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Agenda item 5

**HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING IN TRADE-SUPPORTING
SERVICES: KEY TO GROWTH WITH SPECIAL POTENTIAL FOR LDCS**

Agreed recommendations *

1. The Commission examined the report of the Expert Meeting on Human Resources Development and Training in Trade-Supporting Services: Key to Growth with Special Potential for LDCs and the note by the UNCTAD secretariat, as contained in documents TD/B/COM.3/32 and TD/B/COM.3/36 respectively.
2. In its policy discussion it paid particular attention to the fact that human resource development (HRD) is an indispensable element in all development activities, as illustrated by the discussions on relationships between SMEs and TNCs as well as electronic commerce and tourism.
3. It consequently recognized the need to accord the highest priority to the issue of HRD. Success in this endeavour depends upon concerted national and international efforts to support universal basic education for developing countries, particularly for least development countries (LDCs). In this context, HRD initiatives should be consistent with the broader national policies for education and training and the overall trade strategy.

* As agreed at the fourth (closing) plenary on Friday, 26 January 2001.

4. It further emphasized that exchange of national experiences and the dissemination of best practices would enhance cooperation among countries. For this purpose, the type of networking already promoted by UNCTAD in its capacity-building programmes is useful.

5. In view of the above and taking into account the UNCTAD X Plan of Action, the Commission calls upon all stakeholders in the area of HRD and training in trade-supporting services to work together towards improving the situation and reaping the benefits.

Governments

6. Governments should consider adopting a policy framework for HRD, which should be developed by them in cooperation with the private sector. The framework could include among others the concept of national councils for HRD in trade-supporting services, which would be public/private partnerships with the participation of employee representatives and common standards and procedures for the carrying out of professional duties in trade-supporting services.

7. To encourage the application and adoption of policy measures, awareness raising needs to start promptly; this may be initiated by local institutes for management or public administrations, with the support of programmes undertaken by international bodies as appropriate.

8. The effective application of HRD policies will be greatly enhanced by the existence, at local or regional level, of high-quality HRD institutions covering training, advisory, analytical and research functions. These could be developed from or within existing institutions where appropriate; and government, business-sector and international/regional institutions could all collaborate in setting them up.

9. Regional and international cooperation is essential for expanding and improving HRD and for keeping practices up to date, especially in LDCs. Such cooperation, by communities, institutes and businesses, needs to be encouraged by government policies; it may be reinforced through networking programmes of United Nations agencies.

10. Government, the business community and individual businesses should cooperate in their respective ways so that HRD policies use the role of the private sector as a motor for their implementation, bearing in mind the need for regulatory and institutional change to make training and HRD effective.

11. Support UNCTAD's activities carried out in the context of paragraph 166 of the UNCTAD X Plan of Action and fully associate the participants in any HRD national plan.

12. Governments could consider strengthening, in accordance with their national policies, the role of the private sector in their HRD policy framework, through measures that promote competition, establish incentives for continuous training, change attitudes, retain qualified manpower and encourage the exchange of expertise among developing countries.

International community

13. Action by the international community is particularly important in relation to HRD for trade-supporting services, such as the Integrated Framework and the JITAP programmes. A number of international agencies: – UNCTAD, UNDP, UNESCO, UNIDO, ITC, WTO, ILO, OECD, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund – have an important role to play, and their efforts need to be coherent in order to encourage best use of resources. The involvement of UNCTAD was mandated in the Bangkok Plan of Action, with its emphasis on capacity-building.

14. Encouraging and facilitating networking among educational and training institutions in developed countries with those in developing countries, particularly LDCs, to enhance voluntary services in HRD.

15. Contribute, through partnerships and cooperation, to the enhancement of competence in developing countries, and advocate that support for HRD should be rendered more specific, operational and provided with a time frame.

UNCTAD

16. Promote awareness-raising and dissemination of best practices among government officials, private-sector companies, relevant business associations and academic institutions through the holding of workshops, the production and dissemination of printed materials and the maintenance of web pages dedicated to HRD in trade-supporting services.

17. Take complementary initiatives in HRD for international and regional cooperation and participate in existing ones in cooperation with ITC, WTO and other international organizations.

18. Conduct a pilot exercise in a particular country, with assistance from the secretariat and external technical expertise, preferably from developing countries, to prepare a model policy framework for use at national level. The findings of this pilot exercise, including a review of the resulting action within the country, should be published and further reviewed at a regional workshop of HRD specialists, officials and managers including regional organizations.

19. Assist LDCs to adapt the model policy framework for HRD, taking into account the market needs of the LDCs and their learning capacities, as well as the learning needs of individuals involved in trade-supporting services.
20. Reinforce international programmes for training the trainers and help to establish or reinforce regional-based training systems so as to enhance training opportunities and optimize use of resources, including universities.
21. Explore and make recommendations on the role of communities in trade- supporting services and the ways in which HRD can be enhanced by cooperation across communities.
22. Integrate distance-learning techniques into the range of measures to carry out the above activities and provide assistance for the necessary infrastructures.
23. Strengthen UNCTAD capacity-building programmes to further promote networking among countries in the field of HRD.