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Programme performance report of the United Nations for the biennium 2008-2009

Report of the Secretary-General

EXTRACT - Section 12 (Trade and development)

IV. Programme performance by section of the programme budget

Section 12 Trade and development

Highlights of programme results

337. In 2008, the twelfth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development adopted the Accra Declaration and also the Accra Accord, which reaffirmed the role of UNCTAD as the focal point of the United Nations for the integrated treatment of trade and development and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development.

338. In addition to progress on implementing the Accra Accord, during the biennium, UNCTAD addressed many emergent issues such as the food, energy and financial crises through its publications, meetings and events. For instance, many delegations expressed their appreciation of the annual *Trade and Development Report* and the *Least Developed Countries Report 2009*, which were perceived as providing useful, relevant and timely data, analyses and ideas on policy options with regard to the mobilization of resources for development, as well as the causes, impacts and the necessary policy responses to the global crisis.

339. Several delegations also welcomed the research on climate change, particularly on renewable energy. On other fronts, progress was made through various UNCTAD initiatives in strengthening the capacity of 22 developing countries to integrate commodity production and trade into development, including through facilitating participation in commodity supply/value chains.

340. The Ezulwini Declaration, adopted at the Third Meeting of Trade Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries in 2009, was prepared by a core group of landlocked developing countries in cooperation with the UNCTAD Special Programme for this group of countries. The Declaration highlights the concerns of those countries, provides clear guidance for activities in the near future and calls on their development partners for continued assistance.

Challenges and lessons learned

341. In 2009, the economic, financial and environmental crises dominated parliamentary and technical assistance activities. A key challenge was to help countries to avoid responding to the crises with measures that perpetuate economically, socially and environmentally unsustainable production and consumption patterns. Improved coordination and feedback between research and analysis and technical assistance activities are needed to enhance synergies and contribute towards better integrated assistance to beneficiary countries. The

increasing complexity of debt management has created a need for additional analysis and support, especially in the area of domestic debt. Full involvement of beneficiary regions and countries in their respective projects through co-sharing engenders ownership of the interventions from the beginning, and contributes towards their successful implementation. Increased assistance is required for commodity-dependent developing countries to mainstream commodity policies into national development strategies. The UNCTAD capacity-building and technical cooperation activities will need to take better account of domestic economic realities and the potential offered by regional integration as well as to provide more focused delivery of support with a view to corresponding better to the requests and needs of beneficiary countries at different stages of development.

Output implementation rate

342. The above-cited results are based on the implementation of 89 per cent of 1,606 mandated, quantifiable outputs.

343. Approved expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement can be found in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 (A/62/6 (Sect. 12) and Corr.1).

Executive direction and management

(a) *Increased recognition by Member States of the relevance of UNCTAD work*

344. During the biennium, UNCTAD continued its work on the global financial crises, which was the underlying theme for the work of its intergovernmental machinery. Particular emphasis was put on food security, especially in Africa, and on the role of agriculture and what needs to be done to improve the situation. Many donor delegates reaffirmed their commitment to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and to the fulfilment of other existing commitments to development. Most delegates from developing countries expressed that South-South cooperation should complement, rather than replace, North-South cooperation. Delegates from developing countries stressed the importance of transforming ideas and suggestions emanating from the UNCTAD research and analytical work into concrete action on addressing the special needs and concerns of various groups of countries, including African countries, least developed countries and landlocked countries.

(b) *Mandates are effectively implemented*

345. In 2008, the Working Party on the Medium-Term Plan and the Programme Budget, having considered the progress reports on the implementation of the recommendations contained in two prior evaluation reports, noted with satisfaction the agreed conclusions of the meeting, the progress made on the implementation of the recommendations and encouraged the Secretariat to continue its efforts. Regarding the evaluation on the UNCTAD WTO accession programme, difficulties were encountered in the implementation of all four recommendations outstanding and hence in trying to achieve the target. These concerned the administrative procedures over nearly 400 small trust funds, as well as a recommendation towards donors for predictable funding for the programme. The former issue is being addressed by consolidation of the funds into larger thematic trust funds. The Working Party did not consider any follow-up reports in 2009.

