



Multi-Year Expert Meeting on Promoting Economic Integration and Cooperation
Second session
Geneva, 19–20 May 2014

**Taking stock of the contribution of effective forms of cooperation to the Millennium
Development Goals and their evolution in the area of trade and development**

OUTLINE OF THE MEETING

Session I. Opening ceremony and introduction to the expert meeting

Many different effective forms of cooperation have taken place to date in support of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In the areas of trade and development, the MDGs, in particular Goal 8, contain relevant targets and indicators. The opening session of this expert meeting will take stock of the results since the beginning of the decade and address some of the key challenges that are still unresolved. It will cover the following points:

- What has been achieved through the MDGs and what remains to be addressed;
- The contributions of different forms of cooperation to the achievement of the MDGs;
- Going beyond the MDGs in the post-2015 agenda and the challenge of inequality.

Session II: International finance, debt and the Millennium Development Goals

The international financial system and how it evolved since the beginning of the decade have had an important bearing on the MDGs. Also, there are a few sources of external finance that low-income countries can realistically be expected to draw on to bridge the MDG funding gap. These are mainly foreign direct investment (FDI) and official flows – concessional loans, aid in the form of grants and debt reduction. The challenge is to fashion all these towards meeting the MDGs. The second session of the expert meeting will look at the role of the international financial system in supporting, or not, the MDGs, and discuss the achievements and shortcomings of official aid and international efforts on debt reduction.

In particular, contributions will focus on the following points:

- Critically examining the role of the international financial system, with a focus on its strengths, weaknesses and challenges going forward, including re-regulation of private capital flows;
- Assessing official development assistance and comparing traditional North–South flows with emerging donors’ financial assistance;
- Efforts of debt reduction and the contributions of UNCTAD in the area of debt management in support of the MDGs and beyond.

Session III. Trade and the Millennium Development Goals

In the last two decades, revolutionary advances in information and communications technology, coupled with a gradual reduction in natural and man-made trade barriers, have allowed an unprecedented increase in trade flows. The benefits of this enormous boost, however, have been uneven, and their impact on the MDGs remains unclear. A key issue for LDCs is limited market access. This session will shed some light on the nexus between trade and MDGs and explore ways of harnessing trade for economic and social development.

In particular, contributions will focus on the following points:

- Assessing the multilateral trading system and the need of LDCs for a fairer system: Can we do more? And how?
- Assessing Bali: What implications for LDCs?
- Enhanced Integrated Framework: Taking stock of past experiences and recent contributions of UNCTAD.

Session IV. Building productive capacities to achieve the Millennium Development Goals

Providing finance and harnessing the trade system are not enough to guarantee the achievement of MDGs or to move towards an effective post-2015 development agenda. It is also necessary to develop productive capacities in terms of human capital and technology and fully exploit existing ones to ensure social and economic progress in developing economies.

The closing session of the expert meeting will be devoted to a discussion of some of the following topics:

- Towards full employment in the developing world: The key challenges;
- Technological transfer and technology diffusion in poor economies;
- Official development assistance geared towards enhancing productive capacity and the role of emerging economies.