

Trade and Development Board
Twenty-sixth special session
15, 20 June 2012
Geneva

General statements by member States
Speaker: Egypt

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Statement by H.E. Ambassador Hisham Badr

On Twenty-Sixth special session

15 and 20 June 2012

Mr Chair, Ambassador Maruping, the President of the Trade and Development Board,

Dr. Supachai, Secretary General of UNCTAD,

Mr., Even Fontaine Ortiz, Inspector of the Joint Inspection Unit,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates and participants,

We take note of the presentations made by the distinguished JIU inspector Mr. Ortiz and by Dr. Supachai, UNCTAD's Secretary-General. In this regard, my delegation appreciates the comprehensive response provided by Dr. Supachai on the comments that came in the JIU report. It is with satisfaction that we observe the enthusiasm and commitment demonstrated by UNCTAD's Secretary-General in seriously taking account of the JIU report with a view to reach a greater goal, that is of strengthening and consolidating the work of UNCTAD and the relevance of this unique organization in today's global context.

Allow me, Mr. President, to express my appreciation for the valuable work and contributions of UNCTAD, under the wise and effective leadership of Dr. Supachai, in addressing the global and systemic challenges that face our world under. For developing countries, UNCTAD is our home and we will continue to cherish, protect and advance it.



I would like as well to express our satisfaction with the outcome of UNCTAD XIII conference in Doha, which highlights the crucial role that this organization plays in today world. I wish to thank Dr. S supachai and the staff of UNCTAD for their great role.

Today, we convene a special session of the Trade and Development Board (TDB) in order to discuss the Joint Inspection Unit Report on the review of management and administration of UNCTAD. Egypt is fully committed to the continuous improvement of UNCTAD's management in order to enable the organization to efficiently and effectively implement and fulfill its mandate. UNCTAD is and should continue to be a member-driven organization, whereby the member states guide the strategic orientation of the organization towards the effective implementation of its mandate. In this regard, we believe that the role of member states should not be focused on micro-management of the organization, which is the main responsibility of the Secretary General and his staff, who are responsible for translating the mandate and the strategic guidelines of the member states into programs and deliverables, and who are doing a sterling job. We also believe that the deliberations of member states on substantive issues in the regular sessions of the Trade and Development Board should not be overwhelmed by an overemphasis on the micro-management related issues.

Egypt takes note of the JIU report and the relative management response by UNCTAD's secretariat and looks forward to constructively discuss the main findings and recommendations of the report; hoping that our deliberations today will result in enhancing the effectiveness of the organization in fulfilling its mandate.



While we appreciate some of the findings and recommendations cited in the JIU report, we are concerned about the lack of substantial evidence and elaboration regarding some of them.

In the next paragraphs, I will provide some brief substantive comments over certain recommendations and findings of the report.

Regarding Recommendation no. 1 – and I quote - “*The legislative bodies of UNCTAD should take their responsibilities in reaching their agreed conclusions without any interference from the supporting services of the secretariat, which should only be requested to process the resulting intergovernmental parliamentary documentation*”. In this regard, the inspector criticizes that secretariat provides member states with pre-draft ex-ante agreed-conclusions ready for endorsement during the meetings of the governing bodies, which leads to increasing the leverage of the secretariat over intergovernmental deliberations. Accordingly, he urges discontinuing the practice of pre-drafting of any intergovernmental document by the secretariat. We strongly disagree with this recommendation. We believe that one of the key roles of the UNCTAD secretariat is to provide informative expert advice for the substantive issues under discussion, whereas the decision-making on those issues is the prerogative of member states.

