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## Trade and Development Board Working Party on the Programme Plan and Programme Performance

Eighty-third session  
Geneva, 7–9 and 11 February 2022

### Report of the Working Party on the Programme Plan and Programme Performance on its eighty-third session

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 7 to 9 and on 11 February 2022

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## Introduction

The eighty-third session of the Working Party on the Programme Plan and Programme Performance was held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 7 to 9 and on 11 February 2022. The Working Party pursued its deliberations in an informal setting.

### I. Action taken by the Working Party on the Programme Plan and Programme Performance at its eighty-third session

#### A. Review of the draft UNCTAD programme plan and performance information for the year 2023, part II of the proposed programme budget

(Agenda item 3)

##### Agreed conclusions

*The Working Party on the Programme Plan and Programme Performance*

1. *Concurs* with the UNCTAD programme plan and performance information for the year 2023, part II of the proposed programme budget, as contained in document TD/B/WP(83)/CRP.1;<sup>1</sup>
2. *Welcomes and supports* the decisions taken and vision presented by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD with a view to the implementation of the Bridgetown Covenant and revitalization of UNCTAD;
3. *Requests* the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to take account of comments and inputs provided during the eighty-third session of the Working Party and document TD/B/WP(83)/CRP.1 for the purposes of her submission of inputs for the proposed UNCTAD programme budget for the year 2023 to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for subsequent consideration by the General Assembly of the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies;
4. *Expresses its appreciation* for the reflection of the Bridgetown Covenant in various parts of the document, yet notes the need to better integrate it throughout;
5. *Reiterates* the importance of ensuring objective, relevant and measurable performance measures, while also reiterating its request to the UNCTAD secretariat to seek guidance from the United Nations Secretariat on measuring the impact of the activities under the research and analysis pillar, and to ensure that improvements are reflected through the performance measures included in the future programme plan;
6. *Takes note with appreciation* of the information provided to member States on the resources for UNCTAD for the year 2022 and the geographical representation and gender balance of UNCTAD staff, as well as the use of internships within the UNCTAD secretariat in the year 2021, and encourages the continued provision of such information;
7. *Takes note of and welcomes* paragraph 49 of resolution 76/245 of the General Assembly, which “welcomes the adoption of the Bridgetown Covenant at the fifteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, on 7 October 2021, takes note that, owing to its recent adoption, no provisions are included in the proposed programme budget for 2022 for implementation of the relevant mandates, and therefore requests the Secretary-General to include relevant proposals for implementation of the Covenant in the next proposed programme budget”.

11 February 2022

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<sup>1</sup> Revisions to this document are published as TD/B/WP(83)/INF.1.

## **B. Other action taken by the Working Party**

### **1. Review of the draft UNCTAD programme plan and performance information for the year 2023, part II of the proposed programme budget**

(Agenda item 3)

1. At its closing plenary meeting, on 11 February 2022, the Working Party on the Programme Plan and Programme Performance adopted agreed conclusions on this agenda item as contained in a non-paper circulated on the same date (see chapter I, section A, above).

### **2. Technical cooperation strategy**

(Agenda item 4)

2. Also at its closing plenary meeting, following consideration of the agenda item documentation (TD/B/WP/CRP.2), the Working Party decided to request the secretariat to continue consultations with member States, in particular the regional coordinators, with a view to reaching agreement on and approval of the strategy at the sixty-ninth session of the Trade and Development Board, and to recommend to the Trade and Development Board to include an item on the technical cooperation strategy on the agenda of the sixty-ninth session.