(c) *Improvement in the mainstreaming of gender perspective in the work of UNCTAD*

346. UNCTAD initiatives in 2008 include a parallel event entitled “Trade and gender: perspectives for sustainable growth and poverty alleviation”, delivered by UNCTAD and the Commonwealth Secretariat at UNCTAD XII; the launching of the Women in Business Award at UNCTAD XII; the International Conference on moving towards gender sensitization of trade policy, held in India; and the publication of two studies on mainstreaming gender into trade and development strategies in Africa. UNCTAD activities in 2009 include an intergovernmental expert meeting on mainstreaming gender in trade policy and the publication of two related studies. UNCTAD also participated in a session on trade and gender held at the United Kingdom’s Department of International Development World Trade Week. UNCTAD provided inputs to several United Nations reports on gender issues, including the report of the Secretary-General for the high-level segment of the 2010 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council.

(d) *Programme of work is effectively managed*

347. Expenditure compared to funds available was in line with the target.

(e) *Timely recruitment and placement of staff*

348. The average length of time for recruitment in 2009 was 93 per cent above the target of 150 days. This can be explained by the already existing backlog of cases initiated in previous years. There were also considerable delays external to UNCTAD, including: delays in the review of vacancy announcements for posting in Galaxy; delays in the release of eligible candidates by the United Nations Office at Geneva for departmental review; and clearance of cases by the Office of Human Resources Management. It should be noted that the average number of days for completion of vacancies initiated in 2009 was significantly lower, namely 164 days, or 56 per cent lower, than for the total number of vacancies completed in 2009, which has an average of 289 days. Several additional mechanisms were put in place for monitoring the recruitment process.

(f) *Improved geographical representation and gender balance of staff*

349. The results at the end of 2009 demonstrate that UNCTAD has achieved both the target of improved geographical representation, namely 16.7 per cent (above the target which was set at 8 per cent), and the gender balance, which has increased to 38.7 per cent, exceeding the target which was set at 37.5 per cent. This latter result is attributable to the streamlining of contracts in the secretariat, which called for a revised methodology to calculate gender balance; measurement of performance in that area now includes Professional and above level staff with a contract of one year or more, funded by both regular budget and project funds. UNCTAD continues to strive for improvement in both of those areas, and to that end for instance, respective measures include the recruitment of candidates from the National Competitive Examinations roster, and also, the strengthening of the role of the focal point for women in the selection process.

(g) *Increased timeliness of submission of documentation*

350. Following the Accra conference, progress was made in increasing the timeliness of submission of pre-session documents for translation. From May to

December 2008, 40 per cent of documentation was submitted on time, compared to 27 per cent in 2006-2007. It should also be noted that for the last quarter of 2008, following the reorganization of the Secretariat's Documents Management Section, all documents for intergovernmental meetings were submitted for processing on time. As a result of the collective efforts of all concerned — author divisions, clearance and documents management — the rate of UNCTAD parliamentary documents for intergovernmental meetings throughout 2009 submitted on time for translation reached 91 per cent (61 documents out of 67). All documents for the 2009-2010 cycle of expert meetings were also submitted for translation on time.

Subprogramme 1
Globalization, interdependence and development

- (a) *Better understanding of policy choices at the national and international levels and their implications for faster and more stable growth and hunger and poverty eradication in developing countries as a result of policy advocacy*

351. The analyses and policy recommendations related to this objective were discussed at length at the fifty-fifth and fifty-sixth sessions of the Trade and Development Board. With 33 endorsements of policy recommendations and/or acknowledgments of research findings by Member States the target set for the biennium was exceeded. Many delegations expressed their appreciation of the 2008 and 2009 editions of *Trade and Development Report*, which were perceived as providing useful, relevant and timely data, analyses and ideas on policy options with regard to the mobilization of resources for development, as well as on the causes, impacts and the necessary policy responses to the global crisis. Several delegations also welcomed the research on climate change as a valuable contribution to the global debate on climate change and development.

- (b) *Progress towards debt sustainability in developing countries through better debt and financial management and, as appropriate, debt rescheduling or debt relief*

352. Fifty-seven countries rely on the Debt Management Financial Analysis System (DMFAS) for the day-to-day management of their debt, and an additional 13 new projects were signed with current DMFAS client countries and user institutions. Capacity-building in 46 projects provided training to more than 1,000 officials in 46 countries in debt-data validation and statistical bulletins. Reports such as that of the United Nations Secretary-General on a durable solution to the debt problems of developing countries, or the report to the General Assembly on the effects of the financial and economic crisis on debt sustainability of developing countries helped developing countries to improve their debt position. A new project on promoting responsible sovereign lending and borrowing financed by the Norwegian Government has started to support progress towards debt sustainability through research, analysis, guidelines and advisory groups.

