



## United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Distr.: General  
7 July 2010

Original: English

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### Trade and Development Board

Fifty-seventh session

Geneva, 15–28 September 2010

Item 8 of the provisional agenda

## Evaluation and review of UNCTAD's implementation of the Accra Accord

### Report by the UNCTAD secretariat

#### *Executive summary*

The Accra Accord highlighted UNCTAD's role as the focal point in the United Nations system for the integrated treatment of trade and development and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development. UNCTAD, through its three pillars, has addressed emerging issues and long-standing problems at the interface between trade and development. In particular, the global economic crisis featured prominently in UNCTAD's work since Accra, as policymakers try to understand what has gone wrong, mitigate the damage from the crisis, and seek a way forward onto new and more sustainable development paths.

UNCTAD has also put in place various measures in order to strengthen its institutional effectiveness and enhance its development role and impact, in accordance with the Accra Accord. In this regard, specific actions have been taken, for instance concerning outreach, technical cooperation and the intergovernmental machinery.

This review provides an opportunity for reflection about new developments that have direct or indirect implications on the Accra Accord. The secretariat looks forward to continuing its efforts in fully implementing the Accra Accord in the time remaining before UNCTAD XIII, in the light of the guidance of the fifty-seventh session of the Trade and Development Board.

## Introduction

1. Shortly after UNCTAD XII, the world witnessed a series of crises that vividly illustrate the extent of global interdependence. The crises shook the global economic architecture to its foundation, which led to an ongoing major reflection on the future course of the global economic system and, by implication, the broader development discourse. The journey to Accra itself began in a constructive atmosphere with the recognition that UNCTAD had to be more responsive and agile in assisting member countries to overcome new and persistent challenges. Hence, a major objective of the Conference was to enhance UNCTAD's development role and impact, which was, in retrospect, a prescient objective given the severity and impact of the subsequent global economic and financial crisis. In this regard, it was clear in the discussions at the Conference that there had to be some enhancements to the institution, and that these institutional aspects of the Accra Accord, firmly anchored on UNCTAD's nature as a development think-tank, were intended to better enable UNCTAD to discharge its substantive responsibilities and mandates through its three pillars.

2. The present review is intended to be a reflection on progress thus far in implementing the Accra Accord, and an opportunity for member States to consider new developments that have direct or indirect implications on the Accra Accord and the implementation of the UNCTAD XII mandates in the remaining period until the next Conference. Especially in view of an almost unprecedented economic upheaval, and the resulting challenges to development, including the potential adverse consequences on the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, UNCTAD's analytical and technical cooperation work must remain up to date and, more importantly, relevant to the needs of beneficiary countries. In this respect, this review thus represents an important milestone in UNCTAD's continuing evolution.

3. The present document reports on the implementation of the Accra Accord in the period since UNCTAD XII. To facilitate consideration by the Trade and Development Board, it is structured along the lines of the sub-themes presented in the Accra Accord. Many of the activities carried out since UNCTAD XII are also covered in UNCTAD's annual report. An addendum to the present report sets out in matrix form the detailed mandates of the Accra Accord and the activities carried out by UNCTAD in implementing the mandates. This report also provides some thoughts on the way forward towards UNCTAD XIII.

### **I. Sub-theme 1: Enhancing coherence at all levels for sustainable economic development and poverty reduction in global policymaking, including the contribution of regional approaches**

4. The Accra Accord mandates under this sub-theme concern the interaction between globalization, interdependence and development at the international and national levels, and UNCTAD's role as the focal point within the United Nations system for the integrated treatment of trade and development and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development. UNCTAD's work under this sub-theme focuses on promoting coherence in growth-oriented macroeconomic and financial policies at the international level, and strategies for productive capacity-building at the national level.

5. The global economic crisis has featured prominently in the work of UNCTAD since the adoption of the Accra Accord. For example, the secretariat's report of March 2009 on the *Global Economic Crisis: Systemic Failures and Multilateral Remedies* and the in-depth treatment of the issues in the *Trade and Development Report, 2009* placed UNCTAD at the forefront of a global wave of advocacy for a profound reform of the global financial and economic governance system in response to the crisis. Many of UNCTAD's ideas have been appreciated and acknowledged by member States as being "ahead of the curve", particularly as policymakers try to understand what has gone wrong, mitigate the damage from the crisis, and seek a way forward onto new and more sustainable development paths.