## **II. Chair's summary**

### **A. Opening plenary meeting**

3. The Secretary-General of UNCTAD opened the session. The following speakers made opening statements: the representative of Barbados, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China; the representative of the European Union, on behalf of the European Union and its member States; the representative of Pakistan, on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group; the representative of Botswana, on behalf of the African Group; the representative of Mexico, on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries; the representative of the Republic of Korea, on behalf of the JUSSCANNZ group; the representative of the Russian Federation, on behalf of the Eurasian Economic Union; the representative of the State of Palestine, on behalf of the Arab Group; the representative of Barbados, on behalf of small island developing States; the representative of Cambodia; the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela; the representative of Kenya; the representative of Nigeria; the representative of Jamaica; the representative of Argentina; the representative of the Philippines; the representative of Iraq; the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran; the representative of Peru; the representative of Tunisia; the representative of the Dominican Republic; and the representative of Angola.

4. In her opening statement, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, highlighting her strategic orientations for the future and vision for UNCTAD, addressed the current global context and how it affected UNCTAD; the programme plan for the year 2023; and the structural changes taken to support the implementation of the plan.

5. On the context, she stressed that the pandemic, as an epoch-starting event, marked the beginning of the twenty-first century, much the way the twentieth century could be considered to have started in 1914, with the onset of the First World War, followed by a pandemic. The current pandemic had changed the areas in which UNCTAD served as the United Nations focal point, namely, trade, finance, debt, technology, sustainable development and logistics. It had tested multilateralism, showing the complexities but also the rewards of consensus-building efforts. The Secretary-General highlighted that the State appeared to be back in force as an actor of economic policy and industrial and productive policies; trade was becoming more regional and diversified; the digital economy showed potential but was also creating divides; and old tools, some of which UNCTAD had pushed forward in the past, such as special drawing rights, were resurfacing in the machinery of development finance. In addition, as noted in the Bridgetown Covenant, the pandemic had exacerbated fiscal and other challenges faced by developing countries, and inequalities had

increased significantly worldwide, both within and among countries. The Secretary-General emphasized that prosperity could only be for all if it was sustainable, that it could only be sustainable if it was resilient and that it could only be resilient if it was for all. The mission of UNCTAD to achieve prosperity for all had therefore never been this urgent, and the following four transformations had been highlighted in the Bridgetown Covenant: transforming economies through diversification; transforming to a more sustainable and more resilient economy; transforming how development is financed; and transforming multilateralism. Emphasizing the universal nature of UNCTAD, and the contribution of UNCTAD to a more inclusive recovery, in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals framework, the Secretary-General stated that it was crucial to seize the opportunity to build forward differently, and together, for a world that closed gaps instead of opening them.

6. The Secretary-General recalled the preparatory session for the Working Party on the Programme Plan and Programme Performance held in November 2021, to address how to reflect the Bridgetown Covenant in the programme plan for the year 2023, given the limitations of the template provided for the preparation of the document. Linkages with the Bridgetown Covenant had been ensured in the overall orientation section and in the sections corresponding to each of the subprogrammes, while respecting the pre-established document structure. Dedicated paragraphs had been included on overarching areas such as statistics and the environment and climate change. The principle of decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation for sustainable development, as highlighted in the Bridgetown Covenant, had been clearly identified throughout the programme plan, including at the subprogramme level, through the specific highlighted results. Other areas of focus related to investment; the digital economy and trade facilitation; giving priority to the needs and interests of developing countries, including by fostering productive capacities and structural transformation for sustainable development; mitigating the negative impact of the pandemic; and reinforcing the cross-cutting treatment of gender in trade and development by integrating the gender dimension into research and capacity-building. Finally, the Secretary-General noted that strengthening results-based management in research and analysis and in technical cooperation was ongoing, including the establishment of an indicator framework to follow up on the implementation of the Bridgetown Covenant, as indicated by member States.

7. On structural changes within the organization, emphasizing the importance of support and consultations in achieving the work of UNCTAD, the Secretary-General highlighted the following 10 transformational initiatives:

(a) Establishment of a new stand-alone cross-organizational statistics unit, to ensure independent statistics quality assurance, without centralizing the statistical activities of the divisions but coordinating and supporting standardization and coherence throughout the organization, to increase the support provided to member States.