- (c) *Improved empirical and statistical foundations and informational base for decision-making at the national and international levels on trade, financial and economic policies and development strategies*

353. A new statistical information system established in 2007 has enhanced the ability of UNCTAD to identify data and indicators that quantify economic circumstances. The system shortened the production schedule of the *UNCTAD*

Handbook of Statistics by over six months, and integrated data series from previous years into a common, harmonized format; the system also improved the electronic availability of statistics to the member countries involved in the preparation of UNCTAD XII. The integration of data in a single database offers the power to calculate indicators from multiple domains such as international trade, finance, and macroeconomic trends. The system proved its efficiency and the number of requests from economists for the compilation of new time series and the calculation of derived indicators increased significantly.

- (d) *Improved policy and institutional environment and enhanced international cooperation in the development of the Palestinian economy by strengthening UNCTAD activities in this field through the provision of adequate resources*

354. At the fifty-fifth and fifty-sixth sessions of the Trade and Development Board, 34 delegates commended the secretariat for its high quality policy-oriented research, technical assistance, and survey-based needs assessments to guide the economic development plans and strategies for the future Palestinian State. The vast majority of delegates shared the secretariat's assessment of the Palestinian economy's development predicament, and called for strengthening the resources and related operational activities. Under extremely difficult conditions, the secretariat continued to achieve success and progress in key technical cooperation areas of research, advisory services, trade facilitation, investment promotion and regional integration. By the end of 2009, the programme of work exceeded the target of 10 measures/initiatives for the biennium.

Subprogramme 2

Investment, enterprise and technology

- (a) *Increased ability at the national level to discuss international investment issues and their development dimension*

355. The *World Investment Report* is a key instrument devoted to helping policymakers to improve their understanding of emerging foreign direct investment-related issues and, as a result, enhance their ability to formulate foreign direct investment policies that are more conducive to development. Training activities in the area of foreign direct investment statistics were also carried out with the view to increase developing countries' capacity to discuss international investment issues. As evidenced by a survey conducted with the participants of these workshops, more than 85 per cent of participants were very satisfied with the sessions, which met the objectives of 89 per cent of the participants. Two new products — the *Global Investment Trends Monitor* and the *Investment Policy Monitor* were also launched. Both were well covered by mainstream media, such as the *Wall Street Journal*, and received overwhelming positive feedback from policymakers.

- (b) *Better understanding of policies that will attract and benefit from foreign direct investment and technology transfer and the development dimension of international agreements*

356. The subprogramme conducted eight investment policy reviews during the biennium. The process aimed at improving the investment framework, policies and strategies of developing countries in order to allow them to attract and benefit from foreign direct investment. The first World Investment Forum was launched in 2008

and looked at the role of foreign direct investment in economic development and improved methods of investment promotion. The *International Investment Policies for Development* series and the *International Investment Agreements: Key Issues* series were assessed by policymakers through a survey in 2008, which attributed to them the highest ratings (between four and five on average, on a scale of five) with regards to the quality of their policy recommendations, their capacity to enhance the readers' understanding, and their analytical quality.

- (c) *Improved opportunities for enterprises in developing countries and countries with economies in transition to enhance their competitiveness through deepened linkages between domestic and foreign firms and better understanding of emerging issues in accounting and reporting standards, corporate responsibility, transparency and good corporate practices*

357. The Installation of Empretec centres has been launched in six countries (the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Peru, Romania, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia). About 3,000 graduates of the UNCTAD Empretec programme met to discuss the challenges of starting a business, as well as to share management experiences on and expand their network of contacts on the occasion of the thirteenth International Meeting of Entrepreneurs organized in São Paulo, Brazil, in conjunction with the First Global Entrepreneurship Week. Seven case studies carried out in collaboration with OECD in Africa, Asia and Latin America in various industries highlighted the relationship between selected transnational corporations and their local suppliers. The first Women in Business Award was launched in 2008 in Accra, to recognize women-owned businesses that have benefited from the business development services of the Empretec programme. In response to questionnaires distributed to participants at the meeting of the Intergovernmental Working Group on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting, about 95 per cent of respondents indicated that they found the sessions useful.