6. The 2008 and 2009 editions of the *Trade and Development Report* provided policy options with regard to the mobilization of resources for development, as well as on the causes, impacts and the necessary policy responses to the global crisis. The 2008 *Trade and Development Report* discussed how financing, investment, and – for poverty-stricken countries – official development assistance (ODA) could be used to spur productive capacity, or the ability of developing country economies to offer more sophisticated products to world markets, especially by expanding manufacturing. The *Trade and Development Report, 2009* analysed the causes of the crisis and offered recommendations for the reform of the international financial and economic architecture and governance structure. Notably, the prescient nature of UNCTAD's analytical work in this area is demonstrated by the fact that successive UNCTAD *Trade and Development Reports* since 2005 had been warning of growing current account imbalances and the pernicious effects of currency and commodity speculation on countries' competitiveness. UNCTAD's analysis has consistently sought to highlight the underlying fundamental tendency toward instability that a deregulated, unmanaged financial system engendered, and the correction towards which we were inevitably heading.

7. In addition to the high-level panel discussions at the sessions of the Trade and Development Board, the expert meeting on the Contribution and Effective Use of External Resources for Development, in Particular for Productive Capacity-building served as a forum for discussions that inform global policymaking. The significance of developing domestic productive capacity, optimal use of external resources for economic development, stability of monetary and financial systems at both the national and international levels, and crisis prevention for sustainable development and growth is widely recognized. This meeting promoted better understanding of these issues, including the importance of international macroeconomic and financial policy cooperation to contain speculative capital flows, aid effectiveness in the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), ODA for infrastructure and productive sectors and, finally, debt sustainability in the wake of the financial crisis.

8. In assisting developing and transition economies to cope with the severe external shocks caused by the current global financial and economic crisis, UNCTAD has taken a proactive approach towards addressing the challenges posed by the global crisis to debt sustainability. Reports such as that of the United Nations Secretary-General on a durable solution to the debt problems of developing countries, or the report to the General Assembly on the effects of the financial and economic crisis on debt sustainability helped developing countries to improve their debt position. Drawing from its analytical work in this area, UNCTAD provided advisory services and capacity-building activities to support debtor countries in the design of sustainable public debt and related negotiating strategies.

9. UNCTAD has continued to strengthen the debt management capacity of developing and transitional economies through the Debt Management and Financial Analysis System (DMFAS) Programme. Fifty-seven developing and transitional countries currently choose to use the DMFAS software for their debt management. This includes 20 least developed countries (LDCs) and half of all heavily indebted poor countries. Over 600 debt officials

have benefited from over 100 country-specific capacity-building activities since UNCTAD XII in Accra. This training has resulted in the strengthened capacity of governmental staff to record and monitor debt, to perform debt management operations and to produce reliable debt reports, statistics and debt portfolio analysis in line with best practices and international standards.

10. Since the adoption of the Accra Accord, a key focus of the research work on LDCs has been to translate the analytical framework and strategic orientations, established around the concept of developing productive capacities, into national and international policy terms. Critical ideas which have been introduced during this period include (a) the importance of aid management policies at the recipient country level as a practical mechanism to increase aid effectiveness; (b) alternative macroeconomic policies in LDCs; (c) the idea of good development governance and how developmental State capacities can be built in LDCs; and (d) the nature of developmental agricultural and industrial policies in LDCs. The forthcoming *Least Developed Countries Report 2010*, due in November, will examine international support mechanisms in the context of the global economic crisis.

11. The research work on Africa has focused on trade and development linkages, in particular (a) African export performance after trade liberalization and policies which can improve the performance; and (b) the extent of regional integration in terms of trade in goods and services, intra-African FDI flows and labour migration, and policy proposals for using regional integration for development. The *Economic Development in Africa Report 2010* examines South–South cooperation and new forms of development partnerships for Africa.

12. The secretariat has also presented policy analyses and options to address the complex and wide-ranging special needs and problems faced by landlocked developing countries, small island developing States (SIDS), and other structurally weak, vulnerable and small economies (SWVSEs). UNCTAD has made substantive contributions towards addressing issues of concern to SIDS during deliberations of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, the Committee for Development Policy, and the Commission on Sustainable Development. Contributions towards the September 2010 high-level review of the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for SIDS are also under way. Landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) have been supported in the framework of the Almaty Programme of Action, notably in the area of trade facilitation, and through regular inputs to the Secretary-General's yearly report on LLDCs. A process of re-identification of the countries that can be regarded as other structurally weak, vulnerable and small economies ("other SWVSEs") is under way, with a view to updating the conceptualization and identification of these countries.

