

“Fifty-fifth session of the TDB at a glance”

55th session of the TDB at a glance

- The session was held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 15 to 26 September 2008, and comprised 11 plenary meetings.
- **Participants** (TD/B/55/INF.1):
 - 307 delegates from 114 States members of the Board
 - 18 participants from 6 Observers
 - 19 delegates from 7 intergovernmental organizations
 - 21 participants from 10 UN agencies, specialized agencies and related organizations
 - 68 participants from 38 non-governmental organizations
 - 33 panellists (listed below)

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Procedural matters

- **Election of officers**
 - Mr. Debapriya Bhattacharya (Bangladesh) was elected President of the 55th session. He succeeds Mr. Petko Draganov (Bulgaria), President of the 54th session.
 - 10 Vice-Presidents:

Mr. Arcanjo Maria DO NASCIMENTO	(Angola)
Mr. Alberto DUMONT	(Argentina)
Mr. Paulo ESTIVALLET DE MESQUITA	(Brazil)
Mr. Tomáš HUSÁK	(Czech Republic)
Mr. Christophe GUILHOU	(France)
Mr. Kwabena BAAH-DUODU	(Ghana)
Mr. Masood KHAN	(Pakistan)
Mr. Vassily NEBENZIA	(Russian Federation)
Mr. Javier GARRIGUES	(Spain)
Mr. Otto VAN MAERSSSEN	(United States)
 - Rapporteur: Ms. Andriani FALKONAKI-SOTIROPOULOS (Greece)

2. High-level segment: Trade and productive capacities for achieving internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals

Speakers (15 September):

Mr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD
Ms. Monique Nsanzabaganwa, Minister of Trade and Industry, Rwanda
Mr. Temístocles Montás, Minister of Economy, Planning and Development, Dominican Republic
Mr. Yasuo Hayashi, Chairman and CEO, Japanese External Trade Organization (JETRO)

Mr. Enrique A. Manalo, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Philippines
Ms. Lineo Molise, Assistant Minister of Home Affairs, Lesotho
Ms. Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary, UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
Ms. Mia Horn af Rantzien, Deputy Director-General, Swedish International Development Cooperation

3. Interdependence: Mobilizing resources for development – commodity prices, productive capacity, supply and distribution

Speakers (16 September):

Mr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD
Mr. Heiner Flassbeck, Director, Division on Globalization and Development Strategies, UNCTAD

Speaker (17 September):

Professor Robert Frenkel, Principal Associate Researcher, Centro de Estudios de Estado y Sociedad (CEDES), and Professor of Economics, School of Economics, University of Buenos Aires

4. Review of progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010

Sessional Committee I was established under this item, with Mr. Jean Feyder of Luxembourg elected as Chair and Mr. Ravi Bhattarai (Nepal) as Vice-Chairman-cum-Rapporteur.

4(a). *The Least Developed Countries Report 2008: Recent economic, social and policy trends.*

Speakers (18 September):

Ms. Lakshmi Puri, Acting Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD
Mr. Habib Ouane, Director, Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes, UNCTAD

4(b). Sectors of key interest to the LDCs in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the LDCs for the Decade 2001-2010: Export competitiveness – policy issues and priorities

Speakers (18 September):

Mr. Philippe Besson, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
Mr. Carlos Nuno Castel-Branco, Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Economicos, Mozambique

5. Economic development in Africa: Trade liberalization and export performance in Africa

Sessional Committee II was established under this item, with Mr. Kwabena Baah-Duodu of Ghana elected as Chair and Mr. Joannes Ekaprasetya Tandjung of Indonesia as Vice-Chairman-cum-Rapporteur.

Speakers (19 September):

Ms. Lakshmi Puri, Acting Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD
Mr. Habib Ouane, Director, Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes, UNCTAD

6. Export performance following trade liberalization: some patterns and policy perspectives

Speakers (19 September):

Mr. Arne Lennart Bigsten, University of Gothenburg, Sweden
Mr. Yves Charpentier, Advisor to the Director General, Agence Française de Développement, Paris
Mr. Arsene Balihuta, Ambassador of Uganda

6. Evolution of the international trading system and of international trade from a development perspective

Speakers (16 September):

Mr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD
Mr. Pascal Lamy, Director-General of the WTO
Mr. Shree Baboo Chekitan Servansing, Ambassador and Permanent Representative, Mauritius
Mr. Mothae Anthony Maruping, LDC Coordinator at the WTO, and Ambassador and Permanent Representative, Lesotho
Mr. Eckart Guth, Ambassador and Permanent Representative, European Commission
Mr. Bruce Gosper, Ambassador, Australia
Mr. Paulo Estivallet de Mesquita, Minister Counsellor, Brazil
Mr. David Shark, Deputy Permanent Representative, United States
Mr. Martin Khor, Director, Third World Network

7. Development strategies in a globalized world: Financial policies and productive investment related to trade and development

Speakers (22 September):

Mr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD
Mr. Detlef Kotte, Head, Macroeconomic and Development Policies Branch, UNCTAD
Alfredo Calcagno, UNCTAD
Professor Gerald Epstein, Co-Director of the Political Economy Research Institute, University of Massachusetts
Ms. Yuefen Li, UNCTAD
Professor Ernest Aryeetey, Director of the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research, University of Ghana

8. Investment for development: transnational corporations, infrastructure and development

Speakers (24 September):

Mr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD
Ms. Anne Miroux, Head, Investment Analysis Branch, UNCTAD
Mr. Thomas Scott, Development Bank of Southern Africa
Mr. Geoffrey Hamilton, UN Economic Commission for Europe
Mr. Muhamad Noor YACOB (Malaysia), Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the WTO

9. UNCTAD's contribution to the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields

Presentation by the secretariat of UNCTAD's report (TD/B/55/7 and Corr.1)

Speaker (23 September):

Ms. Lakshmi Puri, Acting Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD

10. Technical cooperation activities

10(a). Review of the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD (report of the Working Party on its fifty-first session)

10(b). Report on UNCTAD's assistance to the Palestinian people (23 September)

The Board took note of the report by the UNCTAD secretariat (TD/B/55/2) and the statements made by delegations and decided, in accordance with General Assembly decision 47/445, that the report of the Board on its fifty-fifth session to the General Assembly should include an account of the deliberation under this item.

