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UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

EXPERT GROUP MEETING
ON
THE POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF ISO 9000 AND ISO 14000 SERIES
AND
ENVIRONMENTAL - LABELLING
ON
THE TRADE OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Vienna, Austria,
23-25 October 1995

REPORT*

* This document has not been formally edited

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INTRODUCTION

- 1 The Final Act of the Uruguay Round was signed at Marrakesh, Morocco, on 15 April 1994, and is the most comprehensive and complex Round of GATT negotiations ever undertaken. The challenges of this Round are to stimulate economic growth and reestablish a credible and liberalized multilateral trading system. Although tariff reductions have continuously been undertaken under the GATT framework since the end of World War II, liberalization of trade has been progressively threatened by the increased use of protectionist measures such as voluntary export restraints and import quotas. Substantial results were achieved towards the reversal of such protectionist measures within the Uruguay Round negotiations.
- 2 The provisions of the Uruguay Round have created a more competitive trading environment. Competition in international markets is now focused more narrowly on product, price and quality. Buyers are placing additional demands on sellers for certification of compliance to ISO 9000, and, in an increasing number of cases, certification that products or processes are environmentally friendly. The burden of certification falls disproportionately upon small and medium sized enterprises, particularly those in developing countries.
- 3 Especially for the European market, buyer demand for third-party certification to ISO 9000 is becoming increasingly widespread. This requirement has crucial implications for enterprises in the industrial sector. Many such enterprises already apply quality systems, without necessarily having documented them, nor having applied for, or obtained, ISO 9000 certification. The substantial human and financial resources needed to fully comply with the ISO 9000 certification requirements are, therefore, intimidating for entrepreneurs.
- 4 In addition to concerns related to quality systems, there is an on-going effort of industrialized countries to promote environmental labelling, environmental management systems and environmental auditing, not only to enterprises within their national boundaries but in international trade, through supplier-customer chains.
- 5 Diverse national measures related to environmental management, as well as the success of the ISO 9000 series on quality management systems, encouraged the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) to enter the field of environmental management. In 1991, ISO and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) created the Strategic Advisory Group on the Environment (SAGE), a panel of experts from the member countries of the two Organizations. SAGE considered whether international management standards would achieve the following:
 - promote an approach to environmental management similar to the approach for quality systems
 - enhance an organization's ability to improve its environmental performance and to measure that improvement
 - facilitate trade and the removal of trade barriers

- 2
- 6 Following SAGE's recommendations on these issues, the Technical Management Board of ISO created the Technical Committee 207 (TC 207) in 1993 to develop a series of international standards for environment management (ISO 14000 series), which includes standards for environmental management systems and auditing. These standards were circulated as draft international standards for comment and approval by ISO members in August 1995. Final standards are expected by mid-1996. Work on environmental labelling standards is still underway.
- 7 From the foregoing it seems apparent that developing countries face continuous and complex challenges, in order to maintain their participation in foreign markets. In order to examine the actual and potential opportunities and constraints faced by developing countries, UNIDO convened an Expert Group Meeting on The Potential Effects of ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 Series in the Trade of Developing Countries. The purpose of the meeting was to:
- Evaluate the present situation and advise UNIDO on the actual and potential effects of the ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 series on developing countries exports in the industrial sector
 - Recommend suitable follow-up actions for technical assistance by bilateral and multilateral organizations
 - Clarify UNIDO's role and preparation of a programme for technical assistance
- 8 The meeting was held in UNIDO headquarters in Vienna, 23-25 October 1995. Annex I contains the details of the organization of the meeting. The meeting was attended by 11 experts from 10 countries and 12 representatives of international organizations. The list of participants appears in Annex II.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Plenary (Sessions 1+2)

- 9 By way of an overview, presentations were made on the main issues as follows:
- a ISO 9000, the Issues from UNIDO's perspective- Mr O. Maizza Neto (UNIDO).
 - b ISO 14000 - an overview - Ms R. Hillary (UNIDO Consultant)
 - c ISO 9000 + ISO 14000 - A comparative Analysis - Ms C. Jasch, (UNIDO Consultant)
 - d Results of a UNIDO survey on the implications of ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 - Mr O. Maizza Neto and Mr R. Luken (UNIDO)

