

Forum: Metrology – Trade Facilitator

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Introductory remarks

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Thank you Dr Hoffmann, and thank you Prof. Kochsiek for your welcome greetings and for addressing the audience. We feel honoured by your presence and we also hope that the Forum will be a success.

Dr Hoffmann, special thanks also for the continued support that your Ministry has given the projects of metrology, standardisation, testing, quality, accreditation and certification which the PTB is able to carry out with your financial resources. Also thank you very much for the important background information on what is going on in the international arena with regards to trade facilitation and institution building.

Before the first sessions starts, let me give some important information about this Forum. As you may know, the OIML created a new Permanent Working Group on Developing Countries last year and I was asked to be its Chairman. The aim of this Group is to support developing countries in their efforts to strengthen legal metrology. The problem is, how could we achieve this goal with a small working group? Working on this problem, the idea was born to find out what is needed and what is offered. We thought that it was a good opportunity to do so during the forthcoming 12th Conference of the OIML. We realised that the participation of many of the 110 or so Member States and Corresponding Members of the OIML would be a good chance to reach our objective, so we proposed to devote one day to this event.

Looking for a common denominator faced by developing countries and OIML activities, we identified trade, because one the OIML's main tasks is to facilitate trade and one of the major problems faced by developing countries is that of competing in international markets. The close relationship between economic growth, trade and poverty reduction has been noted time and again. The integration of developing countries into the global market is seen as a major prerequisite in achieving the UN's Millennium Goal of halving extreme poverty worldwide by 2015. The Doha Development Agenda recognises technical cooperation and capacity building as essential elements to enable developing countries to benefit from the world trade system. Indeed, adequate technical infrastructures for metrology, standardisation, testing, quality, accreditation and certification, which are necessary for the conformity assessment of products and services, bar developing countries from taking full advantage of market potentials. Having this in mind, we will discuss the role of metrology as a trade facilitator, and bring together developing countries looking for support and donors, organisations and implementing agencies capable of offering support, and thus facilitating the adjustment of offers to needs.

To reach this objective, the Forum will consist of two parts: the oral statements and the posters. The statements presented by invited speakers during the first session will focus on the importance of technical infrastructures in the area of conformity assessment and with the elements of metrology, standardisation and accreditation. In the second session, we will listen to general problems faced by developing countries and their needs,

presented by resource persons with special experience representing different regions of the world. During the third session "*What is offered?*" we will be informed about support programmes and projects. Since time is always restricted, we created the possibility of presenting posters illustrating what is needed and what is offered. You may have seen already these posters, which have been prepared by the BIML and the PTB in the Eichen Saal. The poster session will start following the first break and they will be exhibited for the whole week, giving you the opportunity to see how the needs may be matched by the offers. The Forum will be closed by presenting some results and recommendations for actions which will be proposed to the OIML Permanent Working Group on Developing Countries for follow-up. It is our expectation that the Forum will raise awareness about metrology as a trade facilitator, and will contribute to solution of problems. Furthermore, the event should stimulate the exchange of information amongst developing countries, the so-called "South-South dialogue" and encourage the inter-regional and intra-regional cooperation. I am sure that we will reach these ambitious goals with your valuable contributions.

Thank you.