NOTIFICATION

Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation (2016–2018)
Second Meeting
Geneva, 26–27 January 2017

The second meeting of the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation of the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development will be held on 26 and 27 January 2017 in room XXI of the Palais des Nations, Geneva. It will commence at 10 a.m. This meeting is the second in a series of meetings intended to facilitate the reporting of the Working Group to the twenty-first session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development in 2018.

Background and purpose of the meeting

During its seventieth session, the General Assembly undertook a comprehensive review of the 10-year implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society outcomes. In the outcome document of that review, General Assembly resolution 70/125 of 16 December 2015, the General Assembly requested the Chair of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, through the Economic and Social Council, to establish a working group to develop recommendations on how to further implement enhanced cooperation as envisioned in the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, taking into consideration the work that had been done on the matter thus far. Pursuant to this request, the Chair established the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation on 2 May 2016.

The Working Group held its first meeting on 30 September 2016 (the Chair's Summary is annexed to this notification), at which it agreed on the following two questions that will guide the discussion at its second meeting:

a) What are the high-level characteristics of enhanced cooperation?
b) Taking into consideration the work of the previous Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, particularly paragraphs 69–71, what kind of recommendations should be considered?

As a follow-up to the meeting, the Chair of the Working Group invited all stakeholders to submit their contributions to these two questions by e-mail to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development secretariat (stdev@unctad.org). All contributions will be made available for consideration by the Working Group online (at http://unctad.org/en/Pages/CSTD/WGEC-2016-to-2018.aspx) in their original languages, unless requested otherwise.

The deadline to submit inputs is 7 December 2016.

Participation and nominations

The composition of the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation is available at http://unctad.org/cstd. Member States of the United Nations that are not members of the Working Group may attend the meeting as observers.

Registration should be completed online. To do so, please use the following link: Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation. Nominations and related communications concerning representation at the meeting should be sent to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development secretariat, Science and Technology Section, Division on Technology and Logistics, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10; fax: 41 22 917 0052; e-mail: stdev@unctad.org.

Member States of UNCTAD are requested to inform the secretariat of the name and contact details of the focal point of their delegation by 18 January 2017.

The working language of the meeting will be English.

Logistics

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 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 of the Palais. Participants are requested to carry a passport or similar national identity card. Taxis are not allowed to enter the grounds of the Palais des Nations; therefore, visitors will be dropped off at the entrance gates. Furthermore, luggage may not be brought into the buildings unless the Security Service grants special clearance.

Further information and contact details

Additional information on the meeting and official documents will be available online at http://unctad.org/cstd. Any questions about the preparations for the second meeting should be addressed to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development secretariat, tel: 41 22 917 2083; fax: 41 22 917 0052; e-mail: stdev@unctad.org.

(signed)

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Director, Division on Technology and Logistics
Head, Commission on Science and Technology for Development secretariat

22 November 2016

Annex

United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development

First Meeting of the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation
30 September 2016
Geneva, Switzerland

Chair's summary

17 October 2016

1.   The first meeting of the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation was held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, on 30 September 2016. Remote participation and a real-time transcription of the meeting were made available to facilitate participation by Working Group members and observers.

2.   The meeting was opened by Ms. Shamika Sirimanne, Director, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD, and Head of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development secretariat.
Mr. Peter Major, Acting Chair of the twentieth session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, made an introductory presentation.[1] Mr. Major nominated Mr. Benedicto Fonseca, Ambassador, Brazil, as Chair of the Working Group. Following the approval of the members of the Working Group, the Ambassador accepted the nomination and chaired the remainder of the meeting.

3.   The meeting considered the following issues on its agenda: goals and target dates to meet the request of the General Assembly (A/RES/70/125, paragraph 65); methods of work; review of work and documents related to enhanced cooperation; proposals on topics for and format of the next meeting; and proposed dates for the next meeting.

4.   With regard to goals and targets, the Working Group agreed that to fulfil its mandate to report to the twenty-first session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, it needed to finalize its work by the end of January 2018. This would allow the report to be included in the annual report of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to the Economic and Social Council, and to serve as an input to the annual report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of World Summit on the Information Society outcomes, as requested in A/RES/70/125. Several members expressed concern over the lack of funding that prevented representatives from developing countries and other stakeholders from attending in person. To address this issue, it was suggested that the secretariat further its fundraising efforts. In addition, where possible, future meetings should be organized back-to-back with Commission on Science and Technology for Development intersessional panels and annual sessions, to take advantage of the support for travel.

5.   With respect to methods of work, Ambassador Fonseca indicated that the same methods of work generally adopted by the first Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation (2013–2014) should be followed by this Working Group. He also indicated that he would seek to promote interactive dialogue between members and non-members of the Working Group, with a view to facilitating the full involvement of all relevant stakeholders, as called for by the General Assembly. In that context, all members would be recognized in the order of their requests to speak, regardless of which stakeholder

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[1] Available at http://unctad.org/meetings/en/Presentation/WGEC_2016_meeting1_IntroRemarks_en.pdf.

group they were from and whether they were participating in person or remotely. On a given topic, after Working Group members had spoken, observers would be recognized in the order of their requests, time allowing. In addition, he proposed for consideration by the Working Group the option of having a co-chair of the Working Group representing non-governmental stakeholders. Members of the Working Group held an exchange of views on this subject; the majority expressed objections to the proposal. Although it was decided not to pursue the issue for the moment, the Chair suggested that, if found appropriate, it could be revisited at a later stage. Most members of the Working Group expressed their preference to work in plenary rather than in break-out groups.

6.   Participants took stock of work done to date on enhanced cooperation, including the documents produced by the first Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation (2013–2014). They exchanged views on ways and means to draw on this work for the work of the current Working Group. Ambassador Fonseca offered to prepare a reference document based on the "Mapping of international Internet public policy issues" document[2] in an effort to separate factual information from more controversial text. The aim was to have a document that could guide the Working Group if it wished to work on selected topics at a later stage. He also indicated that such a reference document could include those recommendations developed by the first Working Group on which consensus had emerged.[3] The intention was to have this reference document ready before the next meeting.

7.   With regard to topics for the next meeting, the Working Group agreed on the following two questions that would guide the discussion:
    a)   What are the high-level characteristics of enhanced cooperation?
    b)   Taking into consideration the work of the previous Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, particularly paragraphs 69–71, what kind of recommendations should be considered?
    It was agreed that the secretariat would gather inputs from Working Group members and other stakeholders with regard to these questions. The Working Group noted that, given the comprehensive nature of these two questions, they should allow for inputs or comments addressing any relevant issue.

8.   In that context, some of the other issues highlighted during the discussion on this topic were as follows:
    c)   The Sustainable Development Goals and the link to enhanced cooperation
    d)   Globally applicable principles of public policy issues
    e)   Enabling Governments on an equal footing to carry out their roles and responsibilities on international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet
    f)   Safe and secure Internet
    g)   Bridging digital divides.

9.   It was decided that the secretariat would post the questions through the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation mailing list, as well as online. The deadline for replies would be 7 December 2016. The secretariat would compile the replies and make them available to the Working Group before the second meeting.

10.   The Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation agreed to hold its second meeting on 26 and 27 January 2017 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

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[2] Available at http://unctad.org/meetings/en/SessionalDocuments/ecn162015crp2_en.pdf.
[3] Available at http://unctad.org/meetings/en/SessionalDocuments/CSTD_WGEC2013-14_DraftRecommend_en.pdf.