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Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget
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**Report of the Working Party on the Strategic
Framework and the Programme Budget on its
fifty-sixth session**

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 6 to 8 September 2010

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I. Draft decision and agreed conclusions adopted by the Working Party at its fifty-sixth session

A. Draft decision for consideration by the Trade and Development Board

Review of the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD and their financing

(Agenda item 3)

The Trade and Development Board,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the technical cooperation activities carried out by the UNCTAD secretariat in cooperation with the beneficiaries and development partners;
2. *Takes note* of the reports prepared by the secretariat for the Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget;
3. *Notes with satisfaction* the increase in total delivery of the technical cooperation programmes of UNCTAD, which reached their highest level ever in 2009, and expresses appreciation for the support provided by bilateral and multilateral donors;
4. *Takes note with concern* of the decrease of 12 per cent in total trust fund contributions in 2009 which should be assessed in light of the financial and economic crisis. Invites development partners to provide increased and adequate funding for the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD;
5. *Appreciates* the increased contribution from the developing countries to the UNCTAD trust funds;
6. *Thanks* the contributors to the UNCTAD Least Developed Countries (LDCs) Trust Fund; reiterates its deep concern that the fund never reached its intended level, and invites development partners to make financial contributions to the LDC Trust Fund to ensure, inter alia, the full and effective participation of LDC representatives and LDC civil society actors in the preparatory processes to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and at the Conference itself. Also invites extrabudgetary contributions from development partners to enable the UNCTAD secretariat to enhance its substantive and technical contributions to the preparatory processes and to the Conference;
7. *Expresses concern* with the fact that the UNCTAD trust fund dedicated to WTO accession is very low on resources and invites donors to provide adequate resources for strengthening its technical assistance programmes to WTO-acceding countries, in accordance with paragraph 90(e) of the Accra Accord;
8. *Recalls* its decisions 492 (LIV), 495 (LV) and 498 (LVI) and paragraphs 162, 212, 215(c), 216 and 217 of the Accra Accord regarding the need for more coherence in the planning and implementation of technical cooperation programmes;
9. *Emphasizes* that transparency in UNCTAD's technical assistance process is important in identifying the needs and priorities of beneficiaries and to guide donors in their decisions regarding the allocation of their contributions;
10. *Reiterates its calls* for the full implementation, by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, of the previous decisions of the Working Party – especially paragraph 12 of the agreed conclusions of the Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget at its resumed fifty-second session in June 2009 (TD/B/WP/210) – to strengthen the Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes to fully enable the division to discharge its mandated responsibilities, including the task of providing

substantive and technical support to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries;

11. *Urges* the secretariat to continue its efforts to promote greater coherence in the planning and implementation of technical cooperation programmes, including with UNCTAD's analytical and consensus-building pillars, and particularly through the establishment of thematic clusters and interdivisional coordination;

12. *Requests* the secretariat to explore the feasibility of adding functionality to the Project Portal that would show the list of all development partners that are funding multi-donor trust funds. Invites the secretariat to continue to improve the visibility of the technical assistance and provide all relevant information regarding technical assistance through its portal;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to continue reporting to member States on the implementation of paragraph 6 of the decision contained in document TD/B/WP/210.

B. Agreed conclusions

Evaluation of technical cooperation activities

(Agenda item 4)

Agenda item 4(a). In-depth evaluation of UNCTAD's technical cooperation activities dedicated to least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and other structurally weak, vulnerable and small economies

The Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget,

Having considered the in-depth evaluation of UNCTAD's technical cooperation activities dedicated to least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and other structurally weak, vulnerable and small economies, as contained in documents TD/B/WP/223, TD/B/WP/223/Add.1 and TD/B/WP/224,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* to the independent evaluation team for the evaluation report, and to the Government of Norway for its financial support for the evaluation, and reiterates the importance it attaches to the evaluation process in UNCTAD;
2. *Takes note* of the findings of the evaluation report, and in this context notes the importance of UNCTAD's technical cooperation to address the needs and priorities of least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), small island developing States (SIDS) and other structurally weak, vulnerable and small economies (SWVSEs), and encourages the secretariat to further strengthen its technical cooperation activities to these groups of countries;
3. *Welcomes* the recommendations contained in the evaluation reports and requests the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to implement the recommendations within UNCTAD's mandate;
4. *Welcomes* the contributions made by donors in support of UNCTAD's technical cooperation, and underlines the recommendation for development partners to increase their financial support for UNCTAD's technical cooperation programmes for LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS and other SWVSEs, including through efforts to provide continuous and predictable multi-year funding;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to report on the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations at the next session of the Working Party on technical cooperation;
6. *Encourages* UNCTAD to improve its communications efforts in order to contribute towards better outreach of its technical cooperation programmes.

Agenda item 4(b). Progress report on the implementation of recommendations from the independent external evaluation of UNCTAD's commodities programme

The Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget,

Having taken note of the progress report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in last year's evaluation of UNCTAD's commodities programme, as contained in document TD/B/EX(50)/4,

1. *Notes* the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations;
2. *Requests* the UNCTAD secretariat to continue its efforts to make further progress in their implementation;
3. *Calls on* the secretariat to continue restructuring and streamlining its activities and projects, in order to revitalize UNCTAD's work on commodities.

II. Proceedings

A. Opening statements

1. Opening statements were made by Mr. Heiner Flassbeck, Director, Division on Globalization and Development Strategies, UNCTAD; Mr. Rodolfo Reyes (Cuba) on behalf of the Group of 77 and China; Mr. Nasrul Islam (Bangladesh) on behalf of the Asian Group; Mr. Andrés Lamoliatte (Chile) on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries; Mr. Bassel Salah Ahmed (Egypt) on behalf of the African Group; Mr. Ravi Bhattarai (Nepal) on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries; Ms. Valentine Mangez (Belgium) on behalf of the European Union; Mr. Khondker Talha (Bangladesh), Mr. Athmane Mehadji (Algeria) and Mr. Leulseged Tadese (Ethiopia).

2. The secretariat's introduction of items 3 and 4 provided a broad overview of UNCTAD's technical cooperation activities in 2009, pointing out in particular that delivery of activities had reached its highest level ever, while noting, however, that contributions by developed countries to trust funds had declined to their 2006 level. Efforts towards further rationalization of UNCTAD's technical cooperation activities had continued, in particular through the establishment of thematic multi-donor, multi-year trust funds. UNCTAD had also continued to participate actively in the United Nations' system-wide coherence reform process, in particular as the coordinating agency of the United Nations Chief Executives Board Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity.

3. In the statements made by delegates, all speakers stressed the importance of technical cooperation as an essential pillar of UNCTAD's work. A number of speakers also stressed the need to ensure greater synergy between technical cooperation and the other two pillars of UNCTAD's work – research and analysis, and consensus-building.