I would like to take the opportunity of our discussion today to draw attention to the limited scope of adopting agreed conclusions from the governing bodies of UNCTAD, especially the TDB. In this connection, it is worthy to note that deliberations on substantive agenda items of the regular sessions of TDB do not result in any agreed conclusions. This lack of concrete results of the TDB meetings might be one of the



reasons behind the claimed disinterest of member states in attending UNCTAD's meetings. In this regard, we are of the view that extending agreed conclusions to include the substantive issues discussed in the TDB will enhance the consensus-building pillar of UNCTAD and improve effectiveness of the relevant intergovernmental machinery deliberations. Furthermore, this will encourage member states' delegations to actively participate in the TDB discussion and deliberations. Accordingly, we look forward to enhance the intergovernmental deliberations and the consensus-building pillar of UNCTAD through extending agreed conclusions to include all substantive agenda items.

Regarding Recommendation 4 – and I quote - *“The Secretary-General of UNCTAD should define and elaborate, as a matter of priority, a clear Results Based Management integrated framework and implementing strategy..”* We acknowledge the importance of formulating clear objectives and indicators of achievements based on the mandates given by the member states. In this regard, we affirm the important role of the Working Party in considering the “biennial program performance report of the secretariat” as well as the “draft biennial strategic framework and program” for the next biennium, which enable the member states to guide, evaluate and improve program direction. Furthermore, we encourage UNCTAD's secretariat to abide by the framework that is currently being developed by the United Nations Secretary General for the sake of improving the implementation of results-based management in the UN secretariat, as a unique methodology and implementation strategy within the United Nations context.



Regarding Recommendation no. 8 *“The Secretary-General of UNCTAD should take action to upgrade and strengthen the Technical Cooperation Service, transforming it into a fully-fledged division which is instrumental in coordinating and providing support to other substantive divisions in matching needs and resources to deliver technical assistance to beneficiary countries, leading the definition and implementation of a corporate fund-raising strategy for UNCTAD, and coordination partnerships for development.”.* In this regard, it is worthy to mention that technical cooperation activities are implemented by substantive divisions of UNCTAD, and the role of the Technical Cooperation Service is limited to coordination. Therefore, there is no need to undertake any institutional change of UNCTAD in this regard, especially that we could not view any added value of this change. Moreover, there will be needless financial implication for this change that must even be approved by the UN’s General Assembly.

Regarding Recommendation 9, - I quote – *“Beside the current earmarked and proposed cluster trust funds, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, in consultation with the Trade and Development Board, should seek authorization from the General Assembly to establish an non-earmarked general trust fund to support UNCTAD substantive operations, in particular its research and analysis work and technical cooperation activities.* We would like to express our appreciation for the inspector regarding this recommendation. We consider the establishment of a non-earmarked general trust fund is important and should be given a priority in the current session, since it will have great impact on enhancing the effectiveness of UNCTAD in delivering its mandate. Therefore, we look forward for constructive engagement of the member states for the sake of discussing this important issue



We are quite concerned by the facts mentioned in the report relative to the geographical distribution of professional posts, where 50% of professional staff in UNCTAD - financed either by the regular budget or extra-budgetary resources - are European. In addition, the report mentions that the Western European and Other States Group is the largest regional group in terms of posts in the UNCTAD secretariat financed from the regular budget. In this connection, we call upon the secretariat to implement the principle of fair and equitable geographical distribution in the allocation of posts including in any during any potential recruitment process. This issue should be given p

Furthermore, we are also concerned by the fact mentioned in the report relative to the geographical distribution of external consultants of UNCTAD, where 71% of external consultancy in 2010-2011 is allocated to group B. In this regard, we agree with the inspector's view that while keeping professional expertise as the main criteria for selecting consultants, more active consideration should be given to geographical balance as well.

Egypt looks forward for effective and efficient implementation of the Doha mandate. I will take this opportunity to welcome the initiative of the Secretary General to establish the Doha Mandate Coordinating Committee, as an inter-divisional mechanism created to ensure the effective coordination of cross-cutting issues and activities, through convening all the directors of different divisions under Secretary General chairmanship each month. Finally, we reaffirm our commitment to improve the management and



administration of UNCTAD in order to enable the organization from delivering its mandates

Thank you