



# United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

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**Trade and Development Board**  
**Trade and Development Commission**  
**Multi-year Expert Meeting on Trade, Services and Development**  
Eighth session  
Geneva, 5–6 May 2020  
Item 2 of the provisional agenda  
**Adoption of the agenda and organization of work**

## Provisional agenda and annotations

### I. Provisional agenda

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Leveraging services, including infrastructure services, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
4. Adoption of the report of the meeting.

### II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

#### Item 1 Election of officers

1. It is recommended that the expert meeting elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur.

#### Item 2 Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

2. The substantive topic for the eighth session of the Multi-year Expert Meeting on Trade, Services and Development was approved, on 4 October 2018, by the Trade and Development Board at its sixty-fifth session, part II (TD/B/65(2)/4, annex II). A detailed programme will be available one week before the meeting.

*Documentation*

TD/B/C.I/MEM.4/22

Provisional agenda and annotations



### Item 3

#### **Leveraging services, including infrastructure services, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals**

3. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals is a challenge for most developing countries, particularly those relying on the production and export of a single or few products, notably commodity-dependent countries and small island developing countries. This lack of economic diversity increases their vulnerability to external shocks and inhibits achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Hence, economic diversification is imperative.

4. Four notable features are globally observed during the past decades, which point to the increasing importance of services in an economy. First, the share of services in economies measured by output, employment and trade has increased as a long-term trend, leading to tertiarization in developed countries and in most developing countries. Second, services' output and exports were more resilient than those of goods in the global economic and financial crisis of 2008/09. Third, services embodied in the exports of all sectors have been growing. Fourth, services have been increasingly liberalized under multilateral, plurilateral and regional trade agreements, make more services tradable. Moreover, services are capable of offering input to both the agriculture and manufacturing sectors through value added processes. Hence, the services sector could be leveraged for economic diversification.

5. At the eighth session of the multi-year expert meeting, issues of interest to developing countries will be examined in the area of economic diversification through services, especially infrastructure services (e.g. telecommunications and related ICT services, and transport and financial services). These issues include how to handle tertiarization of the economy while avoiding "premature deindustrialization", what services contribute more towards economic diversification, how to ensure a supply of good-quality infrastructure services through smart regulation and what the developmental implication will be of negotiations on domestic regulation among a group of World Trade Organization members. Through exchanges of ideas and national and regional experiences, it is expected that, at the meeting, actions will be explored that countries can take to increase protection against economic and environmental vulnerabilities, by developing a more diversified economy through services, especially infrastructure services.

6. To facilitate discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat has prepared a background note, document TD/B/C.I/MEM.4/23. In addition, experts are encouraged to prepare case studies on the subject under discussion. These papers will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received.

#### *Documentation*

TD/B/C.I/MEM.4/23

Leveraging services, including infrastructure services,  
to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

### Item 4

#### **Adoption of the report of the meeting**

7. The report of the multi-year expert meeting will be submitted to the Trade and Development Commission at its next session. Participants at the expert meeting may wish to authorize the Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur, under the authority of the Chair, to prepare the final report after the conclusion of the meeting.

#### **Input from experts**

Experts nominated by member States are encouraged to submit brief papers (approximately 5–12 pages) as contributions to the work of the meeting. The papers will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received.

Papers should be submitted to the UNCTAD secretariat in advance of the meeting, addressed to Liping Zhang at [tncdb@unctad.org](mailto:tncdb@unctad.org).