(b) Integration of the Resources Management Service and the Technical Cooperation Section, to ensure an integrated way of planning and reporting activities funded by both regular and extrabudgetary resources, allow for enhanced coherence of the clearance and approval of all organizational agreements, ensure better compliance with financial and substantive performance monitoring and reporting policies for projects and enhance capacity for data analytics; and renaming of the newly combined entity as the Programme Support and Management Service, in recognition of the integration of the technical cooperation component.

(c) Establishment of a new unit in the Intergovernmental Support Service, to reach out to other development stakeholders to open up space for them to better contribute to the work of UNCTAD, recognizing that support needed to be demand driven, and as an initial contribution to efforts to revitalize the intergovernmental machinery.

(d) Establishment of a new branch in the Division on Technology and Logistics, focused on electronic commerce (e-commerce) and the digital economy.

(e) Establishment of a new branch in the Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes, on productive capacities and sustainable development;

renaming of the Trade Poverty Branch as the Trade Poverty and Inequalities Branch; and establishment of a direct reporting line from the Regional Office for Africa to the division.

(f) Refining of the programmatic focus and renaming of the Trade Negotiations and Commercial Diplomacy Branch of the Division on International Trade and Commodities as the Trading Systems, Services and Creative Economy Branch.

(g) Establishment of three thematic working groups and two coordinating committees on taking stock of the pandemic; how to integrate the environment and climate change from a development perspective throughout UNCTAD; how to coordinate the participation of UNCTAD in the Group of 20; statistical coordination; and technical cooperation.

(h) Improvement of the UNCTAD publications policy to enhance the delivery and consistency of the publications programme.

(i) Establishment of dedicated capacity in the Office of the Secretary-General to deal with resource mobilization for the work of UNCTAD.

(j) Investment in a new and ambitious communications strategy for UNCTAD, given that communications was part of mandate delivery and contributed to organizational objectives, drove engagement and built support for effective development policies; with issues-led communications focused on key areas, supporting the implementation of the Bridgetown Covenant.

8. The representative of one regional group commended the consultative process in the lead up to the eighty-third session of the Working Party and, with regard to avoiding further derailment of progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, stated that it was crucial for UNCTAD to continue to be a voice for developing countries in various forums, particularly in relation to issues of debt and finance, including through promoting and protecting an enabling international environment that could lead to increasing flows of foreign direct investment; and to raising awareness of the need for increased support for the most vulnerable. In this context, the representatives of some regional groups and several delegates highlighted the importance of the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD, including with regard to debt, development financing, the mobilization of resources for recovery from the pandemic, non-tariff measures, support from the Assistance to the Palestinian People Unit and the vulnerability index.

9. The representatives of several regional groups and several delegates stated that the programme plan should be aligned with the Bridgetown Covenant. In this regard, to reinforce results-based management, the representatives of some regional groups emphasized that, for successful implementation of the Bridgetown Covenant, it would be important to establish milestones, corresponding performance measures and indicators that were measurable and connected to the work of UNCTAD.

10. The representatives of some regional groups welcomed the initiatives outlined by the Secretary-General, including that of creating a development-friendly strategic framework for the treatment of environmental and climate change issues at UNCTAD. In addition, the representatives of some regional groups noted that it was equally important to better integrate issues of gender and human rights into the work of UNCTAD, in accordance with the Bridgetown Covenant; strengthen the publications programme; reinforce and systematize coordination, including with other United Nations entities, country teams and resident coordinators; and identify cross-cutting issues across divisions to ensure cooperation and synergies in technical assistance.

11. With regard to the establishment of a statistics unit, the representatives of a few regional groups stressed that divisions should also maintain statistical capacities in relation to their core areas of work. The representative of one regional group and some delegates commended the research and analysis and technical cooperation provided by UNCTAD despite the limitations necessitated by the pandemic and highlighted the importance of such support, including with regard to, among others, productive capacities; investment; science, technology and innovation for development; global trade trends; e-commerce, the digital divide and the need to enhance the digital empowerment of women; strengthening legal and

regulatory frameworks; and the unequal impacts of the pandemic in the areas of the international economy, trade and development.

