



# United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

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## Trade and Development Board

### Fifty-fifth session

Geneva, 15–26 September 2008

Item 14 (c) of the provisional agenda

## **Designation of non-governmental organizations for the purposes of rule 77 of the rules of procedure of Board**

### **Application from the UBUNTU-World Forum of Civil Society Networks**

Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

#### *Executive summary*

The UNCTAD secretariat has received an application from the UBUNTU-World Forum of Civil Society Networks requesting the inclusion of that organization by the Trade and Development Board in the list provided for in rule 77 of the rules of procedure of the Trade and Development Board.

Having reviewed the information provided, the secretariat is of the opinion that, subject to the concurrence of the Bureau of the Trade and Development Board, UBUNTU may be classified in the Special Category under the provisions of paragraph 12 (b) of Board decision 43 (VII).

The Board may wish to take action on the above-mentioned application at its fifty-fifth session.

## **Background information on the UBUNTU-World Forum of Civil Society Networks**

### **A. History**

1. According to documents provided by the UBUNTU-World Forum of Civil Society Networks, the former Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Mr. Federico Mayor Zaragoza, sent an introductory letter to a number of civil society actors in October 2000, calling for their collaboration to face the great challenge of globalization. It was subsequently decided to set up the UBUNTU-World Forum of Civil Society Networks to promote cooperation between individuals, cultures and nations in political, economic and social decisions. “UBUNTU” is an age-old African term for humaneness – for caring, sharing and being in harmony with all creation.

### **B. Aims and objectives**

2. According to its statute, the purpose of the forum is to help establish new procedures and institutions of democratic governance on every scale. The forum also aims, in cooperation with other actors, to promote coherence between policies in the macroeconomic, commercial, cooperation and environmental spheres. The forum aspires to make possible social, human and environmentally sustainable development throughout the world, guided by the principles established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

3. UBUNTU works to identify the main challenges facing humanity and proposes common strategies and action plans based on past practice. It aims to present new proposals for dealing with the world’s problems, solving them and managing them, and to give civil society the capacity to dialogue with and exert political pressure and influence on Governments, international organizations, economic actors and the media.

4. The forum facilitates meetings on themes related to UNCTAD activities such as trade policies, trade development, emerging issues on commodities and the world food crisis.

### **C. Membership**

5. UBUNTU is open to individuals and organizations. Its membership includes intellectuals, representatives of 63 international organizations, observers from 8 non-governmental organizations, 27 members from academia and the media and more than 250 international members.

### **D. Structure**

6. UBUNTU is a forum for debate and action. The coordinating committee established at each plenary meeting acts as the governing body and ensures the proper functioning of the forum’s procedures and activities.

7. The current coordinating committee consists of: Gemma Adaba (Trinidad and Tobago) and Eduardo Estevez (Argentina), representing the International Trade Union Confederation; Fatma Alloo from Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (United Republic of Tanzania); Aldo Caliarì from International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity (Argentina); Miquel de Paladella from the Global Movement for Children (Spain); John Foster from the North–South Institute (Canada); Nadia Johnson from the Women’s Environment and Development Organization (United States of America); Alexander Likhotal from

Green Cross International (Russian Federation); Sara Longwe from African Women's Development and Communications (Zambia); Felix Marti from the Linguapax Institute (Spain); Bill Pace from the World Federalist Movement (United States of America); Cyril Ritchie from the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Status with the United Nations (United Kingdom); Pedro Santana from the Observatorio Euro-Latinamericano sobre el Desarrollo Democrático Social (Colombia); Roberto Savio from the Inter Press Service (Argentina); Colin Archer from the International Peace Bureau (United Kingdom); Josep Xercavins (secretariat); and Federico Mayor (Spain).

8. The plenary meeting of the forum takes place every one or two years. The agenda and main documents are debated in a prior participatory process.

9. Decisions are taken by consensus where possible, and otherwise by a simple majority of participants.

10. An ad hoc secretariat services the forum: it is coordinated by Josep Xercavins, of the Technical University of Catalonia (UPC), Barcelona. It currently consists of Josep Xercavins, Marta Garrich, Lluís Miret, Sergi Rovira and Laia Bertran.

## **E. Financial resources**

11. All expenses of UBUNTU are covered by voluntary donations from its members. Its annual budget for the last three years has been as follows:

### **2005**

<i>Annual budget</i>	€343 939
Organizational expenditure	€160 255
Project expenditure	€161 881

### **2006**

<i>Annual budget</i>	€483 736
Organizational expenditure	€218 207
Project expenditure	€247 726

### **2007**

<i>Annual budget</i>	€413 728*
Organizational expenditure	€230 310
Project expenditure	€218 654

\* Expenditure in 2007 included a surplus from previous years.

## **F. Relations with other United Nations organizations**

12. The UBUNTU-World Forum of Civil Society Networks has special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

## **G. Publications**

13. UBUNTU issues annual reports and various publications on the events it organizes.

## **H. Contacts**

### **Liaison officer**

14. Mr. Josep Xercavins will assure liaison with UNCTAD.

**Headquarters**

UBUNTU  
Jordi Girona 29  
08034 Barcelona  
Spain

*Tel:* +34 413 77 73

*Fax:* +34 413 77 77

*E-mail:* josep.xercavins@ubuntu.upc.edu

*Website:* www.ubuntu.upc.edu/

**I. Working language**

15. The working languages of the forum are Catalan, Spanish, English and French.