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Agenda item 12

**DRAFT REPORT OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
ON ITS FIFTY-THIRD SESSION**

Held at the Palais des Nations
from 27 September to 2 October 2006 and 10 October 2006

Rapporteur: Ms. Ana Inés Rocanova (Uruguay)

Speakers:

Outgoing President of the
TDB
President of the TDB
Secretary-General of
UNCTAD
Pakistan for the Group of
77 and China
Argentina for the Group
of Latin American and
Caribbean Countries

Angola for the African
Group
Afghanistan for the Asian
Group
Finland for the European
Union and the acceding
countries of Bulgaria and
Romania
Belarus for Group D

Benin for the least
developed countries
Switzerland
United States
Iraq
Djibouti
UCPA for civil society

Note for delegations

This draft report is a provisional text circulated for clearance by delegations.
Requests for amendments to statements by individual delegations should be communicated
by **Tuesday, 17 October 2006** at the latest, to:

UNCTAD Editorial Section, Room E.8106, fax no. 917 0056, tel. no. 917 1437.

I. OPENING STATEMENTS

1. The **outgoing President of the Trade and Development Board** said that over the past year, UNCTAD's various bodies and its secretariat had continued to play an important role in raising the profile of development issues for the attainment of internationally agreed development goals. UNCTAD had a mandate to discuss and promote trade development, and the related issues of finance, investment and technology, in an integrated manner. Through its research and its analysis of economic trends and through the publication of its flagship reports, it had provided policy inputs to Governments. In keeping with the spirit of the São Paulo Consensus, its activities were geared towards understanding international trends and making globalization development-friendly.

2. UNCTAD had contributed to high-level meetings organized by ECOSOC as well as many international conferences. It had also continued its technical cooperation activities to help build the capacity of the developing countries, countries in transition and least developed countries. The speaker was confident that, true to its mandate, UNCTAD would continue to carry out its responsibilities in a robust and comprehensive manner.

3. The **President of the Trade and Development Board** said that the UNCTAD Mid-term Review, the reform of the United Nations and the report of the Panel of Eminent Persons put UNCTAD at a crossroads. This should contribute to strengthening its role, improving its functioning and increasing the impact of its technical cooperation activities. UNCTAD had been created to reduce the inequalities between rich and poor countries in global trade through the integrated treatment of trade and development, as well as of the related issues of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development. The obstacles to development could be overcome through a collective effort in which all stakeholders assumed their responsibilities. The private sector, civil society and NGOs were increasingly important stakeholders at the national and international levels and must be fully integrated. In this new social contract, however, developing countries and LDCs must benefit from a sufficiently wide margin of action to define their policies.

4. UNCTAD should concentrate on issues of particular interest to developing countries and LDCs in order to help them benefit from globalization. In the context of the ongoing multilateral trade negotiations, UNCTAD should develop its work on consensus building on the main trade and development issues, indirectly facilitating the conclusion of the Doha Round and stimulating South–South cooperation. The latter should not be a substitute for North–South cooperation or for multilateralism. A favourable international environment and an open and equitable trading system remained essential for the integration and development of countries of the South. Member states needed to provide UNCTAD with sufficient and predictable resources so that it could help countries seek durable solutions and better understand their needs and priorities, their challenges and solutions, as well as provide them with technical assistance. The speaker hoped that member States had the necessary will and conviction to strengthen UNCTAD's unique universal approach and thus contribute to promoting the interactions between trade and development.

5. The **Secretary-General of UNCTAD** said that the United Nations had a more vital role than ever in generating ideas and debate on development policy, and that UNCTAD had a central role to play in that endeavour. UNCTAD's primary mission had always been, and must remain, to address trade and development issues pertinent to developing countries. If UNCTAD was to continue to contribute to the broader UN debate on economic matters it

must keep the development perspective in the forefront and must push beyond current boundaries.

