



# United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

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## Trade and Development Board

Sixty-eighth executive session

Geneva, 30 September–4 October 2019

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

**Adoption of the agenda and organization  
of the work of the session**

## Provisional agenda and annotations

### I. Provisional agenda

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2. Interdependence and development strategies in a globalized world.
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4. Economic development in Africa: Made in Africa – rules of origin for enhanced intra-African trade.
5. Capturing value in the digital economy.
6. Report on UNCTAD assistance to the Palestinian people.
7. Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in support of Africa.
8. Report of the Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget.
9. Other matters in the field of trade and development:
  - (a) Progressive development of the law of international trade: Annual report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law;
  - (b) Report of the Joint Advisory Group on the International Trade Centre.
10. Preparatory process for the fifteenth session of the Conference.
11. Designation of non-governmental organizations for the purposes of rule 77 of the rules of procedure of the Board.
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## II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

### Item 1

#### Adoption of the agenda and organization of the work of the session

##### Agenda

1. The provisional agenda of the sixty-eighth executive session of the Trade and Development Board was approved on 27 June 2019 at the sixty-sixth session of the Board. The provisional agenda for the session is reproduced in chapter I above.

### Item 2

#### Interdependence and development strategies in a globalized world

2. Deliberations by the Trade and Development Board under the agenda item will provide an opportunity to consider the *Trade and Development Report 2019: Financing a Global Green New Deal*.

3. The *Trade and Development Report 2019* will examine some of the proposals behind the private financing of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It will suggest that the bias towards private financing is based on limited empirical support and pays insufficient attention to the dangers of a world dominated by private credit creation and unregulated capital flows. Instead, the report suggests that meeting the financing demands of the 2030 Agenda requires rebuilding multilateralism around the idea of a “Global Green New Deal” and, by implication, forging a collective financial future very different from that of the recent past.

##### Documentation

UNCTAD/TDR/2019 and Overview *Trade and Development Report 2019: Financing a Global Green New Deal*

### Item 3

#### Investment for development

4. Special economic zones are increasingly used as key policy instruments for the attraction of investment for economic development. Special economic zones can make significant contributions to growth and development, but their benefits are not automatic, and the performance of many zones remains below expectations. It is therefore important to review and assess their sustainable development impact, with a view to revitalization of existing special economic zones and building a new generation of zones.

5. The discussions under the agenda item will be informed by the latest UNCTAD research and policy analysis, which draws lessons from the experience with special economic zones and presents policy recommendations through three lenses: lessons learned from the past, a forward-looking perspective and a pioneering idea in the form of “Sustainable Development Goal model zones”. The discussions will be an opportunity to hear different perspectives from eminent panellists, which will lead to an interactive dialogue among participants and panellists, bringing in national, regional and interregional perspectives.

6. In addition, the discussions at the meeting will be an opportunity for the secretariat to provide a briefing on the latest developments regarding global trends in and policies on foreign direct investment.

##### Documentation

UNCTAD/WIR/2019 and Overview *World Investment Report 2019: Special Economic Zones*

## Item 4

### Economic development in Africa

7. Under the item, the Board will consider the *Economic Development in Africa Report 2019: Made in Africa – Rules of Origin for Enhanced Intra-African Trade*. The advent of the African Continental Free Trade Area represents a historic opportunity for the continent to boost intra-African trade and accelerate structural transformation. However, this relies on a critical policy instrument: the effective implementation of preferential trade liberalization among the African Continental Free Trade Area members. Whether in practice African firms will utilize tariff preferences under the African Continental Free Trade Area depends on a critical factor: rules of origin and the net benefits of complying with them. The *Economic Development in Africa Report 2019* argues for the adoption of lenient and flexible rules of origin and a strengthening of institutional capacities to ensure an impartial, transparent, predictable, consistent and neutral implementation of agreed rules of origin.