Subprogramme 3 International trade

- (a) *Improved understanding and better ability of developing countries, including non-members of the World Trade Organization, to analyse, formulate and implement appropriate trade policies and strategies in international trade, the international trading system and trade negotiations and an improved international trading environment facilitating market access and entry conditions for the exports of developing countries*

358. UNCTAD contributed to the strengthened capacities of developing countries, especially least developed countries, and countries with economies in transition to participate effectively in the international trading system. UNCTAD activities have had a sustained positive impact in strengthening human, institutional, and regulatory capacities in trade-related policies and negotiations in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, enabling them to realize the gains of development. At the fifty-third session of the Working Party, members reiterated the unique and comprehensive nature of the technical assistance programme on WTO accession and its important contribution to their beneficial integration into the global economy and multilateral trading systems. Pursuant to the Accra Accord, UNCTAD helped countries to develop capacities to establish their own negotiating

priorities, promoted coherence of bilateral and regional trade agreements within the multilateral trading system, and supported regional cooperation mechanisms.

- (b) *Strengthened analytical, statistical and information bases and tools for trade and trade-related decision-making in developing countries at the national, regional and international levels and for enhanced global understanding of interactions among trade, competitiveness and development*

359. UNCTAD led the Multi-Agency Support Team on non-tariff barriers in developing a new classification of non-tariff barriers, proposing several data-collection methods, which are being tested through a pilot project in seven developing countries. The UNCTAD trade analysis tools, such as Trade Analysis and Information System-World Bank Integrated Trade Solution (TRAINS-WITS), have helped in identifying and addressing market access barriers, trade opportunities and promoting more informed participation in trade negotiations at multilateral and regional levels. Over 9,200 new licences were issued to users of WITS during the biennium 2008-2009. Work continues on the refinement of the Trade and Development Index. The number of countries covered by the Trade and Development Index during the biennium increased to 125 (from 123 previously).

- (c) *Strengthened capacity of developing countries to integrate commodity production and trade into development, and enhanced international partnerships with regard to commodities and development*

360. Progress was made through various UNCTAD initiatives in strengthening the capacity of 22 developing countries to integrate commodity production and trade into development. The initiatives were in the following areas: (i) links between the commodity sector and poverty reduction; (ii) strengthening participation in commodity supply/value chains; (iii) financing commodity sector development; (iv) market information systems and statistics; (v) commodity exchanges; (vi) compliance with public and private international trade standards; (vii) minerals and metals; (viii) energy; and (ix) international cooperation on commodities.

- (d) *Improved capability of developing countries to identify and address competition and consumer protection issues and to deal effectively with restrictive business practices in national and international markets*

361. UNCTAD assistance through research, analysis, and advisory meetings on different issues related to competition and consumer protection helped countries to assess the adverse effects of anti-competitive practices on trade and development and take steps to adopt, reform and implement effectively competition laws and policies. The role of UNCTAD in analytical and technical assistance areas was highly appreciated by member States, who asked UNCTAD to continue and enlarge its work in that area.¹ Voluntary peer reviews (Costa Rica, Jamaica, Indonesia, Kenya, Tunisia and the West African Economic and Monetary Union) were conducted, which allowed an exchange of views and best practices on the role that competition law and policy can play in complementing trade liberalization and reforms. Twelve countries (Bhutan, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho,

¹ At UNCTAD XII and meetings of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Competition Law and Policy.

Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Swaziland and Uruguay) achieved significant progress in the preparation, adoption, revision and implementation of national competition and consumer protection legislation, following UNCTAD assistance.

- (e) *Strengthened capacity of developing countries to pursue both trade and trade policy objectives and sustainable development objectives in a mutually supportive fashion, and increased attention to developing countries to the sustainable development objectives in international discussions*

362. The programme has successfully deployed a new round of activities along its core competencies in strengthening the capacities of developing countries. In implementing those activities, the programme has maintained attention on the following issues: the food crisis; volatile energy prices; and the emerging trade and investment opportunities arising from the clean development mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol, as well as from the expanding markets for biodiversity-based products and services. In 2009, activities within the subprogramme were geared towards helping the developing countries understand and deal with the causes and consequences of the economic, financial and the interrelated climate, food, and water crises and, importantly, to seize real opportunities for cleaner growth, including low-carbon growth, such as in the case of biofuels. Attention was also geared towards a better understanding of the substantive links between the mandate and WTO negotiations, taking into account the broadening interface between trade, energy and climate change. The work relating to sustainable development, including organic agriculture was orientated towards the need of small farmers and the ways and means of facilitating their access to supermarket chains.