6. He highlighted a number of examples of UNCTAD's recent work, particularly its research and analysis, and how this work contributed to the broader development policy dialogue. He began by looking at recent UNCTAD reports. This year's *Trade and Development Report* examined the world economy's short-term prospects, as well as the longer-term issue of how to accelerate investment, productivity growth and structural change for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In particular, the report considered the balance between national policy autonomy and effective global governance. This year's *Least Developed Countries Report* addressed the issue of capacity-building and included a call for a paradigm shift from a consumption- and exchange-oriented approach to poverty reduction to a production- and employment-oriented approach. The recent report on economic development in Africa explored how the international aid system could deliver on its promise of revitalizing growth and reducing poverty, and proposed a new architecture for international aid. The Secretary-General also noted the contribution of the *World Investment Report*, which examined the internationalization of research and development in its 2005 edition, and would be examining in this year's edition the emergence of foreign direct investment and transnational corporations from developing and transition economies.

7. The Secretary-General referred to UNCTAD's assistance to the Palestinian people. In particular, he noted analysis highlighting the critical situation facing the economy of the occupied Palestinian territory, and UNCTAD's suggestions concerning measures and initiatives for averting economic collapse. In the area of science and technology, he noted that UNCTAD had conducted policy-oriented analysis that aimed at raising awareness about the importance of sharing national experiences and looked at how to bridge the technology gap. He also highlighted UNCTAD's work in the area of corporate contributions to development, which had emphasized the economic dimension of corporate responsibility.

8. The Secretary-General drew attention to UNCTAD's work in the area of consensus building and technical assistance. Its assistance to developing countries in trade negotiations and WTO accession negotiations was recognized, as was its role as a partner in the Aid-for-Trade discourse, operationalization and implementation. Additionally, UNCTAD's ongoing joint efforts with the WTO and the ITC on developing trade capacities were singled out as an example of UNCTAD's multi-stakeholder approach. Furthermore, he commended UNCTAD's support of the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting, which had recently achieved consensus on a new technical tool, namely UNCTAD's publication entitled *Guidance on Good Practices in Corporate Governance Disclosure*, which was aimed at promoting corporate transparency and restoring investor confidence.

9. In conclusion, the Secretary-General referred to one of the recommendations of the Panel of Eminent Persons, namely the establishment of a global network of think tanks specialized in development policy advocacy and strategy setting. He hoped that such a network would be established with the support of, and in consultation with, member States.

10. The **representative of Pakistan**, speaking on behalf of the **Group of 77 and China**, stressed UNCTAD's importance as the principal organization within the UN system for the integrated treatment of trade and development and other related areas of investment, finance and technology. The role of UNCTAD had been under scrutiny; in the view of the Group of 77 and China, it was the only intergovernmental machinery competent to ensure that the work

of each of the three pillars (research, consensus building and technical cooperation) was carried out in accordance with the mandate provided by the quadrennial conferences.

11. The Group of 77 and China encouraged the TDB to send a clear signal that UNCTAD intended to play a central role in the UN development machinery. UNCTAD drew its strength and legitimacy from the universality of its membership and its demonstrated ability in promoting the successful integration of developing countries into the world economy. Its mandate must not be diluted, supplanted or subsumed during the ongoing UN reform process. UNCTAD did not need to be reinvented; rather, it needed to be revitalized to act as the world's development conscience. The Group of 77 and China emphasized that it was only by focusing on development in the work of each of UNCTAD's three pillars that the organization could continue to retain its relevance and enjoy the trust and confidence of developing countries. Also, the Group and China reiterated the importance of a sequential approach in the work of the three pillars: research and analysis should feed into the consensus-building pillar, which in turn should guide technical assistance.

