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TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
Commission on Trade in Goods and Services,  
and Commodities  
Ninth session  
Geneva, 14-18 March 2005  
Item 2 of the provisional agenda

**PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND ANNOTATIONS**

**I. PROVISIONAL AGENDA**

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## II. ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

### Introduction

1. At its nineteenth special session, held in April 2002 within the context of the UNCTAD Mid-term Review, the Trade and Development Board reviewed the functioning of its intergovernmental machinery and adopted guidelines to improve the machinery's efficiency (TD/B(S-XIX)/7). These guidelines state that the Commissions should conduct a policy discussion on the basis of secretariat research, reports of expert meetings and other relevant inputs, including from panelists and from other intergovernmental organizations and civil society. It should also place the outcome of the discussions within the appropriate policy context and framework. While considering the outcome of expert meetings, the Commissions should complement the issues dealt with by expert meetings, and avoid duplicating their debates as much as possible.

2. When deciding on the nature of the outcome, a main objective should be to maximize the time devoted to substantive dialogue among government representatives so as to build consensus on issues within UNCTAD's competence and reduce to the necessary minimum the time devoted to drafting exercises. The Bureau and the regional coordinators will indicate the nature of the outcome they seek from the Commissions. Whenever possible the outcome should be a Chairman's summary reflecting substantive dialogue and separate concise recommendations to the UNCTAD secretariat. Further options for the outcome may include: principles, guidelines, best practices, agreed conclusions, etc.

3. To this end, the Commission will have before it the reports of the expert meetings held during the previous months, as well as background documentation and other relevant documentation prepared by the secretariat identifying policy issues for discussion by the Commission.

### Item 1: Election of officers

4. In accordance with rule 18 of the rules of procedure of the main Commissions of the Trade and Development Board, the Commission is to elect a Chairperson, five Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur from among the representatives of its members, taking into account the need to ensure equitable geographical distribution. Moreover, rule 19 of the rules of procedure states that the Bureau of the Commission is to consist of seven members (i.e. four members from Lists A and C combined, two members from List B and one member from List D, referred to in the annex to General Assembly resolution 1995 (XIX) as amended).

5. Accordingly, following the cycle of rotation established after UNCTAD IX, the bureau for the ninth session of the Commission will be as follows: Chairperson from List C; Rapporteur from List A (Africa); and five Vice-Chairpersons (2 from lists A and C combined, 2 from List B and 1 from List D).

### Item 2: Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

6. The ninth session of the Commission is scheduled for 14-18 March 2005. At the closing plenary of its eighth session (9-13 February 2004), the Commission approved the provisional agenda for its ninth session and topics for the related expert meetings.

7. With regard to the organization of the work of the session, the Commission has five days available to it. It is suggested that the agenda items be taken up sequentially, with the first plenary meeting, on Monday, 14 March, being devoted to procedural matters and introductory statements.

***Documentation***

TD/B/COM.1/68      Provisional agenda and annotations

**Item 3:      Market access, market entry and competitiveness**

8. Under this agenda item, the Commission will examine how access to commodity trade finance affects the competitiveness and market entry capacities of developing countries under given market access conditions. Commodity trade financing is also important in addressing poverty, gender welfare and larger social and development issues. Recent experiences and trends in financing along the agricultural supply chain will be considered, as examined at the Expert Meeting on Financing of Commodity-based Trade and Development (16-17 November 2004). The Commission will be briefed on the results of the Expert Meeting.

9. A background document on “Market entry for commodities: The role of trade and investment finance” will serve as a basis for the discussion. The report points out that effective access to finance for investments and trade can make developing country commodity producers, processors and traders competitive, and enable them to benefit from new market opportunities or to add value to their production. Experience in several countries has shown that it is possible to design viable and sustainable financing schemes that meet the needs of commodity producers, processors and traders notwithstanding past difficulties with financing schemes in the 1980s. In this regard, the report discusses several innovative trade financing techniques and methods that merit replication in other countries, especially commodity-dependent developing countries and LDCs. It concludes with a discussion of the relevance of these new possibilities for Governments, the private sector, donors and international organizations, focusing on how they can help alleviate problems of access to finance in the commodity sector and in this way contribute significantly to the alleviation of poverty.

10. Additionally, as regards market access, market entry and competitiveness, a key and new area of work mandated by the Commission and subsequently by UNCTAD XI relates to sectoral reviews on dynamic sections of world trade. UNCTAD’s sectoral trade reviews constitute a concrete and practical initiative that will play a useful role in assisting policy makers and other stakeholders in identifying opportunities in particular sectors and articulating policy options and instruments to take advantage of these opportunities. In this regard, the Commission will be briefed on the relevant results of the Expert Meeting on New and Dynamic Sectors, to be held from 7 to 9 February 2005, on sectors such as outsourcing of IT-enabled services, textiles and clothing, and renewable energy products, including bio-fuel.

