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Harnessing of ‘creative industry’ sector can help spur economic growth – UN report



15 December 2010 – Demand for products from the “creative industry” sector – which includes items such as videos, music, video games, and new formats for TV programmes – can help national economies, including those of developing countries, to recover from the global economic downturn, especially if supported by enlightened government policies, according to a new UN survey released today.

The “[Creative Economy Report 2010 \(CER 10\)](#),” prepared jointly by the UN Conference on Trade and Development ([UNCTAD](#)) and the UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)), is the second in-depth UN survey of the topic, with the first having appeared in 2008.

This year’s survey highlights that early evidence indicates that demand for some “creative industry” products, particularly those which are domestically consumed, remained stable during the global recession and that the creative industries hold great potential for developing countries seeking to diversify their economies and participate in one of the most dynamic sectors of world commerce.

The Survey found that the global exports of creative goods and services – products such as arts and crafts, audiovisuals, books, design work, films, music, new media, printed media, visual and performing arts, and creative services – more than doubled between 2002 and 2008. The total value of these exports reached \$592 billion in 2008, and the growth rate of the industry over that six-year period averaged 14 per cent.

In terms of potential for developing countries seeking to diversify their economies, the Survey says that the global market already had been boosted by increases in South-South trade in creative products before the recession set it in. The South's exports of creative goods to the world reached \$176 billion in 2008, or 43 per cent of total creative-industries trade.

Adequately nurtured by governments and public and private-sector partnerships, the production, sale, and trade of creative goods can broaden developing-country economies, create a wide variety of jobs, and spur innovation, the CER 10 notes, adding that appropriate institutional and regulatory frameworks are needed to establish a "creative nexus" that attracts investors, technology, and businesses.

The Survey's key recommendations include that developing countries should include creative goods in their lists of products, and should conclude their negotiations under the Global System of Trade Preferences to give impetus to the expansion of South-South trade in the sector. The rate of growth in the trade of creative goods – from \$7.8 billion in 2002 to \$21 billion in 2008 – is an opportunity that should be fully realized, CER 10 contends.

The Survey adds that although the global economic recovery is still weak, the "creative industry" sector appears to have been relatively "firm" during the crisis, and there are signs that as recovery takes hold, demand for creative goods may resume its previous brisk growth.

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