12. With regard to the recent breakdown of negotiations in the WTO Doha Round, the Group recognized the important role of UNCTAD and the contributions that could be made to international deliberations on trade policy. UNCTAD's role was distinct because of its deliberative nature and development orientation, and because its mandate on consensus building on trade and development issues lacked the inhibitions associated with the negotiations in other organizations. The Group emphasized that UNCTAD's proven competence and utility should continue to be used to develop soft law to catalyse, promote and complement rule making in the WTO and other international organizations. This could advance consensus building in those organizations and contribute to ensuring the primacy of the multilateralism and sustainability of the international economic system.

13. The São Paulo Consensus had provided UNCTAD with a clear and unambiguous mandate for promoting systemic coherence, including through cooperation with other international organizations and follow-up to major UN conferences and summits on social and economic development. The Group hoped that the presentations and deliberations in the TDB and the forthcoming High-Level Policy Dialogue at the final formal meeting of the Mid-Term Review would help in the exploration of ways and means of enhancing systemic coherence by reviewing what had been done and identifying what needed to be done by UNCTAD in terms of functions mandated by the São Paulo in important areas such as policy space, corporate developmental responsibility and ICTs.

14. UNCTAD's 2005 report on the development of Africa was commended by the Group of 77 and China for its useful analysis with regard to the impact of foreign direct investment in Africa. The Group reiterated its call for similar analytical work to be undertaken for Asia and Latin America in the interest of developing a complete picture with regard to the pros and cons of the current trends in FDI flows.

15. In conclusion, the representative stressed the need to strengthen the consensus-building pillar of UNCTAD in an effort to recapture and revitalize the spirit of the organization.

16. The representative of Argentina, speaking on behalf of the **Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC)**, thanked the secretariat for including the post-Doha programme on the agenda of the TDB's session. However, the group regretted the omission of reference to negotiations on fisheries subsidies. The speaker noted the valuable

technical assistance offered by UNCTAD in the area of negotiations, as well as support received from donor countries, including the United Kingdom and Spain. The suspension of the Doha Round was a matter of concern and had had an adverse impact on the mandate of the Doha Development Agenda. The Doha Round should not, and could not, replicate what had happened in the Uruguay Round, which had produced no significant benefits for developing countries, generated high adjustment costs, reduced policy space to implement national development policies and legitimized trade-distorting measures applied by developed countries.

17. Among GRULAC's main concerns were agricultural issues. In this regard, the G-20 had presented a proposal that could serve as a basis for serious discussions. Subsidies and similar trade-distorting measures needed discipline. The agreement on the complete elimination of export subsidies must be respected and serve as the basis for relaunching negotiations. In the area of industrial goods, GRULAC members had implemented a significant process of unilateral liberalization in the framework of regional trade agreements and also with developed countries. The ambitious proposals presented by developed countries did not reflect the difficulties faced by many countries in the region in the context of further liberalization. Adjustment costs, as studied by UNCTAD, were not negligible. Regarding services, the offers presented so far by developed countries did not meet GRULAC's legitimate aspirations. The future of the Doha Round hinged on the willingness of the main commercial partners to respect the legitimate aspirations of developing countries, and on a result that would help to achieve the goals in agricultural and industrial negotiations as reflected in paragraph 24 of the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration. Similarly, a process ensuring the full participation of all WTO Members was needed. UNCTAD could play a key role here in fostering dialogue and an exchange of ideas in a forum that promoted consensus building, and could have an active role in the Aid for Trade initiative, including the definition of its elements and its implementation.

18. The speaker commended UNCTAD's *Trade and Development Report 2006*. Regarding its content, he noted that development processes required active policies and a debate on the flexibility available to developing countries regarding such policies. He suggested that this issue be debated in UNCTAD. He also observed that the current international financial system was unable to influence the causes of international financial imbalances, while the multilateral trading system and the WTO offered a more complete and effective multilateral framework. Also, although rules and commitments, including TRIPS and TRIMS, might apply equally to every member State from a legal point of view, they did not apply equally from an economic one. He asked the secretariat to include a study of the GRULAC region, including regional integration processes, in the 2007 TDR and on the agenda of the next session of the TDB.