10. Country Presentations were made by experts from: Chile, China, Colombia, Hungary, India, Malaysia, Nigeria, the Philippines and the USA. In their presentations the experts elaborated upon the following questions addressed to them by the UNIDO Secretariat:
- a. National or regional standards on quality systems in operation;
 - b. Institutional structure and systems in place for:
 - Standards setting and dissemination/advice on standards;
 - Accreditation bodies;
 - Certification bodies
 - c. Domestic and international constraints with regard to (1) and (2) above- the issue of mutual recognition, etc.
 - d. Difficulties encountered by SME's.
 - e. Regional vs national initiatives relative advantages and disadvantages, and
 - f. The extent to which there is a need for separate approaches to quality and environmental management system certification
11. Presentations of institutional efforts were made by the representatives of ALADI, COPANT, EEC, ISO, UNDP, UNEP, ITC/UNCTAD-GATT and UNIDO. Broadly speaking, those efforts concentrated on three areas:
- a. Ensuring the flow of information on new standards.
 - b. Supporting the development of infrastructure for accreditation and certification, and
 - c. Enabling entrepreneurs and enterprises to adjust to new management practices implied by the standards
12. Obviously, the discussions inspired by all three sets of presentations were lively and presented several different dimensions and areas of agreement as well as disagreement. The Chairman distilled six issues pertinent to developing countries which were worthy of further consideration. These were:
- a. The problem of spreading knowledge and understanding of the standards. In this context it was important to focus on how the principles underlying the standards were communicated i.e. "mandatory" vs "voluntary" application of the standards. It was also important to clearly establish the cause-effect relationships in actual business operations, i.e. that the implementation of quality and environmental management systems were intended to be the motivating force behind the standards as opposed to mere certification. In all this the particular situation and vulnerability of SME's needed to be kept squarely under consideration.

- b. There was a clearly expressed concern over the lack of expertise at all levels, be they recognized accreditation bodies, auditors or consultants on quality management and environmental management. This expertise was crucial to the process of implementing standards and tracking implementation.
 - c. There was a lack of physical infrastructure, ranging from metrology facilities, calibration capabilities, laboratories and accreditation structures, which inhibited the propagation of environmental and quality management systems. Here, given the costs and the range of facilities required, regional institutions and regional networks may provide a fruitful basis for developing the requisite technical infrastructure.
 - d. Internationally, there was a need to support mutual recognition of accreditation bodies and certification schemes. Technical competence was considered a key to the recognition of accreditation and certification bodies, and in order to demonstrate compliance with pertinent international guidelines. For this reason, if no other, developing countries needed to participate fully in bodies such as ISO/CASCO to exert their influence in the formulation of guidelines in this area.
 - e. Environmental labelling schemes, at this point, were considered as being more serious non tariff barriers than environmental management systems standards. Several questions remained unresolved on these schemes. Often, the very criteria on which such schemes were established were open to question, and there was little agreement on the scientific basis on which common criteria could evolve. Here again developing countries needed to exert the fullest possible influence on the process of formulating international technical criteria.
 - f. Finally, while the standards and schemes being discussed were voluntary in nature, there was a need for developing country governments to lend their weight to, or take initiatives on, such aspects as the accreditation infrastructure, and special support to SME's. Without their support, the fear was that there would be no change, and the situation would result in unavailed opportunities, at best, or diminished industrial competitiveness, at worst.
- 13 In order to formulate recommendations, the experts were divided into two working groups, one dealing with national requirements, and the other with trade related issues.
- 14 In conclusion, drawing upon the last point, the chair emphasized the need for international cooperation to address all the above mentioned issues at the levels of policies, institutions and enterprises.

Report of the Working Groups: Elements of a Work Programme

15. The two working groups identified several areas of confluence in the needs identified by them. While some of the recommended actions were directed at UNIDO, it was understood that the responses would require extensive collaboration among agencies.
16. Overall, the actions defined below should be undertaken within the context of specific national programmes or strategies for environmental and quality management, based on the circumstances obtaining in and requirements of the individual country or region. The recommendations have been grouped at the various levels of the system, i.e. international cooperation, policy development, institutional infrastructural development and support to enterprises. The development of infrastructure should be accompanied by parallel awareness raising schemes for the benefit of industry

1. Development of International Standards and Certification Frameworks

- a. UNIDO should promote international recognition of national and regional accreditation bodies from developing countries by a system of peer review. One possible model offered is the ISO/Quality Systems Assessment Recognition (QSAR). This should be expanded to encompass environmental management, in addition to quality management.
- b. ISO/TC 207/SC3 should complete its work on international environmental - labelling principles as soon as possible.
- c. UNIDO should collaborate with other bodies such as UNDP/UNEP/UNCTAD to study the implications of environmental - labelling criteria.
- d. UNIDO should provide assistance to industry associations and bodies in critical product groups to set up sector specific international environmental-labelling guidelines, as is presently being done in the leather sector.
- e. UNIDO should provide financial support for developing country participation in ISO/DEVCO and ISO/TC 207.
- f. There should be close collaboration between UNIDO, ISO/DEVCO, ISO National Standards Bodies and industry associations in identifying qualified representatives to attend ISO/DEVCO and ISO/TC 207.