***Documentation***

TD/B/COM.1/72	“Market entry for commodities: The role of trade and investment finance – Background note by the UNCTAD secretariat”
TD/B/COM.1/EM.24/3	“Report of the Expert Meeting on Financing of Commodity-based Trade and Development”

**Item 4: Trade in services and development implications**

11. Under this agenda item, the Commission will examine the increasing role of developing countries in international trade in services, as well as their experiences, challenges and opportunities in the ongoing multilateral and regional negotiations on services. Most developing countries have embarked on reform processes, recognizing the positive effects that can accrue from liberalizing trade in services in terms of generating jobs, technology and investment. Trade liberalization by itself, however, may not produce the expected results without required complementary policies. Thus, the Commission will address the importance of establishing adequate regulatory frameworks as necessary conditions for trade liberalization to generate beneficial results. GATS Mode 4 is particularly important in providing opportunities for exports of services from developing countries, including LDCs. New trading opportunities for developing countries are emerging in the area of global outsourcing of services. A balanced approach to liberalization of trade in services needs to take into account interlinkages among GATS modes of supply in order to ensure maximum contributions in terms of socio-economic and development impact. Many LDCs have been witnessing a decline of their services share of GDP since 1990. Thus the process of reform and liberalization needs in their case to be based on proper assessment and development benchmarking to increase their participation in global services trade.

12. The Commission will be taking place against the backdrop of the WTO services negotiations within the new timeframe of May 2005 for the submission of revised offers, as set out in the Decision of 1 August 2004. Many developing countries expect direct benefits from services negotiations if predictability in market access for temporary movement of natural persons at all skill levels can be ensured. At the same time, market access liberalization in services cannot be considered in isolation without taking into account progress in the GATS rules negotiations and disciplines on domestic regulations and the need to ensure transparency and objectivity in the application of economic needs tests. The Commission will address some of these issues.

13. The Commission will be briefed on the outcome of the Expert Meeting on Trade and Development Aspects of Professional Services and Regulatory Frameworks, to be held from 17 to 19 February 2005. It will also be briefed on the relevant results of the Expert Meeting on New and Dynamic Sectors, to be held from 7 to 9 February 2005, especially as regards outsourcing of IT-enabled services and interlinkages with other modes of supply.

***Documentation***

TD/B/COM.1/71	“Trade in services and development implications: Note by the UNCTAD secretariat”
TD/B/COM.1/EM.25/3	“Report of the Expert Meeting on Trade and Development Aspects of Professional Services and Regulatory Frameworks”
TD/B/COM.1/EM.26/3	“Report of the Expert Meeting on New and Dynamic Sectors”

**Item 5: Trade, environment and development**

14. Under this item the Commission will address selected trade and environment issues that have received considerable attention in the international debate as well as in recent

UNCTAD work. In the area of environmental requirements and market access, this includes sector-specific issues, for example in the horticultural and electronics sectors, as well as initial and planned future activities of the Consultative Task Force on Environmental Requirements and Market Access for Developing Countries, a key new project-based activity.

15. In the area of environmental goods and services, the Commission may wish to address the need to identify environmental goods of potential environmental as well as export interest to developing countries. This would include considerations in the field of renewable energy services and equipment, one of the sectors for discussion at the Expert Meeting on New and Dynamic Sectors, to be held from 7 to 9 February 2005. Other relevant issues for consideration include opportunities for promoting trade in products derived from the sustainable use of biodiversity, in particular through the BioTrade Initiative, as well as ongoing and future work on standards and related issues concerning organic agriculture, in particular recent activities of the International Task Force on Harmonization and Equivalence in Organic Agriculture (ITF) created by FAO, the International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements (IFOAM) and UNCTAD, and planned activities of the UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity-Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development (CBTF). Finally, the Commission may wish to review developments concerning global environmental issues that will have important implications for trade and development, including new opportunities for developing countries, in particular in the area of climate change.

#### *Documentation*

TD/B/COM.1/70

“Trade, environment and development: Background note by the UNCTAD secretariat”

#### **Item 6: Implementation of agreed conclusions and recommendations of the Commission, including the post-Doha follow-up**

16. The guidelines adopted by the Trade and Development Board in carrying out the Mid-term Review at its nineteenth special session, held in Bangkok from 29 April to 2 May 2002 (TD/B(S-XIX)/7), state that: “Commissions’ agendas will continue to include an item on follow-up and implementation of past recommendations. The secretariat will report on its implementation of recommendations addressed to it, and member States will be invited to report on their own implementation in statements to the Commission”.

17. In this context, the UNCTAD secretariat will prepare a progress report on the implementation of agreed conclusions and recommendations adopted at the eighth session of the Commission addressed to UNCTAD. Member States wishing to report on their own implementation of recommendations will have an opportunity to present their experiences in this regard to the Commission. The UNCTAD secretariat will also provide an annual report on major outputs in 2004 of the Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities for review by the Commission.

#### *Documentation*

TD/B/COM.1/69

Progress report on the implementation of agreed conclusions and recommendations of the Commission, including the post-Doha follow-up: Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

**Item 7: Provisional agenda for the tenth session of the Commission**

18. A draft provisional agenda for the tenth session of the Commission will be submitted for consideration and approval.

**Item 8: Other business**

**Item 9: Adoption of the report of the Commission to the Trade and Development Board**

19. The report of the Commission on its ninth session will be submitted to the Trade and Development Board.