19. In conclusion, the speaker expressed his appreciation for UNCTAD's background note showing the organization's vital participation in the implementation of the results of UN conferences, and encouraged the secretariat to continue that work, within its mandate, including in relation to intellectual property issues.

20. The representative of **Angola**, speaking on behalf of the **African Group**, said that growth in Africa had accelerated since 2003 and that the 5 per cent expected in 2006 would represent a solid performance and a significant improvement over the period 1980–2000. However, per capita income growth was still insufficient for poverty reduction and achievement of the MDGs. While improvements in the external environment were welcome

since they contributed to growth, market access conditions for African exports were still subject to restrictions on product coverage that had often excluded those sectors in which African economies would benefit the most. The challenge for Africa was to translate improvements into sustained economic growth, effective poverty reduction and improved well-being. Other constraints included stagnating prices for African exports, rising prices for oil imports and rising transport costs. Urgent needs included production and export diversification, ODA and debt relief, and progress in multilateral trade negotiations. The African Group endorsed the conclusions of the *Trade and Development Report 2006* on the need for policy space and the emphasis in the *Least Developed Countries Report 2006* on the need to develop productive capacities. Together with the expansion of productive employment, these should be at the heart of poverty reduction strategies. However, social sectors such as education and health were also part of the productive capacity development process.

21. The African Group drew attention to the need for more aid which was rebalanced in its sectoral composition and provided as direct support to programmes of LDCs' Governments. In addition, there should be a speedy resumption of the Doha negotiations, and UNCTAD should play a key role in any aid-for-trade mechanism and continue its assistance with regard to trade negotiations, trade in goods, services and commodities, and trade and environment.

22. The representative of **Afghanistan**, speaking on behalf of the **Asian Group**, supported the statement by the Group of 77 and China. The present meeting was taking place in an environment of uncertainty, and the representative welcomed the commitments undertaken by developed countries regarding increased aid and debt relief. However, market access conditions in developed countries continued to be biased against developing countries, and he hoped that this issue would be addressed more boldly in future trade negotiations. There was still a chance for the Doha Round to live up to its "Development Round" ambitions, provided that all parties took development commitments seriously.

23. The speaker noted UNCTAD's central role in helping Asian countries use trade effectively in order to climb the ladder of development. Despite the "Asian Miracle", the development challenges for Asia were immense. The region's dynamic performance of late must be sustained, spread to other countries and mainstreamed into development processes. This could be achieved only through an effective follow-up to international trade commitments. UNCTAD had been mandated to make concrete contributions to the implementation of those commitments, and Asia considered systemic coherence and policy space to be of vital importance. In short, the process of globalization, which had so far been unbalanced, needed to be redirected and better managed to facilitate development.

24. Whilst there were welcome developments for the LDCs in terms of improved growth, which had begun in 2000 and reached almost 6 per cent in 2004, there were some concerns. Firstly, some (perhaps most) LDCs were still being left out of renewed global growth opportunities, and secondly, the sustainability of growth was fragile because of various unpredictable conditions.

25. Thus, UNCTAD's role needed to be reinvigorated in the reform of the United Nations. This was particularly necessary following the suspension of WTO negotiations. The speaker expressed his appreciation for UNCTAD's analytical and technical cooperation work supporting countries acceding to the WTO. Also, he looked forward to the Mid-term Review

and a stronger UNCTAD, and expected the consensus-building exercise to take the concrete form of negotiated outcomes, which could be conveyed to the United Nations in New York.

