

Sixtieth session of the Trade and Development Board
Geneva, 24 September 2013

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

Progress report on the implementation of the work plan
for enhancing the management and administration of UNCTAD

Statement by the Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD

AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY

Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour for me to address this session of the Board and to present the first formal progress report on the implementation of the work plan for enhancing the management and administration of UNCTAD, contained in document TD/B/60/5.

As just noted by the President, the work plan was requested by the 26th Special Session of the Trade and Development Board in July 2012. Member States considered the draft work plan at the fifty-ninth session of the Trade and Development Board in September 2012, and requested the Secretariat to implement the plan presented at the session, based on its deliberations.

In accordance with these decisions, the secretariat developed a work plan that takes into account the elements raised by member States: the implementation of an integrated results-based management framework; enhanced monitoring and evaluation capacity; enhanced outreach and communications including with the Geneva-based Missions; enhanced coordination of activities internally and externally including through improved processes and procedures; equitable geographic and gender representation, and transparent and effective human resource management; an

effective fundraising strategy and the possibility of the establishment of a non-earmarked trust fund. The plan identified specific measures and actions needed to achieve these objectives, and provided target dates for completion. Work on the implementation started without delay in September last year.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The actions undertaken in implementation of the work plan are part of the Secretariat's wider efforts to enhance our effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of results. Indeed, in the past years, UNCTAD has undergone considerable reform. Following the report of the Panel of Eminent Persons convened in 2005, significant reforms were introduced at the Accra Ministerial Conference in 2008, through subtheme IV of the Accra Accord. Efforts to strengthen communication and outreach and streamline publications have continued since with the adoption of the communications and publications policies in 2009. The actions foreseen in the work plan to enhance management and administration reinforce these ongoing efforts, and widen their scope. The UNCTAD secretariat remains committed to a continuous process of enhancing its management and administration. Today, I can report that the overall implementation of the Work Plan is on track, and I believe that together we are building a stronger UNCTAD.

As you may recall, in the framework of the President's Consultations, I gave two intermediary reports on our progress in implementing the work plan; once in December last year, and then again in April this year. The report before you outlines the measures taken and, where possible, the results achieved in the implementation of the work plan over the full period of one year.

Let me briefly address each of the areas covered by the work plan, beginning with the strengthening of our results-based management framework. In April of this

year, the secretariat circulated the new RBM Framework for UNCTAD, which was one of the main deliverables under the work plan. The new framework aims to integrate the existing modalities of RBM already practised by the UN Secretariat in the manner that is most suitable for the work of UNCTAD, and to streamline RBM in our activities. Some of the main actions that we are undertaking in the implementation of the framework are: (1) a sequenced series of subprogramme-specific appraisals of the RBM orientation of our logical frameworks, which will be reviewed by the Working Party; (2) the adoption of common work plans and self-assessment plans for all Divisions; (3) the improvement of the performance information available to member States; and (4) the development of mechanisms to encourage the better integration of lessons learned into future activities. Through these measures, the new framework can make a significant contribution to strengthening the application of RBM in UNCTAD.

We have also expanded the use of results-based management in UNCTAD's technical cooperation activities. The secretariat drafted and circulated a set of guidelines on the use of RBM in project design, management and implementation to all project managers. These guidelines are also being used by our Project Review Committee when discussing project proposals. In addition, the Secretariat is exploring the feasibility of making broader use of the RBM methodology that is currently being applied to projects under the UN Development Account. Further training on RBM - ideally tailored to the specifics of UNCTAD projects - would greatly support the uniform implementation of the guidelines by UNCTAD project managers, and we are in the process of exploring possible funding sources for such training.

The UNCTAD RBM framework as it is before you will need to be regularly adapted to emerging needs, particularly in the light of any changes in the United

Nations Secretariat's policies on RBM. A periodic review of the framework will be conducted by senior management to further improve it as necessary.