12. Noting that successful implementation of the technical cooperation strategy depended on predictable, stable and sufficient voluntary funding from member States and that an organization-wide resource mobilization strategy was essential in order to bridge the gap between technical cooperation demand and supply, the representatives of several regional groups and several delegates emphasized the need for non-earmarked funding to UNCTAD and to ensure fair and stable financing, as well as to balance demands and needs with resources; prioritize resource mobilization; take into consideration best practices within the United Nations system and beyond; and play a more proactive role in helping beneficiaries match needs and priorities with those of donors.

13. The representative of one regional group encouraged UNCTAD to continue conducting evaluations of its technical cooperation activities. The representative of another regional group noted with appreciation that, under the technical cooperation strategy, UNCTAD would continue to prioritize assistance in terms of geographical scope. The representative of one regional group requested that preparation sessions be held in advance of sessions of the Working Party, to enable informal dialogues with the secretariat.

## **B. Review of the draft UNCTAD programme plan and performance information for the year 2023, part II of the proposed programme budget**

(Agenda item 3)

14. The Chief of the Resources Management Service of UNCTAD made an introductory statement on the agenda item documentation. He provided an overview of the sequence of consideration and the approval pathway of the draft programme plan for 2023, whereby the first step had consisted of the preparatory session for the Working Party in November 2021. This had been followed by consultations alongside the drafting of the programme plan, including through an internal senior management retreat, with the goal of mainstreaming the Bridgetown Covenant into the draft document. The second step was the formal review of the draft programme plan by the Working Party. The Chief noted that the linkages to the Bridgetown Covenant were reflected within the limitations of the template provided for the preparation of the document, mainly in the foreword by the Secretary-General, which conveyed her aspirations; in the overall orientation section; and, at the subprogramme level, in the framework of the strategy and the new results for the year 2023.

15. The representatives of a few regional groups emphasized that, while the document presented clear linkages with the Bridgetown Covenant in the overall orientation section, it could be improved at the subprogramme level, including with regard to deliverables; and that it was equally important to adapt the programme plan for the year 2022 and related funds to the new priorities in the Bridgetown Covenant. Some delegations noted that performance measures would benefit from greater alignment with the Bridgetown Covenant, that some corresponding performance indicators should be reviewed for greater clarity and that those of a qualitative nature should be more measurable and specific.

16. One delegation stated that, in line with the new paradigm shift highlighted in the Bridgetown Covenant regarding integrating climate change from the development perspective, it was important to reflect the agenda of small island developing States in the work of each subprogramme, including work on measuring vulnerability and climate adaptation and financing.

17. The representative of one regional group highlighted that the secretariat should reinforce efficiency and results-based management and further strengthen the framework of the latter. The representative of another regional group expressed encouragement for continued coordination between the divisions. A few delegations stressed the importance of the result related to the engagement of women in e-commerce, of scaling-up the performance indicator in the next few years and of considering allocating additional resources to this area of work, in line with the Bridgetown Covenant.

18. The representatives of a few regional groups commended the secretariat for the documentation provided and its usefulness in the review process; and stated that the Secretary-General should seek additional resources as required for implementation of the Bridgetown Covenant, to support the transformational initiatives she had outlined. The representative of one regional group highlighted that implementation of the agreed conclusions of this session of the Working Party was crucial and that the secretariat should follow up on them thoroughly.

19. One delegation noted that effective implementation of the Bridgetown Covenant required, on the one hand, programmatic collaboration to be enhanced between UNCTAD and the New York Office and, on the other hand, closer collaboration to be achieved between delegates in Geneva and delegates in New York. The representatives of a few regional groups emphasized that it was crucial to establish milestones and mechanisms and necessary, to track implementation of the Bridgetown Covenant.

20. With regard to subprogramme 1, the Director of the UNCTAD Division on Globalization and Development Strategies stated that the work of the subprogramme was underpinned by a policy-based agenda focused on macroeconomic policies, at both the international and domestic levels, structural transformation strategies in developing countries and the compilation and dissemination of statistics on a broad range of economic variables, including monitoring progress in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, for example through indicators such as the Sustainable Development Goals Pulse. In the upcoming period, these themes would continue to be prominent, along with the monitoring of debt sustainability in developing countries in the post-pandemic era. The Director noted that the division was involved in supporting several intergovernmental activities, such as the financing for development process and work under the Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee) related to resolutions of the General Assembly on the question of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, as well as debt sustainability in developing countries, along with monitoring implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Furthermore, the division represented UNCTAD at the International Monetary and Finance Committee and the Group of 20 Framework Working Group. The Director stated that the work of the Division was increasingly influenced by negotiations at sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as the international community was paying attention to the environment and development nexus and its implications for developing countries. The majority of the technical assistance activities of the division continued to be provided through the Debt Management and Financial Analysis System programme and other branches engaged in technical assistance activities when development account funds were available, such as the structural transformation project undertaken in Southern Africa. Finally, the Director stated that the four major transformations highlighted in the Bridgetown Covenant would be fully integrated into the work of the division through the examination of policies at the international and domestic levels that addressed the challenges of diversification and reduced fragilities in developing countries and the development of proposals for a globalization model beneficial to all countries.

21. One delegate noted that the research and technical assistance work of the division on the question of the Occupied Palestinian Territory was particularly useful and had been delivered in a timely fashion. The representative of one regional group, recognizing that UNCTAD had made an effort to make performance more measurable, stated that, while the scope of changes to the document under consideration was limited, further changes could be made to better reflect the Bridgetown Covenant. The representatives of some regional groups indicated that comments and suggestions would be provided on certain sections. One delegation requested further clarification of whether there were plans to provide assistance to small island developing States with regard to structural transformation and the deliverables that detailed how countries in Latin America would benefit from a project on structural transformation in the region. In this regard, the Director indicated that lessons learned from activities in Mauritius could be beneficial for all small island developing States and that details on the project in Latin America would become clearer once the Development Account funding became available.

22. With regard to subprogramme 2, the Director of the UNCTAD Division on Investment and Enterprise, noting that the Bridgetown Covenant had confirmed the mandates of previous sessions of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development with regard to the subprogramme, specified and provided greater information on particular areas of work. He elaborated on the implications for the strategy of the subprogramme, particularly with regard to additional support to member States in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and improving the quality of sustainable financing and investment; the role of investment and enterprise in structural transformation for sustainable development; the implications of the global tax reform for investment policies; the contribution of investment policies to the attainment of the climate-related and environmental Goals of the 2030 Agenda; and more effectively linking domestic economies with global value chains. He further explained the rationale for the proposed performance indicators based on the strategic pillars of the division, namely, the development of electronic tools to mitigate the effects of the pandemic among member States, the broadening of the investment chain to mobilize all stakeholders to bridge the financing gap for achieving the Goals and the mainstreaming of investment policies through the development of policy frameworks, in particular the investment policy framework in support of pandemic recovery and sustainable development launched along with *World Investment Report 2021*. The Director concluded by highlighting some new and recent initiatives launched by the division following the fifteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XV), such as the global alliance of special economic zones and the global sustainable finance observatory.

23. The representatives of a few regional groups stated that the programme plan proposed under subprogramme 2 reflected the discussions held during the preparatory session for the Working Party and responded to the challenges posed by the pandemic. The representatives of a few regional groups commended the subprogramme for its work, including the successful holding of the seventh World Investment Forum in 2021 and the development of electronic government tools that could be assimilated to public goods. The representative of one regional group stressed the need for better alignment of the wording on the outputs of the subprogramme on tax in relation to investment policies. The representatives of a few regional groups requested further clarification of the nature and collection of data obtained for monitoring performance and the representative of another regional group enquired about future topics for intergovernmental meetings. In this regard, the Director provided clarification of the methodology followed under the subprogramme for reporting on performance and highlighted the importance of the systemic collection of feedback. In addition, he advised on possible future topics for meetings, for example, investment and climate change.

24. With regard to subprogramme 3, the Officer-in-Charge of the UNCTAD Division on International Trade and Commodities detailed how the work of the division sought to pursue the four transformations highlighted in the Bridgetown Covenant, including the direct interlinkages to expected results, in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals. Recognizing the importance of the role of UNCTAD in trade and development issues, the Officer-in-Charge emphasized the contribution of the division to United Nations-wide analysis and its commitment to continuing to actively advocate for trade and development issues in reports, activities and forums. The division intended to take an agile approach to mainstreaming the Bridgetown Covenant into activities in 2022, by innovating its work, fostering increased exchanges of expertise within and across divisions and improving its outreach efforts. With regard to the measurement of results and impact, the Director welcomed suggestions of other measurements from stakeholders, to better track performance.

25. The representatives of some regional groups expressed their appreciation for the detail provided and commended the direct linkages made to implementing the Bridgetown Covenant through the work of the division. The representative of one regional group stated that addressing climate change should be more prominently reflected throughout the work of the division and queried the result on non-tariff measures included as part of forecasts for 2022. One delegation requested clarification of the forecasts for the numbers of projects and seminars related to trade and gender issues due to the relative increase in activities in 2021.



26. With regard to subprogramme 4, the Director of the UNCTAD Division on Technology and Logistics presented the draft programme of work for 2023, highlighting the subprogramme strategy, programme performance in 2021 and planned results and deliverables for 2023. The Director identified the response of the subprogramme to requests from member States, in accordance with the Bridgetown Covenant, and stated that the secretariat intended to increase its work in the areas of the digital economy and trade facilitation, both of which were under the purview of the subprogramme.

27. Several delegations commended the work of the subprogramme and its efforts to incorporate the new directions provided by member States in the Bridgetown Covenant. Several other delegations expressed their appreciation to the division for the quality and relevance of its work, including in the following areas: transport; trade logistics; the Automated System for Customs Data, including with regard to single windows; e-commerce and the digital economy, including the eTrade for Women programme; and science, technology and innovation. Some delegates noted the need for additional resources to be provided for the continuation and further increase of the work of the division, notably in the areas of the digital economy and trade facilitation, through extrabudgetary resources as well as additional allocations under the regular budget.

28. With regard to subprogramme 5, the Director of the UNCTAD Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes focused on the following five main areas, in line with the Bridgetown Covenant: strategy; programme performance in 2021; planned results for 2023; deliverables; and division restructuring. The Director recalled the main objective of the subprogramme, which was the effective integration of Africa, the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States into the global economy. He underlined the importance of the strategy of the division including, in particular, the following: enhancing productive capacities; promoting structural transformation; building resilience to economic shocks; supporting graduation with momentum and smooth transitions; and diversifying exports for the better integration of the least developed countries into the global economy. In 2021, the performance of the subprogramme had included enhanced understanding among policymakers of debt, economic diversification and natural resource challenges in small island developing States. With regard to planned results in 2023, the Director emphasized building economic resilience in the least developed countries, improving the participation of countries in Africa in value chains and fostering productive capacities and structural transformation; and with regard to deliverables in 2023, he highlighted the preparation of vulnerability profiles for five of the least developed countries and productive capacities gap assessments at the national, regional, provincial and municipal levels. Finally, he noted that the division had made an effort to strengthen regional integration, particularly in technical assistance related to rules of origin (including with regard to the African Continental Free Trade Area, participation in negotiations at the World Trade Organization and supporting the least developed countries) and regional value chains, along with implementation of a project on transit, transport and trade facilitation in Western Africa.

