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NOTIFICATION

Multi-year Expert Meeting on Enhancing the Enabling Environment at All Levels in Support of Inclusive and Sustainable Development

Geneva, 8–9 December 2014

The second session of the Multi-year Expert Meeting on Enhancing the Enabling Environment at All Levels in Support of Inclusive and Sustainable Development will be held on 8–9 December 2014 in Room XXVI of the Palais des Nations, Geneva. It will commence at 10 a.m. on Monday, 8 December.

Background and purpose of the meeting

An open, transparent, inclusive, non-discriminatory and rules-based multilateral trading system remains an integral part of an enabling economic environment. The effective integration of developing countries into the multilateral trading system remains a priority, and ways and means should be found on how best to achieve this objective.

The objective of the multi-year expert meeting session is to exchange views, experiences and lessons learned regarding policies and measures at all levels to enhance the contribution of an enabling multilateral trading system in fostering inclusive and sustainable development.

The international community is set to define the post-2015 development framework and sustainable development goals wherein trade is expected to play a major catalytic role. Experience suggests that the transmission of efficiency gains from trade integration to broad-based development is not automatic and remains to be established with conscious policy efforts. This will require coherent and integrated policy intervention supportive of structural transformation at macroeconomic and individual sectoral levels to build broad-based productive capacities with possibility for diversification, technological upgrading and job creation. Such changing policy needs and priorities should be supported by an enabling economic environment, of which an open, transparent, inclusive, non-discriminatory and rules-based multilateral trading and financial system remains an integral part. Despite recurrent setbacks, multilateralism remains a global public good to be supported and upheld. The centrality and strength of the multilateral trading system are increasingly under stress as the global trade governance becomes fragmented with the increased prevalence of regional and plurilateral processes. While the ninth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (3–6 December 2013, Bali, Indonesia) adopted a package of decisions, including the Agreement on Trade Facilitation, difficulties in implementing the Bali package has again cast uncertainty over the prospects for the post-Bali work to conclude the Doha Round. Efforts are needed to ensure that multilateral and other processes can create an enabling environment for sustainable development.

The objectives of this session of the expert meeting will be pursued through presentations by experts, an exchange of experiences and lessons learned, and interactive debate. The issues they will address include the following:

- (a) Promoting greater understanding as to how the multilateral trading system can contribute to inclusive and sustainable development;
- (b) Enhancing understanding on how the multilateral trading system has contributed to the Millennium Development Goals and how this contribution can be considered and enhanced in the future implementation of internationally agreed development goals;
- (c) Exchanging experiences and lessons to promote a coherent and integrated approach to trade and inclusive and sustainable development at the national, regional and international levels;
- (d) Promoting greater understanding on the impact of non-tariff measures/barriers on the trade and development prospects of developing countries and identifying possible ways and means of addressing them.

Participation

Experts, who will participate in the meeting in their personal capacities, are expected to have proven expertise in the multilateral trading system, on its evolving contribution to inclusive growth and sustainable development and on its role in containing all forms of protectionism, in measures needed to make trade integration inclusive and sustainable, in the impact of non-tariff measures/barriers on trade and the development prospects of developing countries, in the role of regional integration and cooperation – including South-South, triangular and other forms of cooperation – to complement the multilateral approach in realizing an enabling environment, or in new and emerging issues on trade and development.

The meeting may also be of interest to experts from research institutions, civil society and the private sector, whose focus is on the same subjects. Member States of UNCTAD are requested to inform the secretariat of the names of their participating experts at an early date, not later than 1 December 2014. 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 1 December 2014. 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 1 November 2014.

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 by 1 November 2014 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 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 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 1 November 2014 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

The provisional agenda for the meeting, together with the secretariat's annotations thereto, will be circulated as document TD/B/C.I/MEM.5/4. To facilitate the discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat has prepared an issues note, which will be circulated as document TD/B/C.I/MEM.5/5.

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.

Before entering the Palais des Nations, participants are requested 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 Building E (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 gates. Furthermore, luggage may not be brought into the buildings unless the Security Service gives special clearance.

Nominations and enquiries

Registration should be completed online. To do so, please use the following link: [Multi-year Expert Meeting on Enhancing the Enabling Environment at All Levels in Support of Inclusive and Sustainable Development](#). 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.

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

(signed)

Mukhisa Kituyi
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

15 October 2014