On enhancing the monitoring and evaluation capacity, in 2013, UNCTAD started implementing a set of measures to enhance the delivery of its monitoring and evaluation functions. These include: A revised approach towards developing evaluation plans to ensure that all of UNCTAD's programmes of work will be subject to an in-depth evaluation systematically; Drafting a set of guidelines that operationalize the UNCTAD Evaluation Policy, including on the follow-up to recommendations of evaluation reports; and Improving dissemination of evaluation reports to member States and our broader constituency, thus contributing towards improved learning and accountability. On this last point, we have already noted an increased uptake of our evaluation reports since efforts were made to consolidate and better present them on the "Evaluation at UNCTAD" webpages, with an average of about 64% more downloads per month compared to the same period last year. We anticipate that these, and other planned actions will allow UNCTAD's stakeholders to better use learning and knowledge generated from monitoring and evaluation activities to enable continuous improvement of UNCTAD's performance.

We have also made significant strides in enhancing our outreach and communications. These include: Improvements to the new UNCTAD website, including its technical cooperation portal; the launch of the Delegates' Portal in December last year for better outreach to member States; fostering closer dialogue through the consultations of the President of the Board; and increased application of the social media tools. The secretariat has received some encouraging feedback regarding improvements in our communications with member States, in particular at the annual sessions of the Working Party that follow-up on the implementation of the Communications Strategy. Also, I am pleased to report that the media responses to major events and press campaigns during the past year have been generally positive,

and we have witnessed an enhanced civil society engagement in the work of UNCTAD. For instance, there was a 20% increase in the number of participants in UNCTAD's Public Symposium in 2013, compared to its previous edition in 2011.

Having UNCTAD publications available in the official languages of the United Nations is important for the broader reach and uptake of our research and analytical products. UNCTAD's Conference Services and the United Nations Office at Geneva have been conducting regular consultations to try and identify possible solutions to the problem of timely translation of documents. Meetings are now held at least every two months at the senior level and once a month at the working level. In parallel, the secretariat is taking steps to improve the impact of materials being translated. One such measure is preparing overviews of main UNCTAD reports and submitting them for translation in all official United Nations languages. Another was the management decision to reduce the length of all publications, except for a small number of legitimate special cases, to a maximum of 100 pages. The shorter length of the publications, without jeopardizing their quality, should make the translation of UNCTAD publications more manageable, as well as improve communication.

With regard to our internal and external coordination, efforts to enhance existing mechanisms are continuing. The Doha Mandate Coordinating Committee meets regularly to oversee the activities of the organization. In addition, interdivisional taskforces have been at work on subjects such as UNCTAD's contribution to the post-2015 development agenda, the preparations for UNCTAD's 50th anniversary, and on joint research publications. You would have noted that the sessions of the Trade and Development Commission, the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission, and the Global Services Forum this year were all organized and serviced by more than one division, which yielded synergies through a multifaceted examination of the respective topics. And our efforts will continue, as strengthened interdivisional

cooperation is one of the key goals of the new Secretary-General, and will remain high on the agenda.

In the area of external coordination, the United Nations Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity, which UNCTAD continued to lead, was able to participate actively in the preparatory phases of more than 30 United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) at the country level and formulated and delivered joint programmes and activities within the framework of the "Delivering as One" initiative. In addition to the work of the Cluster, stronger inter-agency cooperation in the area of research and policy analysis has also taken place. For instance, UNCTAD worked with DESA and the UN regional commissions to publish the World Economic Situation and Prospects 2012 report, and collaborated with the IMF and the World Bank on the G20 report on the macroeconomic impacts of excessive commodity price volatility on growth, including the identification of policy options. Similarly, a joint study on Global Value Chains for the G-20 was just released a few days ago by the WTO, OECD and UNCTAD.

In the area of human resources, we have been making continuous efforts to achieve a more equitable geographic and gender balance among both staff and consultants, in particular through improving our outreach. Contacts have been established with regional commissions and other organizations, and with professional networks, to ask for assistance in identifying potential candidates, and we are considering a selective use of the international media. However, we also count on the assistance of member States in achieving this goal. Since December last year, we have been regularly informing all Permanent Missions about vacancies at UNCTAD via an e-mail notification. We plan to migrate these announcements to the Delegates' Portal in the near future. We would be grateful if Permanent Missions could share them widely among the relevant target groups in their countries, and encourage qualified candidates to apply.