26. The delegate of **Finland**, speaking on behalf of the **European Union and the acceding countries of Bulgaria and Romania**, said that UNCTAD had an important role to play in areas such as regional integration, South–South cooperation, commodity dependence, integration of trade, growth and investment in national development plans, poverty reduction and sustainable development. Referring to the *Trade and Development Report 2006*, he said that the EU did not agree with its suggestion that the sole remedy for many problems was increased policy flexibility. However, regarding special and differential treatment, it agreed with the idea that the developing countries should be open to discussion of such treatment based on objective criteria. Concerning the Secretary-General's report on "Economic Development in Africa", he noted that it was useful since it raised fundamental questions about the ways in which aid was distributed and its quality. The EU attached priority to Africa's development, and he mentioned its relevant programmes. Furthermore, the African Union was an essential partner for the EU in the development of Africa, and the EU fully supported the comprehensive programme of ideas and actions laid out by the Commission for Africa in its report entitled "Our Common Interest".

27. On the *Least Developed Countries Report 2006*, he said that the EU agreed with its main thrust, namely that strengthening productive capacities was a key challenge for LDCs, and added that sufficient social sector spending was also a prerequisite for sustainable development. The report on the Integrated Framework (IF) should have been part of the LDC report and in the future greater emphasis should be placed on the role of the IF in addressing the needs of LDCs and in UNCTAD's contribution. The Brussels Programme of Action (BPoA) for LDCs was crucial for improving the LDCs' situation, and respect for human rights, the rule of law, core labour standards, solid democratic institutions, good governance, sound economic policies and improved infrastructure were the basis for sustainable economic growth. UNCTAD's work for LDCs should be enhanced, particularly the implementation of the IF at the country level, taking into account the achievement of the BPoA goals, and sufficient resources should be allocated in this regard.

28. Regarding UNCTAD's technical assistance, while the beneficiaries of its technical assistance programmes were generally content with the latter, the EU needed to receive more effective and results-based reporting from the secretariat since it financed 60 per cent of UNCTAD's technical assistance. The EU was pleased that UNCTAD attached priority to streamlining its technical assistance to increase effectiveness, and it should prepare itself to play an active part in the future operationalization of Aid for Trade.

29. Concerning the Doha Development Agenda, the cost of failing to conclude the negotiations would be extremely high, especially for the most vulnerable developing countries, and the EU would do its utmost to secure an early resumption of negotiations.

30. In conclusion, the speaker said that the EU was committed to enhancing UNCTAD, and it looked forward to having discussions on the recommendations made in the report of the Panel of Eminent Persons to strengthen UNCTAD.

31. The representative of **Belarus**, speaking on the behalf of the **Group D countries**, said with regard to the agenda item on interdependence and development that his group appreciated the *Trade and Development Report 2006* for its new ideas about designing economic policies to enable developing countries to succeed in the global environment. The

group believed that the report's findings could also be relevant to countries with economies in transition. Other UNCTAD publications were also a most valuable source of information for policymakers and researchers in Group D countries. Particular attention was given to the forthcoming *World Investment Report 2006* and its focus on FDI from non-developed countries and its implication for development. As in the past, the group was greatly appreciative of UNCTAD's analytical and research work, particularly that on globalization, trade and development.

32. Regarding the agenda item on the post-Doha work programme, the group believed that UNCTAD provided a unique opportunity for the frank exchange of views and ideas. This could improve understanding and goodwill among nations, and contribute to building confidence and consensus on key issues of interest to developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Because of its experience, competence and development orientation, UNCTAD should play a key role in the Aid for Trade initiative by providing assistance to eligible countries.

33. In conclusion, the representative said that his group attached high priority to UNCTAD's technical cooperation, which focused on helping non-developed countries integrate into the world economy. It thanked donor countries as well as the UNCTAD secretariat for their assistance in such fields as accession to the WTO, building capacity for the Doha Round and other trade negotiations, investment promotion and agreements, debt management and trade facilitation. Also, it commended the UNCTAD secretariat's efforts to ensure predictable funding for the training courses on international economic agenda (paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action).

