

WEBINAR

Building Productive Capacities for Sustainable Development in the LDCs

Preparatory meeting on the road to UNCTAD 15 and LDC5

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Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations in
Geneva

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Virtual meeting

15:30 to 17:30

(Wrap-up by the Chair on the key conclusions)

As President of the UNCTAD's Trade and Development Board, I am pleased to have been able to host this important discussion. Now, more than ever, it is essential for member States in New York and Geneva to have the opportunity to hear from one another, as well as from trade and development experts in Geneva to exchange views and perspectives on the most pressing development challenges and priority areas for action.

As President of the Board, I believe that member States should be fully informed on the key challenges facing vulnerable developing countries and made aware of what is required for them to build resilience and enable them to development in a more sustainable manner. This lies at the heart of what is needed to achieve inclusive growth and prosperity for all.

As we have heard today, the strategies that developing countries need to enhance their economic resilience, are heavily based on building new and leveraging on existing productive capacities, which will enable them to support both structural transformation and the diversification of their economies and export baskets. This

includes focusing on human capital development, boosting innovation, enhancing research and development, and strengthening other building blocks necessary to diversify into and compete in new activities.

Achieving sustainable development in the LDCs will require a new way of working, with the cooperation and coordination of all national governments, regional bodies, development partners, as well as the private sector and civil society. If implemented in a coordinated way, these productive capacities-based policies can help reduce systemic inequalities, boost trade, create decent jobs, improve livelihoods, and help countries meet their own national, as well as global sustainable development targets.

UNCTAD's research and experience in delivering technical assistance to the LDCs confirms the need to think and act differently and move away from a sectoral approach to trade and development. Therefore, a conceptual framework built around the development, expansion, and utilization of productive capacities must form the core of international efforts in the next Programme of Action to support the most vulnerable economies.

The acute and lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have reinforced that without productive capacities, it will be difficult for developing countries to build resilience, achieve inclusive growth and kickstart the process of structural economic transformation. Amid a global health, economic and social crisis, the need to develop coherent policies and strategies aimed at building productive capacities is more urgent than ever. For the LDCs, and indeed all developing countries, we cannot continue with business as usual and expect to achieve different results.

In this regard, I am optimistic that UNCTAD's approach to productive capacity building, including through the utilization of the Productive Capacities Index and the undertaking of Productive Capacities Gap Assessments, can make a

powerful contribution to support countries in enhancing structural transformation by building their productive capacities in those areas where it is needed the most.

Ladies and gentlemen, this brings us to the end of the Webinar. I would like to thank our distinguished panelists as well as the participants for their active participation and contributions. I would also like to thank the UNCTAD secretariat for their support in the preparation of this event.