13. In the area of economic cooperation and integration among developing countries, UNCTAD revived its efforts towards promoting effective South–South integration and cooperation, including triangular cooperation, across all of UNCTAD's sectoral areas of expertise. Its analytical work and meetings have contributed towards improved awareness and understanding of the growing economic interdependence among developing countries and its implications for development strategies, regional integration and multilateral cooperation. For instance, the second session of the Multi-year Expert Meeting on International Cooperation: South–South Cooperation and Regional Integration focused on South–South and triangular cooperation for sustainable agriculture development and food security in developing countries. Experts agreed that growing South–South trade had an important role to play in providing new market opportunities and also in establishing a more supportive environment where countries could improve market access without compromising on the broader policy and institutional support needed to help build productive capacity in the sector. It was recognized that UNCTAD was well placed in this regard.

14. In line with its mandate, UNCTAD continues to provide insights on the development prospects of the Palestinian economy, and the complexities of its relations with other economies in the region. UNCTAD's research and policy analysis on the war-torn economy of the occupied Palestinian territory have informed the deliberations by member States at the Trade and Development Board, and have been appreciated by the United Nations country team in the field. Moreover, despite the difficult conditions, the secretariat's technical cooperation activities in this area have achieved tangible progress. For instance, the Palestinian Customs Authority is now equipped with a state-of-the-art system and capacities to exercise the full range of customs functions similar to any sovereign State. Also, existing national and foreign investors in the occupied Palestinian territory now benefit from an "aftercare" strategy to contribute towards the success of their investments.

## **II. Sub-theme 2: Key trade and development issues and the new realities in the geography of the world economy**

15. In line with the Accra Accord mandates, UNCTAD's analytical, consensus-building and technical assistance work in the areas of international trade in goods, services and commodities and the international trading system contributed towards promoting trade as an engine of economic growth and sustainable development, as well as poverty eradication. Special emphasis was placed on monitoring and assessing the impact on trade of the global financial and economic crisis and successful strategies to mitigate the detrimental impact and foster recovery and sustainable growth. For instance, the deliberations at the first session of the newly established Trade and Development Commission, and the secretariat's reports to the Trade and Development Board and the United Nations General Assembly contributed towards enhancing understanding among members of the implications of the crises, and the kind of trade policy and trade-related actions that would be required to foster recovery, and to build capabilities to withstand future shocks as well as create jobs and widen access to essential services. In particular, UNCTAD stressed the necessity of new approaches to steer the global economy towards cleaner growth and sustainable development.

16. With regard to research and analytical outputs in this area, some 57 publications, training materials and handbooks were published on contemporary issues of trade and development and disseminated to member States, academic institutions, civil society and other interested entities. Several meetings, such as the sessions of the newly established Trade and Development Commission, and the multi- and single-year expert meetings, were organized that raised awareness of, and identified, strategies to address the implications of the global financial and economic crisis, and other trade and development-related issues. For instance, in addition to addressing the impact of the global economic and financial crisis, the Trade and Development Commission considered energy-related aspects of trade and development in 2008, and the contributions of tourism to trade and development were discussed in 2009. Member States have underlined the important role of the Trade and Development Commission and its timeliness in discussing contemporary trade issues.

17. With regard to technical assistance in this area of work, UNCTAD's output in terms of advisory services, technical assistance and capacity-building activities benefited a wide number of developing countries, especially African countries and LDCs. In addition to assistance to regional groupings of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, 52 countries and 24 LDCs received country-tailored support. For instance, Nepal and Uganda both underwent national services policy reviews, including national stakeholder consultations in each country to examine and validate the policy reviews. Rwanda was provided with substantive support in the preparation, review and validation of

a comprehensive trade policy framework, in addition to policy recommendations on how it could enhance its participation in new and dynamic sectors of international trade. Also, technical assistance to Cape Verde has supported the country's structural transformation through economic and export specialization in services.

