



GDS/MISC/2015/1
(15/60gd)

NOTIFICATION

Multi-Year Expert Meeting on Promoting Economic Integration and Cooperation

Third session

Geneva, 2–3 July 2015

The Multi-year Expert Meeting on Promoting Economic Integration and Cooperation will open at 10 a.m. on Thursday, 2 July 2015, in room XXVI of the Palais des Nations.

Background and purpose of the meeting

The third session of the Multi-year Expert Meeting will be held in accordance with the terms of reference approved by the Bureau of the Trade and Development Board. The objective of this session is to discuss how strengthening subregional, regional and interregional dialogue and cooperation can contribute to the economic integration and development of developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The approaches that work best to boost productive capacities in a framework of regional integration will be analysed and discussed. The aim is to distil key policy lessons for development-oriented regional integration and identify important gaps in the understanding of these issues.

The development-oriented economic integration of developing countries in the world economy can spur global growth and reduce poverty and the lack of equality. However, identifying successful ways and means of achieving such integration remains a daunting challenge. Given a less favourable trade environment, the exports-led growth strategies of developing countries and countries with economies in transition may be reaching their limits. Adjusting to the changing dynamics of the world economy will necessarily involve greater reliance on regional and domestic markets. Regional integration at various levels, however, faces diverse challenges, and solutions may involve a range of policies, mechanisms and instruments.

This session of the Multi-year Expert Meeting will explore the conditions under which trade might become an engine of growth in a process of regional integration. The meeting will also discuss productive integration as the basis of development-oriented regional integration, given that the issue of infrastructure continues to be pivotal among the issues to be addressed for deeper regional productive integration. The potential role of regional value chains in development-oriented regional integration will also be highlighted. Finally, issues related to financing for such integration will be explored. Bridging the gap between the investment needs – infrastructure needs in particular – of developing countries and countries with economies in transition and the finance currently available for this purpose is critical for any form of deeper regional productive integration. Experts are expected to bring to the meeting their own perspectives and to highlight specific issues in connection with their areas of expertise.

The meeting will be divided into three sessions, as follows:

- The opening session will explore the conditions under which trade might become an engine of growth in a process of regional integration. The session will seek to identify how to go beyond trade liberalization and trade facilitation and to integrate trade policy in a broader policy framework aimed at the development of productive capacities at the regional level.

- The second session will focus on productive integration as the basis of development-oriented regional integration, with particular emphasis on the role of infrastructure in deeper regional productive integration.

- The third session will examine issues related to financing for development-oriented regional integration. The aim is to identify mechanisms for financing the large investment needs in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in particular with regard to infrastructure development.

Participation

Registration should be completed online. To do so, please use the following link: [Multi-Year Expert Meeting on Promoting Economic Integration and Cooperation](#). Nominations and related communications concerning representation at the meeting should be sent to the UNCTAD secretariat, Intergovernmental Support Service, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10; fax: +41 22 917 0214 and e-mail: meetings@unctad.org.

Member States of UNCTAD are requested to nominate experts to participate in the meeting at an early date, and not later than 18 June 2015. Experts will contribute in their personal capacities. They are expected to have proven expertise in the subject and may be selected from government institutions, academia, the private sector and non-governmental organizations. Experts may also be invited as resource persons. Specialized agencies and intergovernmental bodies wishing to participate in the meeting, as well as non-governmental organizations in the general category and those in the special category wishing to participate as observers, are requested to inform the UNCTAD secretariat of the names of their representatives by 19 June 2015.

Financial assistance

Depending on the availability of funding at the time of nomination, financial assistance via the trust fund for financing the participation of experts may be granted for the participation of a limited number of officially nominated experts from developing countries, including least developed countries and countries with economies in transition. Governments requiring funding are therefore invited to clearly request this in their letters of nomination. It should be understood that funds currently available in the dedicated trust fund are very limited (for up to a total of three experts for each meeting) and nominations will be considered based on this availability. The decision as to which experts should receive financing will be based on the direct involvement and expertise of the nominated experts on the principle of equitable geographical representation and on the needs of beneficiaries, particularly least developed countries. Changes in the experts nominated will be considered as new nominations.

Nominations with requests for financial assistance should be received no later than 17 June 2015 and should be accompanied by the following information about the nominee:

- (a) Curriculum vitae
- (b) Mailing address
- (c) Telephone and fax numbers
- (d) E-mail address
- (e) Name of a contact person in the respective permanent mission in Geneva

Once the list of experts to receive financial assistance has been finalized, all travel arrangements will be made in accordance with United Nations rules and regulations, that is, the use of the least costly fare will be applied.

Background documents and contributed papers

The provisional agenda and annotations for the meeting will be circulated. To facilitate discussions, the UNCTAD secretariat will prepare background documents that, along with further information about the meeting, will be made available in due course on the UNCTAD website (www.unctad.org) under the heading "Meetings". Experts are encouraged to prepare and submit in advance brief papers related to their studies, findings and/or country experiences. These papers will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received.

Logistics

Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in the six official languages of the United Nations.

Before entering the Palais des Nations, participants are requested to collect their badges from the United Nations Security and Safety Service, Pregny Gate entrance, 14 Avenue de la Paix. The Service is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Because of the security measures in force, participants are strongly advised to arrive before 9 a.m. on the first day to complete entry procedures in a timely fashion and proceed to the meeting in Building E of the Palais. Participants are requested to carry a passport or similar national identity card with them. Taxis are not allowed to enter the grounds of the Palais des Nations; visitors should therefore be dropped off at the indicated entrance gates. Furthermore, luggage may not be brought into the buildings unless the Security and Safety Service gives special clearance.

Contact details

All other enquiries should be addressed to Mr. Igor Paunovic, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland; fax: +41 22 917 0044 and e-mail: igor.paunovic@unctad.org or nathalie.bois@unctad.org.

(Signed)

Mukhisa Kituyi
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

27 May 2015