4. Most speakers expressed concern at the sharp decrease in contributions by developed countries to trust funds in 2009, while contributions by developing countries had continued to increase. In order to meet increasing demands from beneficiaries, ways should be found to ensure predictable and stable funding. Many speakers commented that efforts towards greater rationalization should continue, while ensuring that the scope of activities is not reduced.
5. Many speakers praised UNCTAD's involvement in the system-wide coherence reform process and the activities carried out within the United Nations Chief Executives Board Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity, as a unique example of cooperation among agencies at the country level.
6. Two speakers expressed concern at the lack of resources contributed to the LDC Trust Fund, and requested both donors and the secretariat to give adequate attention to the needs of LDCs. Some speakers stressed the importance of the new Memorandum of Understanding signed between UNCTAD and the United Nations Development Programme as an essential tool in the implementation of the "Delivering as One" initiative.
7. Reacting to the "In-depth evaluation of UNCTAD's technical cooperation activities dedicated to least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and other structurally weak, vulnerable and small economies", delegations called for improved coordination and coherence within UNCTAD to enhance its efficiency in delivering technical cooperation and to ensure a sharper focus on the specific needs of those countries.
8. In line with the findings of the above-mentioned evaluation, some delegations expressed their support for more predictable multi-year funding, and also for clearer reporting on technical cooperation expenditures. One delegation suggested that UNCTAD should further strengthen its advocacy role and make this an integral part of UNCTAD's communications strategy.
9. Some delegations suggested that the Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes (ALDC) should take a leading role in coordinating the design of technical cooperation to LDCs. In addition, recalling the agreed conclusions of previous meetings of the Working Party, they called for the necessary financial and human resources to be made available to ALDC. Several other delegations supported the call for increased resources for ALDC.
10. Some delegations acknowledged the progress made by the secretariat in strengthening its commodities programme, and encouraged the secretariat to address the emerging challenges in this area. Several member States also called for the prompt appointment of a Head of the Special Unit on Commodities.

B. Informal meetings

11. The Working Party pursued its deliberations in an informal setting.

III. Organizational matters

A. Election of officers

(Agenda item 1)

1. At the opening plenary meeting, on 6 September 2010, the Working Party elected Ms. Carmen Elena Castillo-Gallandat (El Salvador) as its Chair and Ms. Karolina Frischkopf (Switzerland) as its Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur.

B. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

(Agenda item 2)

2. At the same meeting, the Working Party adopted its provisional agenda (TD/B/WP/221). The agenda was thus as follows:

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Review of the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD and their financing
4. Evaluation of technical cooperation activities:
 - (a) In-depth evaluation of UNCTAD's technical cooperation activities dedicated to least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and other structurally weak, vulnerable and small economies
 - (b) Progress report on the implementation of recommendations from the independent external evaluation of UNCTAD's commodities programme
5. Provisional agenda for the fifty-seventh session of the Working Party
6. Other business
7. Adoption of the report of the Working Party to the Trade and Development Board

C. Provisional agenda for the fifty-seventh session of the Working Party

(Agenda item 5)

3. At its closing plenary meeting, on 8 September 2010, the Working Party approved the provisional agenda for its fifty-seventh session (see annex I).

D. Adoption of the report of the Working Party to the Trade and Development Board

(Agenda item 7)

4. At the same meeting, the Working Party authorized the Rapporteur to finalize the report on its fifty-sixth session.

Annex I

Provisional agenda for the fifty-seventh session of the Working Party

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Review of the programme narrative component of the draft proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012–2013
4. Provisional agenda for the fifty-eighth session of the Working Party
5. Other business
6. Adoption of the report of the Working Party to the Trade and Development Board

Annex II

Attendance¹

1. Representatives of the following States members of the Working Party attended the session:

Albania	Côte d'Ivoire
Algeria	El Salvador
Austria	Indonesia
Belarus	Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Belgium	Japan
Benin	Russian Federation
Canada	Switzerland
China	Thailand

¹ For the list of participants, see TD/B/WP(56)/Inf.1.

2. Representatives of the following States members of UNCTAD but not members of the Working Party attended the session:

Angola	Madagascar
Argentina	Malaysia
Bahrain	Mauritius
Brunei Darussalam	Mexico
Cameroon	Morocco
Chile	Myanmar
Cuba	Nepal
Cyprus	Nicaragua
Czech Republic	Nigeria
Dominican Republic	Oman
Egypt	Pakistan
Ethiopia	Philippines
Finland	Poland
France	Portugal
Germany	Serbia
Greece	South Africa
Guatemala	Spain
Haiti	United Kingdom
Honduras	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Iraq	Viet Nam
Jordan	Zambia
Kazakhstan	

3. The following observer was represented at the session:

Palestine

4. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented at the session:

African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States
African Union
European Union

5. The following United Nations agency was represented at the session:

International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO
