

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: European Union

Friday, 21 September 2012

*Not checked against delivery **

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European Union

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UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

**59th SESSION TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
17-28 September 2012**

EU Statement

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TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD

59th Session

(Geneva, 17-28 September 2012)

Item 12

Mr. President,
Secretary General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

As we have stated during our opening statement to this Trade and Development Board, we thank the Secretariat for producing a first version of the Work Plan for Enhancing the Management and Administration of UNCTAD. We greatly welcome this timely opportunity to focus on strengthening UNCTAD and on enhancing its efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability including through effective results-based management, as mandated by article. 19 of the Doha Mandate. Given the particular importance and urgency of the issue at stake, we are hopeful that we will reach Agreed Conclusions on this exceptionally relevant issue.

The fact that UNCTAD is Member-driven gives the responsibility to the Member States to contribute to the strategic direction and priorities of the organization as well as overseeing the functioning of the Secretariat, without necessarily getting involved in micromanagement issues.

Therefore, by addressing this Work Plan we, the Member States of this Organisation, have the opportunity to work together to come to a common understanding and agreement on how to fulfil the Doha Mandate to strengthen UNCTAD by making it more effective, transparent, and efficient, including through results-based management. This is, without a doubt, a shared objective and in the interest of all the Member States, as well as the Secretariat itself and we look forward to reaching an agreement as to the next detailed steps and roadmap for the improvement of the organisational performance of UNCTAD and its Secretariat over the coming years, and to working with all

Members and all the Divisions and Services of the Secretariat, on how to effectively and expeditiously achieve this objective.

Mr. President,

As we already stated in June during the meeting of the Special Session of the TDB on the JIU Report, we consider the Work Plan presented by the Secretariat as the beginning of a longer, protracted and inclusive process that requires careful reflection and improvement as well as wide consultations, both internally and externally.

With regards to the content of the present version of the plan, in general, we consider that the targets set in the document presented by the Secretariat are too vague and too slow and that the whole process should be more ambitious in rapidness, although not compromising the comprehensiveness and quality of the work.

We would like to have a more solid and self-standing work plan presented by the Secretariat and approved by the Member States well in advance of the appointment of the new Secretary-General next year.

We would also like to underline that on many issues mentioned in the Work Plan, for instance to improve internal and external coordination or to enhance communication and monitoring and evaluation activities and to make the Human Resources management more transparent, inclusive and efficient, it's not a matter of asking for additional resources but of organization, prioritisation, coordination, leadership and approach.

Hence, we consider the Work Plan presented by the Secretariat just as a basis to be improved upon and amended to include specific and concrete milestones and target dates outlining how the Secretariat plans to go about concretely addressing the specific issues and concerns indicated in the Joint Inspection Unit Review and in the Agreed Conclusions of the Special Session of the TDB.

Turning our attention to some crucial elements of the Plan, we consider the section dealing with 'an integrated results-based management framework' as one of the most important sections of it. We would appreciate a more rapid implementation of this part. Slow progress in this regard may

negatively affect future voluntary contributions of some donors, who would like to see concrete steps taken as soon as possible.

With regard to the RBM manual for technical cooperation, the Secretariat has been “finalizing” this already for some time. We ask whether it would be possible to schedule a specific completion date at the very earliest.

Intermediate steps should also be agreed upon for the implementation of a RBM framework for UNCTAD. We ask as to when both the *outline and the final product will be completed*. We are of the view that the entire framework should be completed before the September 2013 TDB.

We are well aware that elaborating and implementing effective Results-based management is easier said than done. However, it is imperative at this stage; it has been done before and there is a wealth of experience on how to go about it, both within and outside the UN family.

Furthermore, monitoring of activities and outputs as well as evaluation of results is needed to ensure that development outcomes are achieved and targets are being met. The subject of enhanced monitoring and evaluation capacity is closely linked to the results-based management framework and in this respect we would request a more specific implementation calendar with intermediate steps and targets to be spelled out. Both internal monitoring and external independent evaluation require the establishment of a comprehensive evaluation mechanism and that sufficient resources are reallocated within the existing budget for this purpose.

As indicated in the JIU Report and in the deliberations of the TDB Special Session on its follow-ups, another fundamental task to be achieved through the Work Plan, which is not dealt with in a satisfying and adequate manner in the present version of the Work Plan, is to substantially improve UNCTAD’s human resource management in order to make it more professional, systematic, efficient, consistent and transparent. This doesn’t concern only geographical and gender balance but also recruitment, selection, promotion, appointments and even retirement. It is a crucial element where there is a considerable margin for improvement and that can impact positively on the motivation, the morale, the perceptions and the performance of both individual staff members and the organization as a whole and that doesn’t represent a significant challenge to the organization in terms of capacity or resources.

Mr. President,

An effective fundraising strategy needs to contain an improved integrated RBM framework as well as an enhanced monitoring and evaluation capacity. Such a strategy cannot function unless substantial improvements can be achieved in planning, implementation and monitoring.

With reference to the possibility of establishing a non-earmarked general trust fund we should keep in mind that its feasibility and usefulness will finally depend on donors' ability to provide voluntary contributions to such trust fund. Many issues such as integrated results-based management framework as well as enhanced monitoring and evaluation capacity would have to be operational before many donors would be ready to finance the proposed trust fund. To this effect, we think that the possibility of establishing a Trust Fund should be eventually discussed and considered only once the RBM issues have been properly solved.

An intermediate step could be further consolidation of thematic trust funds per Division, instead of pursuing a whole of UNCTAD general trust fund. Discussions at Working Party level have highlighted the problem at hand with the LDC trust fund, which is running out of funds resources. The current state of the trust fund is not caused by lack of available funds per se, but because of the quality of the planned activities and lack of information on these activities' potential results and development impacts. Therefore, we are of the view that simply establishing a fund is not the answer to more substantive issues.

There is no doubt that these are ambitious and challenging recommendations to be addressed. However, there is equally no doubt that it is absolutely critical for the Secretariat to further improve and integrate this work plan with the Member States, within its existing resources.

This is a process that that requires careful reflection and wide consultations, both internally and externally. Yet, it is also a process which needs to commence at the earliest.

Mr. President,

The European Union and its Member States look forward to working productively and cooperatively with all parties on this agenda. Allow us to reassure you, Mr. President that we care about UNCTAD, that we believe in its people and its capacity and that we will do our best to help it

move further forward. At this stage, we cannot be satisfied with solely administrative answers and 'business as usual'. What is now needed is a 'change of spirit and attitude', to be developed in the course of the years to come.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.