2. Policy Support to Developing Countries

- a. UNIDO should cooperate with governments to establish a national strategy, embracing national policies and systems that promote, disseminate and use quality and environmental management standards in industry.
- b. UNIDO and international cooperation agencies should support the education of government and industry association officials, on accreditation and evolution of certifying bodies in developing countries. This programme should include study tours and information visits.

- c. UNIDO should develop and provide methodologies by which governments and business could establish sub-sectoral priorities for the application of environment and quality management systems.

3. Development of Institutional Infrastructure

- a. UNIDO should help governments establish national, or possibly regional accreditation bodies on a non commercial basis.
- b. UNIDO should undertake training of trainers for auditors for both accreditation and certification in developing countries. Training programme should cover both theoretical and practical aspects of auditing and be designed to achieve international recognition of auditor's qualifications. The use of international experts as trainers would ensure best auditing practices.
- c. UNIDO should build capacities of national standards bodies and industry associations to develop programmes for the implementation of standards. These institutions must have high levels of competence. In order to attain the required level of competence, the higher management of these institutions would need to be provided training on the best management practices in the management of such institutions and their programmes.
- d. UNIDO should assist governments and private sector interests to identify and, if necessary upgrade those areas of metrology, calibration and testing support which are essential to underpin the implementation and operation of environmental and quality management systems by enterprises.
- e. UNIDO and ISO/DEVCO should strengthen and advise national standards bodies and industry associations on innovative information and promotional programmes on Environmental and Quality Management for the benefit of small and medium enterprises.
- f. ISO/DEVCO should be encouraged and supported in providing guidance to national standard bodies of developing countries for the adoption of ISO IEC Guides for Conformity Assessment and for auditor registration.
- g. UNIDO should assist governments and other interested parties to define and promote criteria for consultants offering services in quality and environment management. Examples of work already underway include EQO and ASQC.

4. Support the Enterprise Level

- a. UNIDO should undertake support programmes to enable SMEs to acquire expertise in environment and quality management, on subsector specific basis. Those programmes should demonstrate environment and quality management in the targeted enterprises, with the objective of taking them up to the point of registration under the relevant standards. Use of the group approach is

recommended as a more efficient use of foreign consultants, working in conjunction with local consultants.

- b. There is a need for more user friendly information materials from ISO, especially suited to the needs of SME's. In order to meet that need, the Technical Committees of ISO are requested to provide explanatory documents and information instruments such as the "ISO 9000 News" need to be provided to developing countries on a preferential basis. UNIDO could devise means by which such preferential access could be facilitated.

Conclusion

- 17 The report of this meeting should be forwarded to ISO/DEVCO for review and action. It should also be circulated to other interested parties and international organizations in order to stimulate action, deliberation and coordination on the recommendations made.
- 18 In the preliminary response to these recommendations, UNIDO invited initiatives from developing countries, in the form of documents describing their national strategies for promoting environment and quality management systems. Those documents should clearly identify the needs for technical cooperation, which should form the basis for following up on this work programme.

ANNEX I

ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

The meeting was opened by Mr. D. Piskounov, Managing Director, Human Resource, Enterprise and Private Sector Development Division. In his welcoming remarks he underlined the importance of the subject of the meeting to the new priorities and focus of UNIDO. In helping developing country enterprises to conform to quality and environmental management standards, UNIDO would be responding to two of its overall development objectives, i.e. supporting enhanced industrial competitiveness and promoting ecologically sustainable industrial development. He wished the experts all success and assured them of UNIDO giving the fullest consideration to their views.

The meeting was chaired by Ms. M. Saunders from United States and its working groups were chaired by Mr. K.P. Nyati from India and Mr. R.V. Navarrete from The Philippines.