34. The representative of **Benin**, speaking on behalf of the **least developed countries**, emphasized the need for a better contribution by the multilateral trading system and trade negotiations to the development of the developing countries. He highlighted the issue of interdependence in the context of trade and development, as analysed in the *Trade and Development Report 2006*. He agreed with the principles to guide the strategy-making process related to trade development, as well as the need for policy space for the developing countries in the implementation of trade policies.

35. Turning to the mid-term review of the Programme of Action for LDCs for the Decade 2001–2010, he noted that mixed progress had been made in those countries, as clearly demonstrated in the *Least Developed Countries Report 2006*. There was a need for a new model giving priority to the productive capacities that would be required in the next 15 years in order to respond to the job crisis in the LDCs. He thus regretted that progress was still to be made in achieving the objectives of the Programme of Action for LDCs.

36. The speaker emphasized the need for increased international aid for African countries since they constituted the majority of the LDCs. However, he expressed concern about the efficiency and impact of international aid on poverty reduction and growth. He agreed with the proposal for reform of the multilateral trading system in terms of aid delivery in order to cut transaction costs, improve coherence and reduce unpredictability in the current aid system. In conclusion, the speaker drew attention to the positive role of civil society in identifying solutions for trade and development issues.

37. The representative of **Switzerland** drew attention to the recent positive trends for developing countries in the world economy, which were helpful for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. However, he expressed concern about the challenges still facing

developing countries, and welcomed the emphasis by the *Least Developed Countries Report 2006* on the need to build greater supply capacity and give more attention to the development of the private sector as a driving force for economic development, particularly for the African continent, which was far from achieving the MDGs. In addition, the speaker highlighted his country's support for the principles of the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness, particularly ownership, alignment and harmonization.

38. Concerns about the uncertainties caused by the suspension of the Doha negotiations were also raised, and the representative welcomed the recent emphasis on Aid for Trade and its priorities, which could serve as an opportunity to increase the efficiency and coordination of aid.

39. The speaker suggested that the way in which mid-term reviews were carried out be examined in order to take into account lessons learned and to improve the functioning of UNCTAD. Ways to revitalize UNCTAD, on the basis of both its centres of excellence and priorities, and suggestions made by the Panel of Eminent Persons, were to be proposed. His country would welcome concrete steps for their operationalization and a calendar for implementation.

40. In conclusion, the speaker expressed his support for a strong UNCTAD, whose voice could be heard, and referred to his country's successful collaboration with several UNCTAD divisions and programmes.

41. The representative of the **United States of America** said that UNCTAD must clearly identify and develop its comparative advantages relative to other agencies in the UN's integrated development framework. It had to establish mechanisms for developing coherent policy advice and technical assistance based on sound empirical research, rigorous and objective analytical review, and the best practices among emerging economies, recognizing that there were no one-size-fits-all recipes for development.

42. Since private finance and trade drove the global economy today, development strategy must include country ownership, capacity building, just and inclusive governance, effective institutions and the rule of law, open markets, trade and productive investment, environmental sustainability and mobilization of financial resources. UNCTAD needed to focus on practical and proven solutions for overcoming barriers to business formation, growth and competition, and creating regulatory environments that empowered entrepreneurs and unleashed the private sector as a driver of development. In so doing, it could help countries build democratic systems and market economies, and support international efforts to build a freer and more open world economy from which all could benefit, including through the successful conclusion of the Doha Development Round.

43. The representative of **Iraq** highlighted UNCTAD's importance as a forum for deliberation and consensus building on the challenges of globalization and the economic development of developing economies. He referred to a number of Iraq's economic reforms. The Iraqi Government had undertaken rapid steps to move its economy from centralized economic control to a more decentralized market-based economy that encouraged private enterprise, economic dynamism and market allocation of capital. This economic transition had included the lowering of trade barriers, the enactment of foreign investment laws, a number of financial reforms and the development of intellectual property rights legislation.