Subprogramme 4

Services infrastructure for development, trade efficiency and human resources development

- (a) *Improved trade logistics of developing countries through, inter alia, strengthening of transport efficiency, trade facilitation and customs and legal frameworks*

363. Based on reports from beneficiaries in the field, the actions suggested have contributed to improving the capacity of counterparts in developing countries to design and implement policy actions in the field of trade and transport facilitation as well as customs modernization (Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA)) through automation of clearance procedures.

- (b) *Improved awareness and understanding by developing countries of the policy and strategy options of the economic applications of information and communication technologies*

364. The Partnership on Measuring Information and Communications Technologies for Development, of which UNCTAD is a leading member, continued to advance the issue of ICT statistics (see related outputs). The availability of information economy indicators, based on the Partnership's core list of indicators, continues to improve. Over 60 countries from developing country regions were trained and are better prepared to produce this information for policymaking. The first country analysis by UNCTAD of the impact of ICT on business activities was published for Thailand. Harmonization in regional frameworks on cyberlaws continued in East Africa and Latin America with the help of UNCTAD, which should enhance the international

competitiveness of the countries involved. Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic are building the capacities of policymakers on the legal implications of ICT before processing and enacting their cyberlaws. In 2008-2009, science, technology and innovation policy reviews in Angola, Ghana, Lesotho and Mauritania enabled those countries to strengthen such policies and to better integrate them in their overall development strategies. Another science, technology and innovation-focused programme, the network of centres of excellence continued to foster South-South collaboration among outstanding scientific and technological institutions in developing countries and facilitated the delivery of advanced and basic training in biotechnologies and ICTs.

- (c) *Strengthened capacities in developing countries in the fields of trade, investment, and trade-supporting services through human resources development, networking and sustainable use of information technology*

365. In 2008-2009, 18 universities joined the UNCTAD Virtual Institute network; new training materials for universities were developed and adapted to country contexts; curricular support was provided; professional development workshops for academics were organized regionally and nationally; fellowships at UNCTAD were granted to academics; joint research projects were implemented by Virtual Institute universities; and the virtual services of the Institute reinforced. Five regional courses on key issues on the international economic agenda were organized for policymakers and academics, and 12 short courses on key international economic issues were held for Geneva-based diplomats. Subsequent to TrainForTrade project activities, Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic moved forward with their law-drafting processes, Guinea took action in the field of trade facilitation and Benin prioritized sustainable tourism as an essential tool for achieving Millennium Development Goals. Moreover, Angola, Djibouti, Ghana, Guatemala, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Peru and the United Republic of Tanzania launched local port management training cycles, while Benin, Cameroon, Guinea and Senegal continued training activities in that field. TrainForTrade has also continued to develop distance learning materials and to deliver face-to-face and e-learning courses in African, Asian and Latin American beneficiary countries.

Subprogramme 5

Africa, least developed countries and special programmes

Development of Africa

- (a) *Increased range of national and international policy choices to promote African development in the areas of expertise of UNCTAD*

366. The *Economic Development in Africa Report 2008* shows that most African countries have undertaken extensive trade liberalization and most can be said to have had open economies since the mid- to late 1990s; however, export performance following trade liberalization has been weak in terms of increased export volumes, increased export/gross domestic product ratios and diversification in high-value agricultural exports and manufactures. A *Policy Handbook*, extending and deepening the analysis of the *Economic Development in Africa Report 2007*, was also published in 2009. Two stakeholder workshops were held in 2008 in Burundi and Zambia to present the draft of the *Handbook* and three dissemination workshops were held in 2009 in Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Ghana to present the *Handbook*. A

workshop on development strategies in Africa was organized to solicit inputs from renowned African economists to UNCTAD XII.

