



**United Nations Conference
on Trade and Development**

Distr.: General
7 January 2013

Original: English

Trade and Development Board
Trade and Development Commission
Multi-year Expert Meeting on Trade, Services and Development
First session
Geneva, 25–26 February 2013
Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Provisional agenda and annotations

I. Provisional agenda

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Trade, services and development: the regulatory and institutional challenges
4. Adoption of the report of the meeting

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

Item 1

Election of officers

1. It is recommended that the expert meeting elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur.

Item 2

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

2. The provisional agenda for the expert meeting is reproduced in chapter I, above. A detailed programme will be available one week before the meeting.

Documentation

TD/B/C.I/MEM.4/1 Provisional agenda and annotations

Item 3

Trade, services and development: the regulatory and institutional challenges

3. The multi-year expert meeting is held in accordance with the decision of the Trade and Development Board at its fifty-sixth executive session on 3–4 December 2012. It will build upon the previous multi-year expert meetings on regulatory and institutional dimensions in the development of the services sector, including infrastructure services sectors (ISS). 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, trade and development in a balanced manner, including a strengthening of national services regulation without creating trade barriers.

4. Encompassing transport, telecommunications, energy, financial and water supply services, ISS constitute the backbone of the economy in all countries and contribute directly and indirectly to growth, income generation and higher welfare. ISS also assume an important social function as access to basic services (including electricity, gas and safe drinking water), financial inclusion and bridging of the digital divide are catalytic to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Weak ISS often hamper the development of other service sectors, including tourism, distribution (wholesale, retail, etc.), and information and communications technology services, especially in least developed countries and small and vulnerable economies. For infrastructure services to contribute successfully to the economic and social development of a country, the legal and regulatory environment must be supportive. Accordingly, the regulatory and institutional framework of infrastructural services is becoming increasingly crucial to inclusive and sustainable development.

5. Building on the discussions undertaken and the recommendations made during the past multi-year expert meeting (between 2009–2012), the first session of the current multi-year expert meeting will seek to analyse the regulatory and institutional challenges to well-functioning ISS through case studies in four key areas: attracting and sustaining investment (including cross-border investment) through enabling regulations and institutions; benchmarking performance in ISS (including how to set functional variables to benchmark the performance of providers and how to overcome data constraints); stimulating innovation and adapting regulation to changing markets (for example, regulation as stimulus and dispenser of innovation); and ensuring universal access in different ISS (including financial inclusion).

6. To facilitate discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat has prepared an issues note. In addition, experts are encouraged to prepare case studies on the subject under discussion. These papers will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received.

Documentation

TD/B/C.I/MEM.4/2 Trade, services and development: the regulatory and institutional challenges

Item 4

Adoption of the report of the meeting

7. The report of the expert meeting will be submitted to the Trade and Development Commission at its next session. The expert meeting may wish to authorize the Rapporteur, under the authority of the Chair, to prepare the final report after the conclusion of the meeting.

Input from experts

Experts nominated by member States are encouraged to submit brief papers (approximately 5–12 pages) as contributions to the work of the meeting. The papers will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received. They should be submitted to the UNCTAD secretariat in advance of the meeting, and addressed to Ms. Liping Zhang and Ms. Faustina Attobra-Wilson, Palais des Nations, CH-1211, Switzerland; fax: +41 22 917 0044; e-mail: liping.zhang@unctad.org and faustina.attobra-wilson@unctad.org.
