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TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Commission on Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities
Ad Hoc Expert Meeting on Logistics Services
Geneva, 13 July 2006

PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND ANNOTATIONS*

I. Provisional agenda

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Trade and development aspects of logistics services
4. Adoption of the report of the Meeting

* This document was submitted on the above-mentioned date as a result of processing delays.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

Item 1: Election of officers

1. It is recommended that the Ad Hoc Expert Meeting elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson-cum-Rapporteur.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

2. The provisional agenda is reproduced in section I above. A detailed programme will be made available one week before the meeting.

Item 3: Trade and development aspects of logistics services

3. At its tenth session, in February 2006, the Commission on Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities decided to convene an Ad Hoc Expert Meeting on Logistics Services in pursuit of the mandate contained in the São Paulo Consensus of June 2004. In its paragraph 49, the São Paulo Consensus states that UNCTAD is to assist developing countries, in particular LDCs, to design and implement active policies for building productive capacity and international competitiveness, based on an integrated treatment of investment, corporate responsibility, technology transfer and innovation, enterprise development and business facilitation (including transportation and ICT), competitiveness, diversification and export capacity, to sustain a high level of growth and promote sustainable development.

4. Broadly speaking, logistics services can be defined as the process of planning, implementing, managing and controlling the flow and storage of goods, services and related information from the point of origin to the point of consumption. Firms need logistics services to get their products to their customers. They can either produce these services in-house or outsource/offshore them to another firm. The logistics industry is constantly evolving, requiring both providers (logistics services companies) and consumers (other firms) to keep abreast with developments in the sector. Logistics services providers have learned to adapt to the needs of their customers. They have gone from providing relatively basic services (such as transport and warehousing) to providing value-added and advanced services such as project management, global supply chain expertise, and knowledge- and information-based services.

5. Economies are facing different opportunities and challenges regarding access to efficient logistics services. For developing and least developed countries, access to efficient logistics services is particularly crucial for integration into the international trading system. Remotely located and landlocked countries, and countries with poor infrastructure, face particular difficulties in this regard. Countries strive to achieve a virtuous cycle where improved transport and logistics services lead to increased trade, which in turn encourages investment in better transport and other logistics services.

6. The Expert Meeting provides an opportunity for actors from the public and private sectors, including trade negotiators, policy makers and academics, to explore different facets of logistics services in an open debate at the international level. The aim is to assist developing countries in strengthening their capacities to increase their participation in global services trade, in particular in logistics services, and apply the insights gained to help

strengthen domestic services and regulatory capacity. To this end, the Meeting will endeavour to bring about an exchange and convergence of views on a set of policy options necessary to achieve further progress in GATS negotiations on logistics services, as well as consider the different negotiating approaches that can be used to produce pro-development commitments.

7. To facilitate the discussions, UNCTAD secretariat is preparing an issues note, which will be circulated. In addition, all experts are encouraged to prepare and submit brief papers related to their country's experience in regulation and liberalization of logistic services, the sector's contribution to the development of developing countries, and opportunities for suppliers of logistics services from developing countries to access regional and global markets. These papers will be made available to the Meeting in the form and language in which they are received.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.1/AHM.1/2 Trade and development aspects of logistics services

Item 4: Adoption of the report of the Meeting

8. The report of the Ad Hoc Expert Meeting will be submitted to the Commission on Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities at its eleventh session. The Ad Hoc Expert Meeting may wish to authorize the Chairperson to prepare a Chairperson's summary after the conclusion of the Meeting.

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