The meeting was organized in three sessions, with the following agenda:

Monday, 23 October Session 1: Overview and Country/Institutional Experiences with Quality and Environmental Standards

08 30 - 09 00	Registration of participants
09 00 - 09 30	Opening of meeting/Approval of Agenda
09 30 - 10 00	Coffee break
10 00 - 10 30	ISO 9000 - the issues from UNIDO's perspective
10 30 - 11 00	ISO 14000 - an overview
11 00 - 11 30	ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 - a comparative analysis
11 30 - 12 30	Results of the UNIDO survey on the implications of international standards
12 30 - 14 00	Lunch break
14 00 - 15 30	Presentation of country and organizations' positions
15 30 - 16 00	Coffee break
16 00 - 17 00	Presentation of country and organizations' positions

Tuesday, 24 October Session 2: Trade Effects of International Voluntary Agreements

09-00 - 10 30	Discussion of presentations from Session 1
10 30 - 11 00	Coffee break
11-00 - 12 30	Assessment of the actual and potential involuntary non-tariff trade barriers arising from international standards
12 30 - 14 00	Lunch break

- 14 00 - 15:30 Working Groups on follow-up actions to technical assistance
 Working Group 1 on National Requirements
 Working Group 2 on Trade Related Matters
- 15 30 - 16 00 Coffee break
- 16 00 - 17:00 Plenary: Presentation of working group results and recommendations
 for follow-up actions for technical assistance

Wednesday, 25 October Session 3: Conclusions and Adoption of Report

- 09:30 - 10:30 Circulation and review of draft report
- 10 30 - 11:30 Plenary: Adoption of report and recommendations
- 11 30 - 12:00 Closure of meeting

The closing session of the Expert Group Meeting was addressed by Ms A. Tehknavorian-Asenbauer, Managing Director, Industrial Sectors and Environment Division. In her remarks, she underscored the changes in the patterns of industrialization as we enter the twenty first century. Those patterns of industrialization would rely heavily on new organizational patterns and technologies, on global competitiveness and on a shifting emphasis in favour of the private sector. At the same time the dimensions of quality goals and environmental protection would assume ever increasing importance.

UNIDO saw this Expert Group Meeting as an important element of its own strategy for reorienting its efforts to meet the challenges faced by developing countries in this evolving context. She expressed the hope that there would be ongoing collaboration between experts present at the meeting and UNIDO, to bring into fruition the ideas exchanged here.

Annex II
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ANNEX III**LIST OF DOCUMENTS****a. Country Papers tabled by experts:**

<u>Country</u>	<u>Title</u>
Austria	ISO TC 207 and it's Relation to European EMAS-Regulation
China	The situation and Suggestion about the Effects of ISO 9000, ISO 14000 (to be released) and Eco-labelling on the Trade of Developing Countries
Colombia	ISO 9000 - ISO 14000 and Colombian Ecolabelling Scheme
India	EMS Standards (BS - 7750/ISO - 14001/IS - 13967)
Malaysia	Current Developments on ISO 9000, ISO 14000 and Eco-Labelling in Malaysia
Nigeria	Statement by Professor J. A. Abalaka, Director General Standards Organization of Nigeria
Philippines	ISO 9000 Series and ISO 14000 - Present Philippines Situation

b. Papers submitted by International Organizations

ALADI	Technical Barriers to Trade within Aladi
European Commission	Working document on A European Quality Promotion Policy or the European way towards Excellence
COPANT	Potential Effect of ISO 9000 and 14000 on Human Development
UNDP	The ISO 14000 Series on Environment Management
UNIDO	Information Packet Infrastructure for certification of ISO 9000, Mobil survey of companies, Export patterns for developed countries, Export patterns for developing countries, Arthur D Little ISO 14000 Survey, Article from Inter-economies, Volume 30, May/June 1995. Eco-Labelling and Environmental Policy Efforts in Developing Countries, by Rasul Shams, Article from Financial Times, 13 October 1995. 'Vote on 'green passport'
UNIDO	Report on Expert Group Meeting on Eco-Label for Leather and Leather Products, Vienna, Austria, 3-4 October 1994

- UNIDO Trade Implications of International Standards for Quality and Environmental Management Systems (ISO 9000/ISO 14000 Series) Response to questionnaire Draft 13 October 1995
- UNIDO Environmental Management Systems and Eco-Labeling Potential Adverse Effects on the Trade of Developing Countries
- UNIDO A Survey on Trade Implications of International Standards for Quality and Environmental Management Systems
- UNIDO Evaluation of Actual and Potential Involuntary Non-tariff Trade Barriers ISO 14000 Series (Consultant paper commissioned by Resource)
- UNIDO Thematic Paper: "Quality, Standardization and Metrology"