18. In its work to promote the beneficial participation of developing countries, in particular in the international trading system, UNCTAD supported these countries in their review and formulation of trade policies, and in addressing the development impact of their engagement in multiple trade arrangements and negotiations, most notably (a) the World Trade Organization (WTO) Doha Round of trade negotiations; and (b) regional and interregional negotiations, including the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of Countries (ACP)–European Union (EU) Economic Partnership Agreements. Assistance on key market access issues such as trade preferences, dispute settlement, and Aid for Trade was also provided to Papua New Guinea, Bangladesh and China. Most developing countries in the process of acceding to the WTO, including all acceding LDCs, received extensive support from UNCTAD. UNCTAD also played an active role in assisting developing countries to examine ways of strengthening their participation in new and dynamic sectors of world trade, including through promoting actions on the creative economy. For example, Mozambique, Senegal and Zambia were supported in the development of their creative economies.

19. In the area of competition laws and policies and consumer protection legislation, with UNCTAD's assistance, several countries have achieved important progress in the preparation, adoption, revision and implementation of such legislation. For instance, a national workshop on the draft Completion Bill in Sao Tome and Principe facilitated the revision and preparation of the draft Bill for its submission for adoption. Also, a new competition programme for Africa (AFRICOMP) was officially launched in 2009 to help African countries to develop administrative, institutional and legal structures for effective enforcement of competition and consumer law and policies. The annual Inter-Governmental Group of Experts on Competition Law and Policy continued to serve as a unique forum for competition institutions and experts to discuss, review and develop consensus on key issues in this field, such as the promotion of best practices in effective enforcement of competition law, and the relationship between competition and industrial policy in promoting development.

20. To address the trade and development impact on non-tariff barriers, UNCTAD led an inter-agency initiative to identify, classify, and monitor the use of non-tariff barriers, and to advise developing countries on how to meet these standards as well as to take advantage of the competitive opportunities they sometimes create. This work also led to the promotion of international cooperation initiatives to address them, including on product standards such as those affecting organic agriculture exported by poor small farmers, especially in Africa.

21. In its work on trade and sustainable development, UNCTAD has strengthened countries' capacities to address the challenges of climate change, and to seize the opportunities at the nexus of trade, environment and development, including organic agriculture, biotrade and biofuels. For example, UNCTAD's Biotrade Initiative helped South African producers complete a four-year effort to win approval from the EU to export nutritionally rich baobab fruit pulp to EU countries. The authorization, under the EU's Regulation on Novel Foods, instantly created a market estimated at \$500 million for baobab pulp and generated income growth for the producers.

22. In pursuance of the Accra Accord mandates related to work on commodities, the secretariat has bolstered its work in this area, in view of the sector's importance to much of the developing world. Based on its analytical work, the UNCTAD secretariat facilitated consensus-building on national and international policies in the areas of minerals and metals, energy and key agricultural commodities of interest to developing countries to

provide recommendations on ways for stakeholders to cooperate to maximize gains in favour of the weakest market participants. Since 2008, the Unit has successfully conducted the Multi-year Expert Meetings on Commodities, multi-stakeholder consultations on cotton and on coffee and the Global Commodities Forum. The United Nations Cocoa Conference, facilitated by UNCTAD, successfully concluded negotiations for the Seventh International Cocoa Agreement in June 2010.

23. Furthermore, the secretariat – in collaboration with other United Nations agencies, donors and partners – implemented technical assistance on commodity-related issues to (a) provide producers and policymakers with information tools necessary to best respond to market signals and product standards; (b) address issues of sustainable and equitable management of extractive industries resources; and (c) provide research-based advice and training to policymakers and analysts from developing countries on all major issues of the day concerning commodity-based development. For instance, one of the Unit's main technical cooperation projects has contributed towards improving the agricultural performance of commodity dependent countries in the ACP region, within the context of the EU-funded "All-ACP Agricultural Commodities Programme".

24. In accordance with its mandates on landlocked countries, UNCTAD actively supports the efforts of these countries towards overcoming the structural disadvantages they are faced with in an increasingly competitive global economy. The Ezulwini Declaration, adopted at the Third Meeting of Trade Ministers of LLDCs in 2009, was introduced by a core group of LLDCs, with UNCTAD's Special Programme for this group of countries providing substantive backing. The Declaration highlights the concerns of LLDCs, provides clear guidance for activities in the near future and calls on their development partners for continued assistance. In addition, UNCTAD continues to support the ongoing tripartite negotiations between China, Mongolia and the Russian Federation on a transit traffic agreement. A technical assistance initiative aimed at "Enhancing the capacities of landlocked developing countries to attract FDI for the development and modernization of productive capacities" has also commenced.