#### Documentation

UNCTAD/ALDC/AFRICA/2019 *Economic Development in Africa Report 2019: Made in Africa – Rules of Origin for Enhanced Intra-African Trade*

TD/B/66/3 Economic development in Africa: Made in Africa – rules of origin for enhanced intra-African trade  
Overview

## Item 5

### Capturing value in the digital economy

8. Under this item, the Board will consider the *Digital Economy Report 2019: Value Creation and Capture – Implications for Developing Countries*. The report (formerly known as the *Information Economy Report*) examines the scope for value creation and capture in the digital economy by developing countries. It gives special attention to opportunities for these countries to take advantage of the data-driven economy as producers and innovators, but also to the constraints they face, notably with regard to digital data and digital platforms. The topic is timely, as almost only a decade remains for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Harnessing the potential for the many, and not just the few, requires creative thinking and policy experimentation. It also calls for greater global cooperation to avoid widening the income gap.

#### Documentation

UNCTAD/DER/2019 and Overview *Digital Economy Report 2019: Value Creation and Capture – Implications for Developing Countries*

## Item 6

### Report on UNCTAD assistance to the Palestinian people

9. As in previous years, the UNCTAD report on assistance to the Palestinian people analyses key issues and recent economic developments in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The report highlights the rise in Palestinian unemployment, decline in per capita income, dependence on the economy of the occupying Power and expansion of the Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and elaborates on the de-development of the Gaza Strip.

10. The report provides an update for the Trade and Development Board on proposed and recent UNCTAD technical cooperation activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the challenges the secretariat faces in implementing those activities.

*Documentation*

TD/B/EX(68)/4                      Report on UNCTAD assistance to the Palestinian people:  
Developments in the economy of the Occupied Palestinian  
Territory

**Item 7**

**Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in support of Africa**

11. Under the agenda item, the Trade and Development Board will consider a report on UNCTAD activities in support of Africa, which is prepared every year and presented to a session of the Board. The report provides an overview of research and analysis being undertaken by UNCTAD with regard to African development, as well as a summary of specific activities, including advisory services and technical cooperation, in each sector that falls under the mandate of UNCTAD.

*Documentation*

TD/B/EX(68)/2                      Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in support of Africa  
Report by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD

**Item 8**

**Report of the Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget**

12. The report of the Working Party on its seventy-eighth session will be before the Board for its consideration.

*Documentation*

TD/B/WP/300                      Report of the Working Party on the Strategic Framework and  
the Programme budget on its seventy-eighth session

**Item 9**

**Other matters in the field of trade and development:**

(a) **Progressive development of the law of international trade: Annual report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law**

13. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 2205 (XXI), the report of the fifty-second session of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law will be before the Board.

*Documentation*

A/74/17                              Report of the United Nations Commission on International  
Trade Law on its fifty-second session

(b) **Report of the Joint Advisory Group on the International Trade Centre**

14. The Trade and Development Board will consider the report of the fifty-third session of the Joint Advisory Group on the International Trade Centre.

**Item 10****Preparatory process for the fifteenth session of the Conference**

15. In accordance with past practice, the Board will establish a preparatory committee to be chaired by the President of the Board in order to prepare, inter alia, the pre-Conference negotiating text.

**Item 11****Designation of non-governmental organizations for the purposes of rule 77 of the rules of procedure of the Board**

16. The UNCTAD secretariat has received four applications requesting inclusion in the list provided for in rule 77 of the rules of procedure of the Board. A list of the approved non-governmental organizations is contained in document TD/B/NGO/LIST/25.

*Documentation*

TD/B/EX(68)/R.1	Application from the International Pole and Line Foundation Note by the UNCTAD secretariat
TD/B/EX(68)/R.2	Application from the National Association for Consumer Protection Note by the UNCTAD secretariat
TD/B/EX(68)/R.3	Application from the World Assembly of Youth Note by the UNCTAD secretariat
TD/B/EX(68)/R.4	Application from Action humaine pour le développement intégré au Sénégal Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

**Item 12****Other business****Item 13****Adoption of the report**