



DITC/TNCD/MISC/2015/1
(15/13gd)

NOTIFICATION

Multi-year Expert Meeting on Trade, Services and Development Third session

Geneva, 11–13 May 2015

The third session of the Multi-year Expert Meeting on Trade, Services and Development will be held on 11–13 May 2015 in room XXVI of the Palais des Nations, Geneva. It will commence at 10 a.m. on Monday, 11 May.

Background and purpose of the meeting

The Doha Mandate, adopted at UNCTAD XIII, stresses that development of services and access to them, supported by adequate regulatory and institutional frameworks, is important for sound socioeconomic development. The objective of the expert meeting is to identify best-fit practices at the levels of policymaking, regulations, institutions and trade negotiations that link services, development and trade in a balanced manner, including strengthening national services regulation.

The third session of the expert meeting will examine possible elements for the preparation of a toolkit consisting of a set of best-fit practices from which developing countries could extract information applicable to their own countries and circumstances that could assist them in enhancing efficient and effective regulations and institutions. This would potentiate the role of their services economy and services trade as an enabler of sustainable development goals in the context of the post-2015 development agenda.

Services sectors are in fact essential to the efficient functioning of all economies and strengthened productive capabilities and competitiveness. The quality of policies, regulations and institutional frameworks is the key determinant of services performance, and is decisive for harnessing the pro-development benefits of services sector development. Devising adequate regulatory and institutional frameworks that are best fit to national circumstances and priorities is a critical challenge for Governments. This process should start with an assessment of services sector performance, and of the regulatory and institutional frameworks conditioning such performance. UNCTAD Services Policy Reviews have provided a useful toolkit to assist countries in meeting this challenge and devising an appropriate policy mix to improve services sector performance, export diversification and structural transformation. Lessons can be learned from country experiences towards the identification of best-fit practices for harnessing services economy and trade for sustainable development. The issues that experts will address may include the following:



- (a) In what way do services economy and trade contribute to the post-2015 sustainable development goals?
- (b) What are the main binding constraints to the development of services and services trade?
- (c) How do policies and regulations affect services performance?
- (d) What is the role of regulatory institutions and governance frameworks?
- (e) How can the competitiveness of services enterprises, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, be enhanced?
- (f) How can universal access to essential services, including financial inclusion, be ensured?
- (g) How can trade liberalization and regulations best be approached?
- (h) What data are needed for informed services policymaking and how can the collection of services-related statistics be improved?

Participation

Registration should be completed online. To do so, please use the following link: [Multi-year Expert Meeting on Trade, Services and Development, third session](#). 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; e-mail: meetings@unctad.org.

Experts, who will participate in the meeting in their personal capacities, are expected to have proven expertise in regulation, policymaking or trade negotiations on services, particularly infrastructural services. The meeting may also be of interest to experts from research institutions, civil society and the private sector, whose focus is on infrastructure services sectors and their linkages with the rest of the economy, including other services. Member States of UNCTAD are requested to inform the secretariat of the names of their participating experts at an early date and not later than **15 April 2015**. Specialized agencies and international and regional 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 **15 April 2015**. There is no limit to the number of experts, including from Governments, who can participate in the meeting. Participants who wish to be panellists should contact UNCTAD no later than **30 March 2015**.

Experts are encouraged to prepare and submit to the meeting brief papers (5–12 pages) related to one or more of the issues contained in the provisional agenda, which will be available on the UNCTAD website. These papers will be made available to the meeting in the form and language in which they are received. They should be sent in advance of the meeting to the coordinators in the UNCTAD secretariat whose contact details are provided in this notification.

Financial assistance

Depending on the availability of funds in the Trust Fund for Financing the Participation of Experts at the time of nomination, funds may be allocated to finance the participation of a limited number of officially nominated experts from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Governments requiring funding are therefore invited to explicitly request this in their letters of nomination. It should be understood that funds currently available in the dedicated trust fund are very limited (up to a total of two or three experts for each meeting), and nominations shall be considered based on that 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, in particular, least developed countries. Changes in the experts nominated will be considered as new nominations.

Nominations with requests for funding should be received no later than **30 March 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 be financed 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 for the meeting, together with the secretariat's annotations thereto, will be circulated as document TD/B/C.I/MEM.4/7. In order to facilitate the discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat has prepared an issues note, which will be circulated as document TD/B/C.I/MEM.4/8.

Logistics

The meeting will take place at the United Nations Office at Geneva, Palais des Nations. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in the six official languages of the United Nations.

Upon arrival, participants are requested, before entering the Palais des Nations, to collect their badges at the United Nations Security Service, Pregny Gate entrance, 14 Avenue de la Paix. The Security 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. in order to complete entry procedures in good time and proceed to the meeting in the E-Building (Bâtiment 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 and visitors will therefore be dropped off at the entrance gates. Furthermore, luggage may not be brought into the buildings unless the United Nations Security Service gives special clearance.

Further information and contact details

All other enquiries should be addressed to the coordinators in the substantive divisions, tel: 41 22 917 5866, 41 22 917 4893, 41 22 917 5526 and 41 22 917 5640; fax: 41 22 917 0044; e-mail: mina.mashayekhi@unctad.org and/or taisuke.ito@unctad.org with a copy to bruno.antunes@unctad.org and aurangzeb.butt@unctad.org.

(signed)

Mukhisa Kituyi
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

9 March 2015