



Annual Report

> 2025

Shaping the future



United Nations

Geneva, 2026

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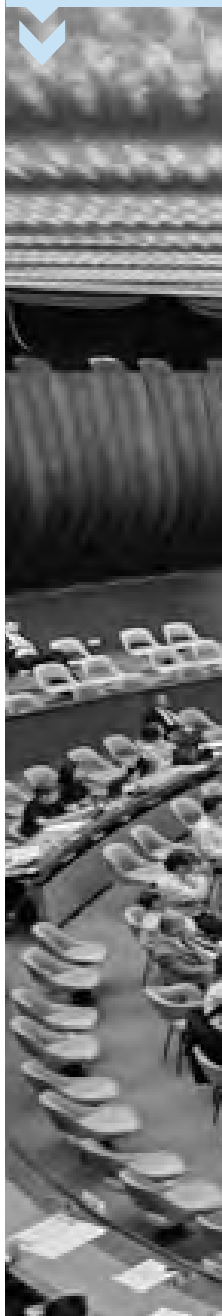
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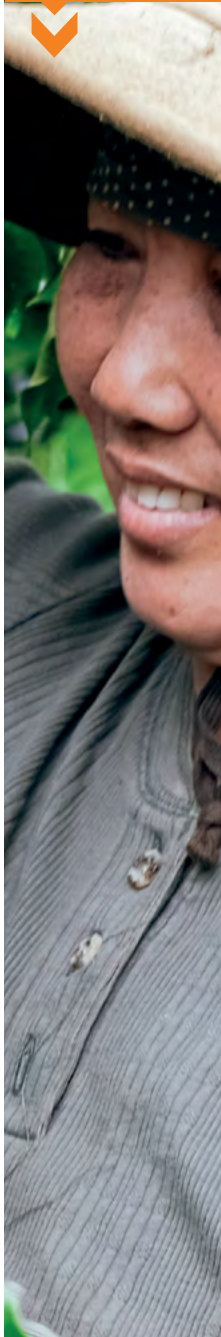
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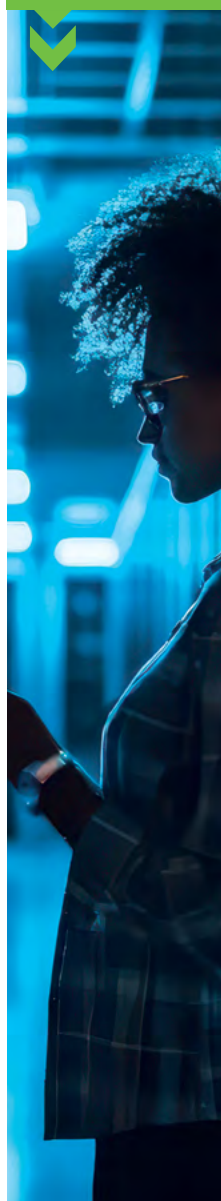
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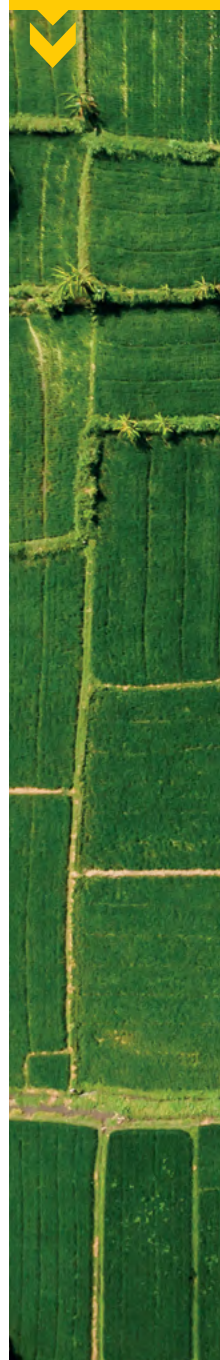
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Foreword



The year 2025 was a defining one for UNCTAD. It was the year of our sixteenth ministerial-level conference, the first held in Geneva since our founding in 1964, and the year our member States adopted the Geneva Consensus, a renewed road map for our work at a time of extraordinary global change.