### **III. Sub-theme 3: Enhancing the enabling environment at all levels to strengthen productive capacity, trade and investment: mobilizing resources and harnessing knowledge for development**

25. Since UNCTAD XII, more than 145 countries have benefited from UNCTAD's programmes in the area of investment and enterprise development. Particular attention was given to addressing the special problems of the African continent, where 45 countries have benefited from UNCTAD activities in this area, as have 36 LDCs, 26 LLDCs and 15 SIDS.

26. With regard to analyses on the development impact of FDI, UNCTAD's *World Investment Report 2008* reflected development concerns about the crises and focused on ways to channel more investment into infrastructure, agriculture and manufacturing sectors in the poorest countries, especially in Africa. The *World Investment Report 2009* dealt with the implications of the financial and economic crisis and the role of transnational corporations (TNCs) in agricultural production in developing countries. In accordance with the Accra mandate, the *World Investment Report* has been considered at the annual sessions of the Trade and Development Board since 2008. The choice of topics for both the 2008 and 2009 *Reports* were acknowledged as timely and important, especially in light of their contributions to the achievement of the MDGs. Moreover, at the fifty-sixth session of the Board, many delegations agreed that there was a need to increase investment in agricultural production in developing countries, but also expressed concerns on its potential social,

economic and environmental impacts. Notably, building on the *World Investment Report 2009*, UNCTAD is developing – in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Bank – a set of principles for responsible agricultural investment for sustainable development.

27. In its work on FDI statistics, UNCTAD continued to provide technical assistance to developing countries to build their own institutional capacities on statistics on FDI and TNCs. To this end, several national workshops on FDI statistics and TNCs activities were carried out, and a new Training Manual of FDI Statistics in three volumes was issued in 2009. The secretariat also maintains FDI statistics online, which allows developing countries to monitor their own FDI performance.

28. With regard to national investment policies, nine Investment Policy Reviews have been completed since UNCTAD XII (Belarus, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Mauritania, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Viet Nam). Substantial follow-up assistance was also provided by the secretariat to 10 countries in areas such as (a) national regulatory reforms (Colombia); (b) skills attraction (Rwanda); (c) the development of investment laws and bilateral investment treaty (BIT) models (Ghana, Morocco and Sierra Leone); (d) the codification of investment related laws (Morocco and Nigeria); and (e) investment promotion and facilitation activities (Belarus, Benin, Ethiopia and Zambia).

29. In accordance with its mandates on international investment agreements (IIAs), since UNCTAD XII in Accra, some 1,196 government officials have benefited from the various training courses organized by the secretariat on issues such as the core aspects of IIAs, and managing investment disputes, including investor–State disputes. UNCTAD also continues to be the leading source of information on IIAs with databases on BITs, double taxation treaties, free trade agreements, and investor–State dispute settlement cases.

30. In its work on investment promotion and facilitation, UNCTAD has organized regional and national workshops and study tours on investment promotion and facilitation issues, including good governance, with more than 600 officials from developing countries participating. UNCTAD also recently launched its i-portal – a holistic tool aiming at providing smart e-solutions to governments for promoting and attracting investment for development.

31. To further research and analysis on trade and investment aspects of intellectual property, UNCTAD is preparing a reference guide for Intellectual Property Rights and Local Pharmaceutical Production in Developing Countries and, in cooperation with the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, launched a new series of policy briefs aimed at providing innovative proposals to implement the recommendations contained in the World Intellectual Property Organization Development Agenda.

32. Responding to a new mandate received in Accra, UNCTAD developed a new programme on best practices in investment policymaking, aimed at increasing the capacity of policymakers to devise policies that create the conditions for making foreign investment suit development needs and contribute to national development strategies. Case studies prepared on this topic were discussed during the High-level Session on Best Practices in Investment Policies at the first session of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission.

33. In pursuance of its Accra mandates on enterprise development and business facilitation, two sessions of the Multi-year Expert Meeting on Enterprise Development Policies and Capacity-building in Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) allowed the identification of the main elements for an effective formulation, monitoring and evaluation of entrepreneurship policy frameworks. New Empretec centres were installed in the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Peru, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, and a

total of 15 Empretec workshops and three regional training of trainers courses were organized. Installation of Business Linkages programmes also progressed in Argentina, the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Peru, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. The impact of the programmes can be observed: in Uganda for instance, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that participated in the pilot phase of the programme demonstrated growth of up to 460 per cent, increased employment up to 100 per cent and improved productive efficiency.

