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Trade and Development Board
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Multi-year Expert Meeting on Trade, Services and Development
Fourth session
Geneva, 18–20 May 2016
Item 2 of the provisional agenda
Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

Provisional agenda and annotations

I. Provisional agenda

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Services, development and trade: The regulatory and institutional dimension
4. Adoption of the report of the meeting

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

Item 1 **Election of officers**

1. It is recommended that the expert meeting elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur.

Item 2 **Adoption of the agenda and organization of work**

2. The provisional agenda for the expert meeting is reproduced in chapter I above. A detailed programme will be available one week before the meeting.

Documentation

TD/B/C.I/MEM.4/10 Provisional agenda and annotations



Item 3**Services, development and trade: The regulatory and institutional dimension**

3. The Multi-Year Expert Meeting on Trade, Services and Development is held in accordance with the decision of the Trade and Development Board at its fifty-sixth executive session on 3 and 4 December 2012. The objective of the expert meeting is to identify best-fit practices at the levels of policymaking, regulations, institutions and trade negotiations that link trade, services and development in a balanced manner, including strengthening regulation of national services. This objective will be pursued through an exchange of experiences and lessons learned in order to assist developing countries, particularly least developed countries and countries with economies in transition, to establish and strengthen coherence between regulation and trade liberalization with a view to enhancing their services supply and trade capacity and the efficiency and competitiveness of the services sector.

4. To address the regulatory and institutional dimensions in the development of the services sector, including infrastructure services, this session will build on the discussions undertaken and the recommendations made during the past multi-year expert meetings (between 2009 and 2012), as well as in the first, second and third sessions of the current expert meeting. This session will examine practices and experiences in building coordination and coherence between trade negotiators, policymakers and regulators, and making regulatory and trade agendas mutually supportive in services sectors. This includes lessons learned from UNCTAD Services Policy Reviews, which have assisted countries in devising an appropriate policy mix to improve services sector regulation and performance, export diversification and structural transformation. A coherent regulatory and trade framework would potentiate the role of their services economies and services trade as enablers of the Sustainable Development Goals.

5. Services sectors are essential to the efficient functioning of all economies and to strengthened productive capabilities, with the potential to induce structural transformation in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The quality of policies, regulations and institutional frameworks is the key determinant of services performance. Services are increasingly subject to liberalization under multilateral, plurilateral and regional trade agreements. This makes it critically important to secure coherent approaches to domestic regulation and trade liberalization in the services sector, including by instituting effective coordination mechanisms between trade negotiators, policymakers and regulators. It is important to work towards good regulations and best-fit regulations, while recognizing risks and trade-offs that such a reform agenda may entail for national regulatory autonomy, policy space and development imperatives. Lessons may be learned from country experiences that lead to the identification of practices in promoting coherence for harnessing the services economy and trade for sustainable development.

6. To facilitate discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat has prepared an issues note. In addition, experts are encouraged to prepare case studies on the subject under discussion. These papers will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received.

Documentation

TD/B/C.I/MEM.4/11 Services, development and trade: The regulatory and institutional dimension

Item 4**Adoption of the report of the meeting**

7. The report of the expert meeting will be submitted to the Trade and Development Commission at its next session. The expert meeting may wish to authorize the Rapporteur, under the authority of the Chair, to prepare the final report after the conclusion of the meeting.

Input from experts

Experts nominated by member States are encouraged to submit brief papers (approximately 5–12 pages) as contributions to the work of the meeting. The papers will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received.

Papers should be submitted to the UNCTAD secretariat in advance of the meeting, addressed to Ms. Mina Mashayekhi and Mr. Aurangzeb Butt, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland; fax: 41 22 917 0044; e-mail: mina.mashayekhi@unctad.org and aurangzeb.butt@unctad.org.
