



**United Nations
Conference
on Trade and
Development**

Distr.
GENERAL

TD/B/COM.1/EM.25/1
11 November 2004

Original: ENGLISH

TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Commission on Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities
Expert Meeting on Trade and Development Aspects of
Professional Services and Regulatory Frameworks
Geneva, 17–19 January 2005
Item 2 of the provisional agenda

PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND ANNOTATIONS*

I. Provisional agenda

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Trade and development aspects of professional services and regulatory frameworks
4. Adoption of the report of the meeting

*This document was submitted on the above date for technical reasons.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

Item 1: Election of officers

1. It is recommended that the Expert Meeting elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson-cum-Rapporteur.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

2. The provisional agenda for the Expert Meeting is reproduced in section I above. A detailed programme will be available one week before the meeting.

Documentation

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Provisional agenda and annotations

Item 3: Trade and development aspects of professional services and regulatory frameworks

3. The Commission on Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities decided to convene an UNCTAD Expert Meeting on Trade and Development Aspects of Professional Services and Regulatory Frameworks. The Expert Meeting will explore, on the basis of different professions, the main features of trade in professional services and associated regulatory frameworks and their contribution to the development of developing countries.

4. The discussions under this substantive item are expected to provide UNCTAD member States with a better understanding of the role of professional services in economic growth, trade and sustainable development of developing countries. The aim is to discuss policy options and associated regulatory frameworks that enhance the contribution of these services to growth, trade and development. In that context, the meeting will address the new realities of international trade in professional services and current negotiations on services at the multilateral and regional levels, assessing their role in contributing to the attainment of national development objectives in this area. Presentations by experts representing the private and public sectors, including professional associations, academics, regulators and trade negotiators, will contribute to a better understanding of the options available to developing countries in pursuing further liberalization of market access in professional services and in providing elements for advancing on recognition of qualification.

5. To facilitate the discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat has prepared an issues note. In addition, experts are encouraged to prepare brief papers on the subject under discussion. These papers will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.1/EM.25/2

Trade and development aspects of professional services and regulatory frameworks

Item 4: Adoption of the report of the meeting

6. The report of the Expert Meeting will be submitted to the Commission on Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities at its next session. The Expert Meeting may wish to authorize the Rapporteur, under the authority of the Chairperson, to prepare the final report after the conclusion of the meeting.

Inputs from experts

Experts nominated by member States are expected to submit brief papers (approximately 5 pages long) as contributions to the work of the meeting. These should be submitted to the UNCTAD secretariat in advance of the meeting. Papers drawing on experts' experience will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received. An expert paper may address one or more of the following issues:

- ✓ How are professional services defined at the national level? How is this understanding being applied at the regional level? What are different approaches and features in making possible temporary movement of professionals as natural persons at the national level (e.g. visa regimes, contractual/employment-related arrangements)?
- ✓ What are the new features of the market for professional services at the national level? What are the specific regulatory issues in addressing professional services? How are regulations evolving? What is the role of professional associations? How are global market and regulatory trends reflected in your country?
- ✓ What has been the experience in pursuing recognition of qualifications, including recognition agreements, as a tool to promote trade in services, their impact on the movement of professionals to provide services and possible approaches in the area of recognition of qualifications?
- ✓ How could development of professional services accelerate development of developing countries? What is the contribution of professional services to development?
- ✓ What have been the main barriers to trade in professional services encountered by persons (natural and juridical) supplying services abroad?
- ✓ How could progress be achieved in the work on GATS Article VI.4 disciplines to render market access effective? What are the concerns of developing countries and issues of interest in the ongoing GATS negotiations, and for future work in the WTO?
- ✓ What are the positive experiences of developing countries in promoting development and trade in professional services? What are some strategies that maximize development dividends?

Experts are requested to submit papers by **15 December 2004** to Ms. Jolita Butkeviciene, Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland, fax: +41 22 907 0044, email: jolita.butkeviciene@unctad.org.