With regard to the goal of gender balance, I can report that as of 30 June 2013, 48.3% of all UNCTAD staff (including General Service Staff) were women. In the professional category of staff subject to geographical distribution, UNCTAD was able to mark a positive trend between June 2012 and June 2013, in the proportion of women, which increased from 36.6 % to 37.9%; this may not seem as much, but it means that of the net addition of four staff for the period, all were female. The stated target of the UN system for all groups is 50%. To some extent, the existing gender imbalance in the UNCTAD Secretariat is a reflection of our applicant's pool: Our analysis showed that only 35% of all applicants to professional vacancies subject to geographical distribution in UNCTAD are women. And 64% of these women are from countries in Group B. Therefore, widening the applicants' pool will be crucial to achieving a more equitable gender and geographical balance, and I am confident that our strengthened outreach, along with your support, will yield better results over time. We will continue to provide you with Human-resources related information on the Secretariat during the Working Party meeting in December, so as to strengthen the oversight role of member States.

As a further step to enhance the transparency and effectiveness of our human resources management, the new UNCTAD career web page was launched in May this year. Aimed at improving information sharing with member States and the general public, the web pages — which are available in both English and French — present information relating to employment opportunities in a more user-friendly manner. Guidelines for programme managers on human resources policies and best practices are also being developed, which will strengthen the effectiveness of our human resources management.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Another key deliverable from the work plan was the development of a draft fundraising strategy for the organization. The draft was elaborated by the Secretariat and circulated to member States in March 2013. At the recent 65th session of the Working Party, member States began their consideration of the draft strategy. We are looking forward to your valuable inputs with a view to further improving and implementing the strategy.

This brings me to my final point, where you tasked the secretariat to explore the possibility of establishing a non-earmarked general trust fund to support UNCTAD substantive operations, in particular its research and analysis work and technical cooperation activities. The proposal for a non-earmarked trust fund was transmitted to member States in July this year, and in parallel, the proposal was sent to the UN Controller to ensure proper coordination and compliance with the relevant rules and regulations of the United Nations. As already mentioned during the Working Party earlier this month, I can inform you that we have recently received the approval from the Controller for the operationalization of this trust fund as of 1 September 2013.

We now count on your support to get this trust fund off the ground. The purpose of the trust fund is to finance activities under the three pillars of UNCTAD, for which there are funding gaps. The objectives, expected results, and activities are in accordance with UNCTAD's strategic framework for the period concerned. The trust fund will be managed by the Office of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD and administered in accordance with the applicable United Nations rules.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Significant efforts have gone into the implementation of the Work Plan. Not all the target deadlines were met for all of the specified actions. There was a delay in the submission of the proposal for the Non-earmarked Trust Fund. Also, some actions mentioned in the work plan, such as the creation of self-assessment capacities in all

divisions, including through staff training, as well as the effective implementation of the RBM framework through logical framework design and programme monitoring, were identified as being dependent on the availability of additional resources, and could not be addressed right away.

Despite these obstacles, I am able to report that all measures foreseen in the Work Plan for the first year of implementation have been completed, and the others are on track. Allow me to recall that this was achieved at a time when we were asked to cut our budget twice, leading eventually to a loss of 15 posts and significant non-post resources. We still hope that these efforts will yield the expected results in due course.

Let me also stress that for us this is not the end of the process. Implementation of the Work Plan will continue, and we will brief you on our progress as needed. But our efforts will not be limited to the implementation of this Work Plan. To stay successful, any organization must constantly strive to identify weaknesses to address and opportunities to innovate. Achieving this requires effective monitoring of the quality of outputs, client satisfaction, and internal processes. It requires managing for results. The incoming Secretary-General, Dr. Kituyi, has made it his priority to do just that.

With this in mind, we look forward to hearing your views, and of course, to your continuing support in working together for the organization's effective mandate delivery.

Thank you very much.