34. In the area of accounting and corporate responsibility, both the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth annual sessions of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (ISAR) addressed the impact of the financial crisis, and in particular on the implementation of International Financial Reporting Standards. UNCTAD also collaborated with the United Nations Global Compact and the Principles of Responsible Investment to host the first high-level dialogue on sustainable stock exchanges, where participants examined the various ways in which stock exchanges can promote sustainable business practices.

35. In implementing the Accra mandates on science, technology and innovation, UNCTAD continues to strengthen its research and policy analysis on STI-related issues and has supported STI policymaking in developing countries. Since Accra, a number of Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Reviews (STIP Reviews) have been completed for Angola, Ghana, Lesotho and Mauritania. Currently, STIP Reviews are under way in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Peru. Also, a new report entitled the "Technology and Innovation Report" was launched in May 2010, to address issues of STI policy analysis. This year's report addresses the issue of food security in Africa and the role of innovation and technology in improving productivity and output among small-scale farmers.

36. With regard to information and communication technologies (ICTs), the *Information Economy Report 2009* took stock of recent trends with regard to extending connectivity worldwide. The 2010 edition will be devoted to the link between ICTs, enterprises and poverty alleviation. Similarly, continued efforts will be undertaken to support developing countries, and especially LDCs, in enhancing the availability of internationally comparable ICT indicators as well as their regulatory frameworks to facilitate more e-commerce and m-commerce.

37. UNCTAD supports developing countries' efforts to build their institutional and policymaking capacities through training and policy advocacy. Since Accra, the secretariat has (a) organized five regional training courses on key issues on the international economic agenda (also known as P166 courses) in Belarus, Bahrain, Egypt, Columbia and Indonesia; (b) enhanced the capacities of members of the Virtual Institute from 54 universities in 32 countries to conduct trade and development-related teaching and research; and (c) trained more than 2,000 officials under its TrainForTrade programme. Notably, assessments conducted six months after the P166 training courses with both participants and their supervisors showed a positive impact on the participants' work in preparing position papers and national schedules for bilateral, regional and multilateral trade negotiations, attracting and embedding FDI and trade logistics issues, among other areas.

38. In the area of trade facilitation, transport and related services of interest to developing countries, research and analytical outputs focused on a wide range of issues, including transport costs, determinants of developing countries' access to global shipping networks, port benchmarking criteria, and the climate change challenge. Several meetings were successfully conducted, including two sessions of the Multi-year Expert Meeting on Transport and Trade Facilitation; the Forum on Engaging the Private Sector in the WTO Negotiations on Trade Facilitation; and two meetings on the Challenges and Opportunities

Faced by Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries in Improving Transit Transport Operations.

39. The Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) programme achieved further progress in implementing customs automated systems to facilitate and secure trade while strengthening customs controls. Notably, the programme launched a new regional collaboration project with the secretariat of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa to develop and implement a system for the monitoring of international transit between the member States of the Community, which will facilitate trade for landlocked countries – the first of its kind worldwide.

#### **IV. Sub-theme 4: Strengthening UNCTAD: enhancing its development role, impact and institutional effectiveness**

40. The Accra Accord once again highlighted UNCTAD's role as the focal point in the United Nations system for the integrated treatment of trade and development and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development. Since UNCTAD XII, UNCTAD has addressed many emerging issues – such as the food, energy and financial crises – through its three pillars of work. By implementing the various enhancements to the institution contained in Sub-theme 4, UNCTAD's work is being strengthened, contributing towards the enhancement of its development role and impact, as evidenced by the agility with which the institution through its three pillars has responded to some new and emerging issues of concern to member States.

41. Member States, through the sessions of the Trade and Development Board, the Commissions, the Working Party, and the Consultations of the President of the Trade and Development Board, have provided effective guidance on UNCTAD's strategic positioning. For instance, the Working Party has been providing intergovernmental oversight of UNCTAD programmes, including reviews of the proposed UNCTAD biennial programme plan (in the context of the United Nations Strategic Framework) and the proposed programme budget. A new initiative for the preparation of the 2010–2011 and the 2012–2013 biennial programme plans involved close collaborations between interested delegations and the secretariat, during informal consultations and at the formal sessions of the Working Party, to develop new and improved indicators of achievement and performance measures. A process to enhance the functioning of the Working Party also led to agreement on a draft Terms of Reference for this body.

