on International Legal Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A legal toolkit by the UNCITRAL Secretariat (A/CN.9/1144) <b>Ms. Anna Joubin-Bret</b>, the Secretary of UNCITRAL <b>Ms. Marianela Bruno Pollero</b>, Legal Officer, UNCITRAL Secretariat</li> </ul>
15.20-15.50	<p><b>Open discussion on the toolkit and the way forward</b></p> <p>Moderated by: <b>Mr. Liparit Drmeyan</b>, Head of the Office of the Representative of the Republic of Armenia on International Legal Matters</p>
15.50-16.00	<p><b>Closing remarks</b> (Commission session)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ms. Anna Joubin-Bret</b>, the Secretary of UNCITRAL</li> <li>• <b>Government of Armenia</b></li> </ul>