- (b) *Increased utilization of services provided in support of NEPAD and various intergovernmental and inter-agency initiatives with regard to Africa*

367. The Programme participated in the Regional Consultation Mechanism of NEPAD in 2008 and 2009. It did not receive specific requests for advice from NEPAD but there were increased requests for advisory services in various intergovernmental and inter-agency initiatives with regard to Africa.² The programme responded to requests for advice and inputs on several reports including: an ECA report on governance; the International Development Research Centre's (Canada) work on peacebuilding; the North-South Institute's project on domestic resource mobilization in sub-Saharan Africa in 2008; the *European Report on Development 2009* chapter on fragile States; and the African Development Bank workshop on responses to the financial crisis in 2009. At the end of 2009, a joint project was concluded with the African Union Commission to enhance the communication and application of UNCTAD research and policy analysis on Africa and the least developed countries within Africa.

Least developed countries

- (a) *Increased analytical understanding and consensus in the global economy of the development problems of the countries concerned*

368. *The Least Developed Countries Report 2008* examines trends in poverty and of the Millennium Development Goals achievement in the least developed countries and suggests that aid management policies should be adopted as one concrete step to improve the terms of development partnership. *The Least Developed Countries Report 2009* argued that the global financial and economic crisis should be seized as an opportunity for a new policy approach in least developed countries and recommended the new role for the State based on a mixed economy model and the adoption of good governance. Capacity-building workshops on the policy recommendations of recent *Least Developed Countries Reports* were held on a regional basis for policymakers from least developed countries in West Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, Asia, and also in Angola, Mali and the Niger. Expert advice was given in OECD and World Bank meetings on integrating science, technology and innovation into national policy and development cooperation.

- (b) *Better integration of trade policies and priorities in the national development plans through the Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries and the building of capacities for country ownership and implementation of the action matrices of the Enhanced Integrated Framework*

369. Forty-five countries participate in the Integrated Framework Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies. Although the Integrated Framework is in a period of transition, in-country activities have continued, with UNCTAD support from the preliminary stages to project implementation, in the form of pre-Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies workshops, advisory missions and participation in meetings, including

² 2008 in the Fourth Tokyo Conference on African Development process (both preparatory conference and Ministerial) and in the High-level Meeting on Africa's Development Needs at United Nations Headquarters at the opening of the General Assembly.

participation and contribution to validation workshops in Vanuatu and the Comoros. As of February 2009, 36 Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies have been completed and 8 additional studies are in preparation. The number of new studies to be prepared is limited: Haiti has had its Technical Review approved and is awaiting for the Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies to be launched, Eritrea continues to be on hold (as per the Government's decision) from the Integrated Framework since 2003 and the Technical Review for Equatorial Guinea has thus far not been approved.

Special programmes

- (a) *Enhanced international cooperation to implement the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and to improve the effective participation of landlocked developing countries, as well as other groups of countries mentioned in paragraph 33 of the São Paulo Consensus, in the global trading system*

370. 2008 was the year of the mid-term review meeting of the Almaty Programme of Action. The Special Programme was substantively and directly or indirectly involved in numerous activities that took place in the run-up to the mid-term review. The Special Programme's activities in favour of landlocked developing countries focused in 2009 on the preparation of the Third Meeting of Trade ministers of landlocked developing countries, which took place in Ezulwini, Swaziland, from 21 to 22 October 2009. Given the dramatic change in the global economic climate, the discussions were dominated by the impact of the global economic crisis on landlocked developing countries and possible policies and measures to mitigate the impact of the crisis on the development prospects of these countries. The meeting recorded a high turnout with more than two thirds of the 31 members of the group of landlocked developing countries.

- (b) *Contribution to the follow-up to the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in 2005*

371. In 2008-2009, UNCTAD intensified its support to small island developing States (individual members as well as the group as a whole through the Alliance of Small Island States) in their efforts to bring the international community to achieve progress on some key economic aspects of the Mauritius Strategy, such as the questions of (a) graduation from least developed country status; and (b) international support measures in the multilateral trading system. In 2008 and 2009, six small island developing States benefited from direct assistance from UNCTAD with regard to the question of graduation: three pre-graduation (potential graduation) cases: Kiribati, Tuvalu, Vanuatu; two graduation cases: Maldives, Samoa (during their transition period); one post-graduation case: Cape Verde. Some other (non-small island developing States) least developed countries (Equatorial Guinea, Haiti, Lesotho) have also benefited from this line of advisory services.