42. In implementing its mandate on the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues, the visibility that UNCTAD acquired in the midst of the discussions on the food, financial and economic crises allowed the secretariat to continue raising awareness on other issues, including gender equality and the empowerment of women, and sustainable development. For instance, the Expert Meeting on Mainstreaming Gender in Trade Policy considered the effects of the global crises on women's jobs and empowerment, and underlined that more research into the links between trade policy and gender is needed. With regard to the promotion of full and productive employment, among other deliverables, the fifty-seventh session of the Trade and Development Board will have an item on employment, informed by the analyses in the *Trade and Development Report, 2010*.

43. With regard to strengthening system-wide coherence, UNCTAD has actively participated in the Delivering as One initiative as the lead entity of the United Nations Chief Executives Board (CEB) Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity. The Cluster focuses on ensuring that the issues relating to trade and productive sectors are adequately taken into account in the Delivering as One process, as well as when countries map out their United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs). Joint

programmes designed within the CEB Cluster and led by UNCTAD are being implemented in Cape Verde, Mozambique, Rwanda and Viet Nam.

44. UNCTAD's contributions towards the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, can be evidenced across all its sectoral areas of expertise, and an annual review of progress on this has been undertaken by the Trade and Development Board. These contributions have included for instance, inputs to the Report of the United Nations Secretary-General to the United Nations Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly on review of progress in the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action, and substantive contributions towards the mid-term review, and the post mid-term review of the Almaty Programme of Action.

45. In accordance with paragraph 183 of the Accra Accord, the Commodities Branch of the Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities, was transformed into an autonomous unit on commodities that reports directly to the Secretary-General of UNCTAD. Further initiatives include a restructuring of the unit aimed at enhancing its relevance and effectiveness. The unit has a clear emphasis on research and analysis, the results of which will feed into its meetings, and technical cooperation programmes.

## **A. Research and analysis**

46. With regard to the research and analysis pillar of work, UNCTAD's analyses and pragmatic policy recommendations have underpinned intergovernmental discussions and deliberations, and informed policymakers at the national level. In line with its mandate to "stay ahead of the curve" and "pursue innovative solutions", UNCTAD contributed actively towards the intense international debate on how to respond to the crises, and especially, kept attention focused on the interests of developing countries, in particular the LDCs. In support of Haiti in the aftermath of the earthquake, UNCTAD published two policy briefs that, respectively, called for a cancellation of its debt, and underlined the importance of a new approach to international cooperation for rebuilding the country.

47. Since 2008, the secretariat has faithfully implemented Trade and Development Board decision 449 (EX-17), and streamlined its publications programme. Its work in this regard has been guided by the Board, through the Working Party, and the newly established Publications Committee within the secretariat.

48. UNCTAD is also in the process of implementing its Communications Strategy – approved by the Trade and Development Board at its fifty-sixth session – in order to attain a more effective outreach of its messages and work. Various initiatives have already been undertaken in the implementation of the Strategy, including (a) the creation of a Communications Editorial Board to strengthen outreach and enhance internal communications; (b) targeted outputs such as policy briefs for policymakers and customized training programmes; (c) closer collaborations with United Nations information centres and United Nations Development Programme offices in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and with government ministries, think tanks, universities, investment promotion agencies and other local and national partners for more effective dissemination of UNCTAD's flagship publications; and (d) a technical cooperation portal on the website accessible to delegates and to the public at large, which provides information by subject matter and by country on each technical cooperation project.

## **B. Consensus-building**

49. With regard to the consensus-building pillar of UNCTAD's work, one of the main thrusts in efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the consensus-building pillar has involved enhanced participation in broader United Nations processes. In November 2008, the Trade and Development Board articulated its contribution to the agenda to be addressed by Governments in Doha at the Follow-Up International Conference on Financing for Development in Qatar. The forty-ninth executive session of the Board in June 2010 focused on the MDGs and on LDC issues with a view to contributing to the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals and preparations for the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. The fifty-first executive session will again focus on LDC issues. In this regard, in 2008 and 2009, the President of the Board participated in the General Assembly deliberations on trade and development, and in 2009 and 2010, the President attended the special high-level meetings of the United Nations Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO and UNCTAD. In 2009, the President also attended the high-level segment of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

50. In its work, the intergovernmental machinery has been providing guidance and support to long-standing problems and strategic policy issues relating to trade and development. For example, the fifty-fifth session of the Trade and Development Board addressed the issue of trade and productive capacities for achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs. Furthermore, through its regular sessions, executive sessions, and the regular President's consultations, the intergovernmental machinery has promptly addressed emerging issues such as the food crisis, financial crisis and assistance to Haiti.