29. The representatives of a few regional groups and a few delegations welcomed the technical assistance and research, strategy and outlook of the division and commented on the articulation of the various research and technical assistance activities, notably the methodology for assessing the expected results, as well as how to measure the results of the productive capacities index and its impact among the least developed countries. The Director noted in this regard that several experts had contributed to the development of the index and that the division would make an effort to ensure that the least developed countries benefited from this instrument to identify any shortcomings and promote development. Finally, the Director recalled that the division had worked with other divisions and development partners on both the productive capacities index and the vulnerability index, thus reflecting the consensus-building pillar in the work of the division.

## C. Technical cooperation strategy

(Agenda item 4)

30. The Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD presented the agenda item documentation (TD/B/WP(83)/CRP.2) and stated that the technical cooperation strategy was the third side of the equilateral triangle of UNCTAD, complementing the action plan and vision of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD with a view to the implementation of the Bridgetown Covenant and the UNCTAD programme plan for the year 2023. She recalled that the current discussions with member States were intended to lead to the formal approval of the strategy at the next session of the Trade and Development Board and highlighted four main features of the strategy. First, she emphasized the close links between the three pillars of UNCTAD, namely, research and analysis, consensus-building and technical cooperation, which mutually complemented and fed into each other, and she stressed the comparative advantage of UNCTAD in developing tailored approaches and tools to best respond to the long-term development needs of countries. Second, she highlighted the importance of the integration of the ongoing reform of the United Nations and related coordination with the United Nations resident coordinator system into the technical cooperation strategy, as well as the need for complementarity between UNCTAD and other relevant entities in the United Nations system with a view to ensuring a more coherent, integrated and efficient approach when delivering technical assistance at the country level. Third, she noted the need for more cross-divisional cooperation for better coherence and visibility, notably with regard to partners and donors, with the development of more sustainable and predictable activities. Fourth, she detailed the methodology adopted under the strategy with regard to improved results-based management, namely an integrated planning, management and reporting solution.

31. The representative of one regional group and a few delegations welcomed the draft strategy and expressed their appreciation for the efforts of the secretariat to incorporate the orientations from the Bridgetown Covenant and to enhance results-based management, evaluations and inter-agency and interdivisional coordination. The representatives of a few regional groups and one delegate indicated that the late submission of the strategy had not allowed for thorough consideration and that only preliminary suggestions could be provided for the present discussions.

32. The representatives of some regional groups and one delegate highlighted the importance of having a single, coherent fundraising strategy as part of the technical cooperation strategy that would provide strategic orientation for UNCTAD technical cooperation. The representative of one regional group stressed that the strategy would benefit from packaging technical cooperation requests as comprehensive, multi-year and regional programmes and linking it to improved funding arrangements. The representative of another regional group expressed concerns about the decentralization of fundraising as such fragmentation could be interpreted as lack of coherence and strategy, and would not be conducive to the credibility of and long-term support to the organization.

33. The representative of one regional group stressed that the strategy should be aligned with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. One delegate emphasized that the strategy should be aligned with the Bridgetown Covenant and also adapted to the main theme of UNCTAD XV. Another delegate stressed that technical cooperation should support structural reforms in developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, to help create resilience and, in this regard, noted with appreciation the reference to the resident coordinator system in the strategy and requested more information about how UNCTAD collaborated with resident coordinators in delivering technical cooperation. The representative of one regional group emphasized that, in addition to policy analysis, technical cooperation should also include the implementation and follow-up of policy recommendations and assessments to enhance its results-based orientation.

34. The representative of one regional group and one delegate suggested that the strategy could benefit from further focus in terms of the forms of technical cooperation and of geographical scope. One delegate proposed that UNCTAD play an advocacy role for developing countries to suggest that donors should finance technical cooperation

programmes in line with national priorities. Another delegate queried whether the strategy was a permanent document or would be updated at each session of the Conference.