44. As well as being rich in petroleum and gas, Iraq had a highly educated and highly ambitious population. He indicated that through the development of an economic policy that was consistent with international standards and practices, Iraq would have the opportunity to become an effective partner in international trade.

45. Despite all Iraq's efforts and initiatives, it still faced many difficulties and challenges impacting on the economic reform project, which was based on transition to the principles and legal framework of a market economy. The Trade Ministry was facing challenges in its efforts to convince the local private sector to further develop its activities in the context of a dynamic economic environment. In particular, the Iraqi Government was confronted with the challenge of attracting investment in an unstable environment. Nevertheless, it had made overtures to the Governments of other free markets, seeking to develop trade and investment opportunities. The Iraqi Government regarded membership of the World Trade Organization as an important step in integrating more fully into the world economy.

46. The representative of **Djibouti** thanked the Trade and Development Board for admitting his country as a member, and promised that it would play an active role in future activities of the Board and other UNCTAD bodies. He also expressed his appreciation to the UNCTAD secretariat for the quality of its work both on the ground and in Geneva.

47. The representative of the **Uganda Consumers' Protection Association**, speaking on behalf of **civil society**, said that UNCTAD's continued interaction with civil society organizations (CSOs) helped it publicize and channel the "grassroots views" of global trade and development, and integrate them into the mainstream, with a focus on developing countries. At UNCTAD's hearing with CSOs on 22 September 2006, the latter had urged member States to strengthen UNCTAD's role in international trade and development, enhance its political engagement in global trade governance and increase resources to strengthen its work under the three pillars, namely research and analysis, technical assistance and consensus building.

48. CSOs reminded member States of undertakings the latter had made at recent international gatherings, such as the UN Summit and ECOSOC High-Level Segment, to address the challenges of globalization and trade liberalization for employment and the working conditions of the masses. CSOs urged UNCTAD to undertake analysis of the impact of trade policy interventions on the working population, including farmers, and in-depth gender and trade analysis of women and young people in the informal sector and small and medium-sized enterprises.

II. PROCEDURAL, INSTITUTIONAL, ORGANIZATIONAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND RELATED MATTERS

A. Opening of the session

49. The fifty-third session of the Trade and Development Board was opened on 27 September 2006 by Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya (Nepal), the outgoing President of the Board.

B. New member of the Board

50. At its 984th (opening) plenary meeting, on 27 September 2006, the Board agreed to the request of Djibouti to become a member of the Board.

C. Election of officers

(Agenda item 1 (a))

51. At its opening plenary meeting, the Board elected Mr. Mohamed Saleck Ould Mohamed Lemine (Mauritania) by acclamation as President of the Board at its fifty-third session.

52. Also at its opening plenary meeting, the Board completed the election of officers to serve on the Bureau of the Board at its fifty-third session by electing 10 Vice-Presidents and the Rapporteur. Accordingly, the elected Bureau was as follows:

President: Mr. Mohamed Saleck Ould Mohamed Lemine (Mauritania)

Vice-Presidents: Mr. Arsene Balihuta (Uganda)
Mr. Juan Antonio Fernández Palacios (Cuba)
Mr. Andrej Logar (Slovenia)
Mr. Juan Antonio March (Spain)
Mr. Alex Van Meeuwen (Belgium)
Mr. Fredrik Arthur (Norway)
Ms. Lisa Carle (United States of America)
Mr. Iouri Afanassiev (Russian Federation)
Mr. Mohammad Ali Zarie Zare (Islamic Republic of Iran)
Mr. Miguel Bautista (Philippines)

Rapporteur: Ms. Ana Inés Rocanova (Uruguay)

53. In accordance with past practice, the Board agreed that the regional coordinators and China would be fully associated with the work of the Bureau.

D. Adoption of the agenda and organization of the work of the session

(Agenda item 1 (b))

54. At its opening meeting, the Board adopted the provisional agenda for the session contained in TD/B/53/1. It decided that all agenda items would be taken up in plenary.