11. Hearing with civil society

Speakers (17 September):

"The global food crisis: addressing a systemic failure in development strategy":

Ms. Iara Pietricovsky, Instituto de Estudos Socioeconomicos, Brazil
Ms. Jacqueline Coté, International Chamber of Commerce, Geneva Office

"The global food crisis and its impact on sustainable development":

Mr. Sam Kuloba Watasa, Uganda Consumers' Protection, Uganda
Mr. Mamadou Ndiaye, Office Africain pour le Développement et la Coopération, Senegal

12. Other matters in the field of trade and development

12(a). Progressive development of the law of international trade: forty-first annual report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (New York, 16 June-3 July 2008)

The Board took note of the forty-first annual report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (A/63/17).

12(b). Report of the Joint Advisory Group on the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO on its forty-first session (Geneva, 4-5 December 2007)

Speakers (23 September):

Mr. Malloum Bamanga Abbas (Chad), Chair of the Joint Advisory Group
Mr. Stephen Brown, Deputy Executive Director of the International Trade Centre

13. Matters requiring action by the Board arising from or related to reports and activities of its subsidiary bodies

Report of the Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget on its fiftieth session

Speaker (23 September):

Mr. Dmitri Gudunov (Russian Federation), Chair of the Working Party

The Board took note of the report of the Working Party (TD/B/WP/200) and endorsed the agreed conclusions contained therein.

Report of the Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget on its fifty-first session

Speaker (23 September):

Ms. Carmen Castillo-Gallandat (El Salvador), Chair of the Working Party

The Board took note of the report of the Working Party (TD/B/WP/206) and endorsed the agreed conclusions contained therein.

14. Institutional, organizational, administrative and related matters:

(a) The Board took note of the Report of the President of the Advisory Body set up in accordance with paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action on the implementation of courses by the secretariat in 2007-2008 and their relevant impact; and the appointment of the members of the Advisory Body for 2009. It also approved the following members of the Advisory Body for 2009:

Ambassador Debapriya BHATTACHARYA (President of the Board, Bangladesh); Mr. Sergei ALEINIK (Belarus); Mr. Georgi AVRAMCHEV (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia); Jean-Baptiste MATTEI (France); Mr. Dinesh BHATTARAI (Nepal); Mr. Yahya S. H. AL-WAHAIBI (Oman); Mr. Mario MATUS (Chile); Mr. Byron LARIOS (El Salvador); Mr. Alejandro ARTUCIO RODRIGUEZ (Uruguay); Mr. Pierre BARUSASIEKO (Burundi); Mr. Malloum BAMANGA ABBAS (Tchad); Mr. Guy RAJEMISON RAKOTOMAHARO (Madagascar); Mr. Darius Kurek (Switzerland); Mr. Otto VAN MAERSSSEN (USA); Group B (*to be announced*).

- (b) There were no new applications before the Board for status with UNCTAD from intergovernmental organizations. At present, there are 112 such organizations (TD/B/IGO/LIST/7).
- (c) There are 200 NGOs in status with UNCTAD, 110 in the general category and 90 in the special category. There are 21 national NGOs included in the register (TD/B/NGO/LIST/9). The Board approved an application for observer status from the World Forum of Civil Society Networks (UBUNTU) (TD/B/55/R.1).
- (d) The Board approved the calendar of meetings for the remainder of 2008 and the provisional calendar for 2009.
- (e) Membership of the Working Party for 2009: Albania, Belarus, China, Congo, Djibouti, El Salvador, Finland, France, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Sweden, Switzerland, United States.
- (f) Review of the lists of States contained in the annex to General Assembly resolution 1995 (XIX): The membership is reflected in document TD/B/INF.211. There were no new applications.
- (g) There were no financial implications arising from the work of the Board at its current session.

15. Other business

The Board approved the outstanding topics and terms of reference for UNCTAD expert meetings and requested the secretariat to issue them in a compilation as an official Board document. It approved the proposal to hold an executive session on 13 November to provide input to the follow-up Conference on Financing for Development, along with the draft agenda for the session (TD/B/55/CRP.2). The Board requested that the extended bureau meet next week on this subject.

16. Adoption of the report (TD/B/55/L.1, L.2 and Adds. 1-9, TD/B/55/SC.1/L.1 and SC.2/L.1)

At its final plenary meeting on 26 September, the Board adopted its report and authorized the Rapporteur to finalize its report to the General Assembly. The report incorporates the Board's agreed conclusions under the various items, along with the President's summaries.

SPECIAL EVENTS

"One United Nations" initiative: special presentation on the UNCTAD-led joint programme on the graduation of Cape Verde from the category of least developed countries and its integration into the world economy

Speakers (22 September):

Mr. José Maria Pereira Neves, Prime Minister of Cape Verde (prerecorded statement)

Mr. Supachai Panitchpadki, Secretary-General of UNCTAD

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Mr. Shishir Priyadarshi, Director of the Development Division, WTO
Ms. Petra Lantz De Barnardis, United Nations Resident Coordinator, Cape Verde
Ms. Fatima Fialho, Minister of Economy, Growth and Competitiveness of Cape Verde

Launch of a study on "Organic Agriculture and Food Security in Africa", produced by the UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development (CBTF) (24 September)