35. The Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD, expressing her appreciation for the constructive comments, provided further details on three themes, namely, the guiding principles supporting the technical cooperation strategy, the need for enhanced coordination and the need for better advocacy. First, with regard to the guiding principles, she confirmed that the 2030 Agenda was the main road map for the strategy and that, in that context, the strategy would be fully embedded within the renewed mandate of UNCTAD, benefiting from the Bridgetown Covenant, the vision of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD and consultation processes with member States. Second, she highlighted the importance of enhancing coordination in order for UNCTAD to propose joint work in effectively “Delivering as one” and thereby achieve greater recognition in the United Nations system with appropriate participation in country-level cooperation frameworks. Third, she concurred that the strategy needed to be supported by the appropriate mobilization of resources, achieved through coordinated advocacy vis-à-vis donors.

### **III. Organizational matters**

#### **A. Election of officers**

(Agenda item 1)

36. At its opening plenary meeting, on 7 February 2022, the Working Party on the Programme Plan and Programme Performance elected Mr. Martin Zbinden (Switzerland) as Chair and Mr. Natee Vichitsorasatra (Thailand) as Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur.

#### **B. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work**

(Agenda item 2)

37. Also at its opening plenary meeting, the Working Party adopted its provisional agenda, as contained in document TD/B/WP/313. The agenda was thus as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Review of the draft UNCTAD programme plan and performance information for the year 2023, part II of the proposed programme budget.
4. Technical cooperation strategy.
5. Provisional agenda of the eighty-fourth session of the Working Party.
6. Other business.
7. Adoption of the report of the Working Party to the Trade and Development Board.

#### **C. Provisional agenda of the eighty-fourth session of the Working Party**

(Agenda item 5)

38. At its closing plenary meeting, on 11 February 2022, the Working Party approved the provisional agenda of its eighty-fourth session, as contained in a non-paper circulated on 4 February 2022 (see annex I).

#### **D. Other business**

(Agenda item 6)

39. There were no further issues presented for consideration by the Working Party.

**E. Adoption of the report of the Working Party to the Trade and Development Board**

(Agenda item 7)

40. At its closing plenary meeting, on 11 February 2022, the Working Party approved the report of the session and authorized the Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur, under the authority of the Chair, to finalize the report to the Trade and Development Board.

## **Annex I**

### **Provisional agenda of the eighty-fourth session of the Working Party**

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Review of the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD and their financing.
4. Evaluation of UNCTAD activities:
  - (a) Evaluation of UNCTAD activities: Overview;
  - (b) Independent evaluation of UNCTAD subprogramme 1: Globalization, interdependence and development.
5. Preparatory session for the programme plan and performance information.
6. Provisional agenda of the eighty-fifth session of the Working Party.
6. Other business.
7. Adoption of the report of the Working Party to the Trade and Development Board.

## Annex II

### Attendance\*

1. Representatives of the following members of the Working Party on the Programme Plan and Programme Performance attended the session:

Algeria	Guyana	Panama
Angola	Haiti	Peru
Argentina	Honduras	Philippines
Bangladesh	Hungary	Portugal
Barbados	India	Republic of Korea
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Indonesia	Romania
Botswana	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Russian Federation
Brazil	Iraq	Serbia
Burkina Faso	Jamaica	South Africa
Cabo Verde	Japan	Spain
Cambodia	Jordan	Sri Lanka
Chile	Kenya	State of Palestine
China	Kuwait	Sudan
Colombia	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Switzerland
Congo	Lebanon	Syrian Arab Republic
Cuba	Lesotho	Thailand
Czechia	Madagascar	Tunisia
Djibouti	Mauritius	Turkey
Dominican Republic	Mexico	Uganda
Ecuador	Montenegro	United Arab Emirates
Egypt	Morocco	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Estonia	Mozambique	United Republic of Tanzania
Finland	Namibia	Vanuatu
France	Nepal	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Gabon	Netherlands	Viet Nam
Gambia	Nicaragua	Yemen
Germany	Nigeria	Zambia
Greece	Oman	
Guatemala	Pakistan	

2. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented at the session:

European Union

3. The following specialized agencies and related organizations were represented at the session:

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

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\* This attendance list contains registered participants. For the list of participants, see TD/B/WP(83)/INF.2.