It was also a year of widespread shocks. Tariff volatility reshaped world trade. Investment flows to developing countries weakened. Debt burdens grew heavier. Aid flows declined. For the most vulnerable economies - the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States, these pressures compounded one another, making the path to structural transformation steeper than ever. Each of these shocks demanded a response across our three pillars of work: in our research and analysis, in our intergovernmental consensus-building and, on the ground, in our technical cooperation.

UNCTAD itself operated under significant resource constraints throughout the year. Budget reductions led to the abolition of posts, and liquidity pressures across the United Nations Secretariat forced difficult choices about what we could deliver and when. Some projects were scaled back. Some meetings were shortened. Some publications were postponed.

And yet, this was also a year that showed what UNCTAD can do under pressure. When tariff announcements began altering the landscape of global trade, we did not wait for the dust to settle. We launched rapid assessments to give member States real-time analysis of what the shifts meant for their exporters, their farmers, their small businesses. We brought evidence to the table when policymakers needed it most. Our technical cooperation programmes, from customs modernization and debt management to entrepreneurship networks and digital trade readiness, continued to deliver results in over 100 countries and territories.

The centrepiece of the year was our quadrennial conference, the sixteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. In October 2025, member States came together in Geneva and adopted the Geneva Consensus, a comprehensive outcome that reaffirmed the role of UNCTAD as the development arm of the United Nations system and set clear priorities for the years ahead. In the Consensus, member States called on us to deepen our support for electronic commerce and the digital economy, to strengthen our assistance for countries approaching graduation from least developed country status and to sharpen our engagement with landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. They recognized the growing importance of services trade as a frontier for structural transformation, and the urgency of addressing critical minerals governance, illicit financial flows and developing-country representation in the international financial architecture.

This annual report documents what UNCTAD accomplished throughout that demanding year. The pages that follow cover each dimension of our work, from the flagship publications that shaped policy debates, to the intergovernmental processes that built consensus, to the technical cooperation that translated mandates into tangible support for developing countries. They reflect the contributions of every division and office: globalization and development strategies, international trade and commodities, investment and enterprise, technology and logistics, our work on Africa and least developed countries, statistics, intergovernmental outreach and support service and our presence in New York. They also reflect the work of our communications team, which expanded the reach and visibility of UNCTAD at a time when our analysis was in high demand.

The year ahead will bring no less complexity. But the Geneva Consensus gives us a clear mandate, and the work documented in these pages shows an institution that delivers, even under pressure. UNCTAD was built for moments like this. It will continue to rise to them.

Rebeca Grynspan

Secretary-General

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development



UNCTAD at a glance

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UNCTAD is the focal point within the United Nations system for the integrated treatment of trade and development and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development.



Geneva Consensus

195

member
States



XVI United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD16) took place **20-23 October** with the participation of

171

countries

*a historical record
participation*



522*

staff
members



\$84.1

million

regular budget



\$58.9

million

technical cooperation
expenditure with

203

projects



78**



technical cooperation
requests received from

57

countries and
territories and one
regional organization

238



publications,
research and
analytical materials,
and parliamentary
documents

75

countries
benefited
from



106

national projects, including
43 projects for the least
developed countries

* This number includes 73 regular budget positions that were abolished effective 1st January-2026 on account of the UN80 resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly.

** Provisional 2025 data includes 59 cleared requests and 19 more under review on the date of drafting.



Senior leadership



Rebeca Grynsipan

Secretary-General

Officer-in-Charge, Division on Globalization and Development Strategies



Pedro Manuel Moreno

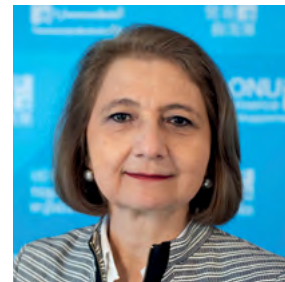
Deputy Secretary-General



Adnan T. Issa

Director

Office of the Secretary-General



Luz Maria de la Mora

Director

Division on International Trade and Commodities



Nan Li Collins

Director

Division on Investment and Enterprise



Paul Akiwumi

Director

Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes



Torbjörn Fredriksson

**Rotational
Officer-in-Charge**

Division on Technology and Logistics



Angel Gonzalez Sanz

**Rotational
Officer-in-Charge**

Division on Technology and Logistics



Key moments at UNCTAD in 2025

JAN 2025

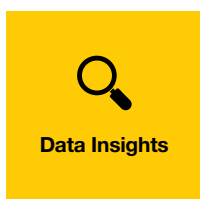
Handbook of Statistics 2024

Data Insights

A live handbook with continuously updated data and analysis

33rd special session of the Trade and Development Board

89th session of the Working Party on the Programme Plan and Programme Performance