51. The newly established Trade and Development Commission and the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission have each convened annual sessions since Accra, and have considered topics including "Energy-related issues from the trade and development perspective" and "Creating an environment conducive to productive capacity-building". Six multi-year expert meetings were launched by the Trade and Development Board after UNCTAD XII, on topics including commodities and development, and South-South cooperation.

52. Efforts have also been made to enhance involvement of non-State actors in consensus-building activities. In 2009, UNCTAD organized its first Public Symposium, open to participation by civil society organizations, the private sector, academia and other stakeholders. The second Symposium took place in May 2010. At UNCTAD's regular intergovernmental meetings, all of which are open to civil society organizations with status in UNCTAD, direct participation of non-State stakeholders has been encouraged through the contributions of various panellists.

## **C. Technical cooperation**

53. With regard to the technical cooperation pillar of UNCTAD's work, since 2008, technical cooperation activities averaged \$38.5 million per year. In 2009 for example, UNCTAD implemented some 255 projects in more than 80 countries, with annual expenditures of nearly \$38.8 million, an increase of 1.3 per cent over 2008. LDCs accounted for 41 per cent of these expenditures each year.

54. In support of the implementation of the Accra Accord, various policy measures were introduced within the secretariat to improve the management and the organization of technical cooperation. For instance, the Project Review Committee has become the primary

mechanism of the secretariat to coordinate fund-raising, increase interdivisional operations, monitor the implementation of thematic clustering, and facilitate UNCTAD's participation in United Nations country plans and in the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF). In this regard, UNCTAD made important contributions through its missions in EIF countries such as the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Vanuatu, Comoros and Uganda. This has led to the formulation of projects based on the action matrices of these countries. Other projects are in the pipeline, such as (a) "Setting up of the National Agency of Investment Promotion" and "Customs Modernization" in Comoros; (b) "Support to Maldives Customs Service to upgrade ASYCUDA" in Maldives; and (c) "Review of the National Priority Action Agenda (PAA) and the Trade Act" and "Customs In-land Freight Station and the Import Tariff Act Review" and trade-facilitation related activities in Vanuatu.

55. With regard to Aid for Trade, in 2008, UNCTAD and other United Nations global and regional organizations met to come to an understanding on how best to collaborate on the evolving Aid for Trade initiative. Joint research with these agencies is under way. UNCTAD also began Aid for Trade training courses for developing country policymakers in 2008 to help them better understand the concepts and issues involved, and to assist them in gearing national strategies for taking advantage of this initiative.

## V. Conclusions and consideration of the way forward

56. In evaluating UNCTAD's implementation of the Accra Accord through its three pillars, it is important to recall that the current evaluation period represents the mid-point of the period of the current mandate. In our consideration of the way forward, the secretariat will continue to work on the priority areas identified, and address other new and emerging issues that have a direct impact on trade and development in the time remaining before the next Conference. Drawing on its rich body of research and analysis, UNCTAD will continue exploring new and coherent development paths. It is in this context that, looking ahead towards UNCTAD XIII, the secretariat will continue its work towards full implementation of the Accra Accord mandates and in particular, intensify its efforts in these areas to:

(a) Strengthen assistance to all developing countries, in particular LDCs and countries with special needs, in designing and implementing active policies to boost productive capacities;

(b) Identify new development paths, which will underpin UNCTAD's efforts towards achieving the objectives set out in paragraphs 11 and 179 of the Accra Accord, and strengthen progress towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

(c) Build strong science, technology and innovation capabilities to foster technology-driven economic development that can contribute towards improved social welfare, and provide practical, equitable responses to the growing need for improved food and energy security, increased energy efficiency and adaptation to climate change;

(d) Intensify assistance to developing countries, in particular LDCs, in integrating trade and development concerns into their national development plans and poverty reduction strategies;

(e) More effectively support commodity-dependent developing countries in the mainstreaming of their commodity and commodity-diversification policies into national development strategies;

(f) Contribute to the global review of the Aid for Trade initiative in 2010, in close collaboration with other United Nations agencies, in order to help make the initiative work better and produce tangible results; and

(g) Consider further enhancements to UNCTAD's intergovernmental machinery. For instance, areas for attention could include reviewing the modalities of arriving at the agreed conclusions of Commissions, adjusting the scheduling of the Commissions, increasing the focus on practical outcomes in the expert meetings, and considering replacement of the civil society hearings with regular sessions of the public symposium.

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