

**Trade and Development Board, fifty-ninth session**  
Geneva, 17–28 September 2012

**Item 12: Matters requiring action by the Board  
in the follow-up to the thirteenth  
session of the Conference**

**General statements by regional groups**  
**Speaker: The Islamic Republic of Iran**  
**on behalf the Asian Group**

**Friday, 21 September 2012**

*Not checked against delivery \**

\* This statement is made available in the language and form in which it was received. The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNCTAD.

**Draft Statement**  
**by H.E. Ambassador Abbas Bagherpour, Deputy Permanent Representative of**  
**the Islamic Republic of Iran,**  
**on behalf of the Asian Group**  
**On Agenda item 12: Follow-up to the Joint Inspection Unit report and Work plan**  
**for enhancing the management and administration of UNCTAD**  
**at the 59<sup>th</sup> Session of the Trade and Development Board**  
**Geneva, 21 September 2012**

**Mr. President,**  
**Mr. Secretary General,**  
**Excellencies,**  
**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Asian Group. The Group aligns itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the G77 and China. I wish to thank the secretariat for its oral presentation as well as preparing the work plan for enhancing the management and administration of UNCTAD.

Mr. President,

In our general statement delivered in opening plenary, we emphasized that the TDB should focus on its substantive work. We believe issues like organizational matters should complement UNCTAD's substantive work and not distract us from our main task which is to contribute to the achievement of the broader global development agenda. In this context, we once again express concern that the JIU report, which its aim is to strengthen UNCTAD, has devolved into an issue that is paralyzing intergovernmental machinery. With this in mind, we call on all parties to reaffirm their commitment and to focus on the main goal at hand, which is UNCTAD's substantive work and the promotion of the global development agenda.

This does not mean that we will ignore UNCTAD's management and administration. On the contrary, the Asian Group attaches great importance to such matters. It goes without saying that UNCTAD's management and administration are essential to the implementation of its mandate. However we stress that in our TDB deliberations; organizational matters should be considered as a means to an end, rather than the objective itself. The substantive work of UNCTAD should not be taken hostage by institutional issues.

Mr. President,

UNCTAD has proved its effective contribution to the global development agenda and as a competent body has guided and assisted developing countries in their path towards inclusive development. Developing countries have benefited a lot from the analytical work of UNCTAD, as well as its technical cooperation activities. What UNCTAD needs today is stronger support from its other pillar which is the intergovernmental machinery. The Working Party, TDB, Commissions and all other intergovernmental bodies should work to support UNCTAD's main goal, which is to promote inclusive development for all nations. It is regrettable that in recent months,

minor issues and non-substantive matters has overshadowed UNCTAD's work and weakened its consensus building pillar.

Mr. President,

All organizations have their weak and strong points and strive for continued improvement. However in this process, all parties should try to strengthen the work of the organization rather than hinder its work under the guise of improving management and administration. Similarly, oversight should not lead to micromanagement. In this respect, all member states should refrain from micromanagement which will have an adverse affect on UNCTAD's substantive and routine work.

After these general remarks, allow me now to address the work plan. Mr. President, the Asian Group attaches great importance to UNCTAD's fund raising strategy. As such, we expected the current work plan to produce clear ideas on this important issue. Another equally important concern has to be the balanced implementation of UNCTAD's mandate and the establishment of a non-earmarked general trust fund which we believe is essential. The establishment of this fund would improve the substantive work of UNCTAD and greatly contribute to the implementation of demand-driven projects and meet the real needs of developing countries. However it is unfortunate that for both of these important issues, which are very important to developing countries, the work plan has submitted nothing. We believe that in order to take any decision on the implementation of the work plan, it should be complete and comprehensive and to address the needs of all member states in a balanced manner. Therefore we are hoping that the updated and balanced version of the work plan will be prepared for our comprehensive discussion.

I also underline the JIU's recommendation on equitable geographical representation and express the Asian Group's concerns about the imbalance and non-equitable geographical distribution of posts and consultants in UNCTAD. The JIU report illustrates that 50 percent of the posts have been allocated to only one region. While we agree this major principle should be applied to the UN in its entirety, however any UN body should also apply this principle in its recruitment policy; otherwise we would face an imbalanced organization. We cannot accept that the UN rules states that UNCTAD could recruit 50 percent of its staff from one region. We also cannot agree that the all qualified candidates are coming only from one region or developed countries. With a transparent, fair and effective recruitment policy we are sure that many competent and qualified candidates can be found in developing countries. In this context we call on the secretariat to improve its recruitment policy, including its announcement policy on vacancies and consultancy requests. Such announcements should be circulated to all Permanent Missions in Geneva and put on the UNCTAD's website.

With regard to the gender recruitment policy, we are pleased with UNCTAD's record, comparing to the UN itself. However we believe that the rule of equitable geographical distribution should also be applied to the recruitment of women. Concerning the steps that the secretariat is going to take, and on regular updates on human resources indicators, we recall an earlier decision by the Working Party, calling on the Secretary General to prepare a list of staff with different indicators and to send regular updates to all member states. We call on the secretariat to improve that list and

its indicators, including the geographical distribution of posts, and to regularly circulate tri-annual updates.

On the RBM, we note that UNCTAD has taken many steps in advance and is going to prepare a document on a better integrated RBM framework and a manual for technical cooperation. The Asian Group attaches great importance to the results based management of UNCTAD in the framework of the UN standards and ready to discuss these documents as appropriate.

To meet the specific information needs of Geneva-based delegates, we welcome the secretariat's work on the delegates' portal for official documentation, meetings, publication alerts, draft reports, UNCTAD staff missions abroad, etc, and note with satisfaction that it would be operational by the end of 2012.

Last but not least, the Asian Group notes that the implementations of some recommendations require extra resources. However, we recall the TDB decision that implementation of the work plan should in no way affect the resources for the Doha Mandate and UNCTAD programmes.

Thank you Mr. President.