FEB 2025

77th executive session of the Trade and Development Board

Economic Development in Africa Report 2024 "Unlocking Africa's Trade Potential: Boosting Regional Markets and Reducing Risks" launched in Abidjan



MAR 2025

5th United Nations Ocean Forum

14th International Debt Management Conference

DMFAS 7 software release

Taking public debt management to the next level

Establishment of the Working Group on Data Governance as Relevant for Development at All Levels under the **Commission on Science and Technology for Development**

Launch of the **Global Trade Update** monthly series



APR 2025

Technology and innovation report 2025

"Inclusive Artificial Intelligence for Development"

Trade and Development Foresights 2025

"Under Pressure – Uncertainty Reshapes Global Economic Prospects"

28th session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development

34th special session of the Trade and Development Board

15th session of the Trade and Development Commission



MAY 2025

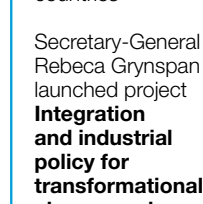
Critical energy transition minerals

UNCTAD-Japan initiative to support Southern African countries

Secretary-General Rebeca Grynspan launched project **Integration and industrial policy for transformational change and resilience in Latin America** in Mexico City

15th session of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission

8th session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy



JUN 2025

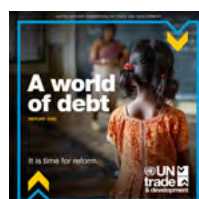
UNCTAD at the 3rd United Nations Ocean Conference 2025

World Investment Report 2025

"International Investment in the Digital Economy"

A World of Debt 2025

35th special session of the Trade and Development Board



JUL 2025

4th International Conference on Financing for Development
UNCTAD to co-lead several initiatives under the Sevilla Platform for Action

9th United Nations Conference
to Review All Aspects of the Set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices

45th anniversary of the adoption of the **United Nations Set of Principles and Rules on Competition**

40th anniversary of the adoption of the **United Nations guidelines for consumer protection**

The State of Commodity Dependence 2025

AUG 2025

Economic costs of the Israeli occupation for the Palestinian people: the post-October 2023 shocks compounding the historical cumulative cost of the occupation of the West Bank

3rd United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries
in Awaza

UNCTAD advocates integration, digitalization and trade facilitation for landlocked economies

Investment facilitation
Launch of new database mapping over 400 international treaties since 2010

New digital platform to track trade facilitation reforms and deepen economic integration - with support from UNCTAD, the Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration and the European Union

SEP 2025

UNCTAD co-hosted the **Future Investment Conference 2025** in Xiamen, China

Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies adopted by WTO members – UNCTAD to support implementation

Review of Maritime Transport 2025
"Staying the Course in Turbulent Waters"

UNCTAD-CARICOM cooperation agreement to support Caribbean resilience

UNCTAD at the high-level week of the 80th session of the General Assembly

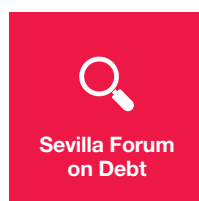
36th special session of the **Trade and Development Board**



OCT 2025

XVI United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD16)
"Shaping the future: Driving economic transformation for equitable, inclusive and sustainable development"

Launch of the Sevilla Forum on Debt
Spain leading the initiative, with support from UNCTAD and the Department for Economic and Social Affairs



NOV 2025

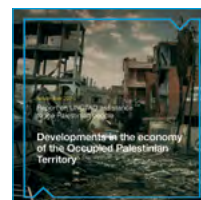
Report on UNCTAD assistance to the Palestinian people
"Developments in the economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territory"

UNCTAD at **United Nations climate change conference, COP30** in Belém, Brazil

Annual General Meeting of the Intergovernmental **Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development**

42nd Session of the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on **International Standards of Accounting and Reporting**

72nd Session of the **Trade and Development Board**

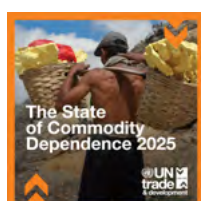


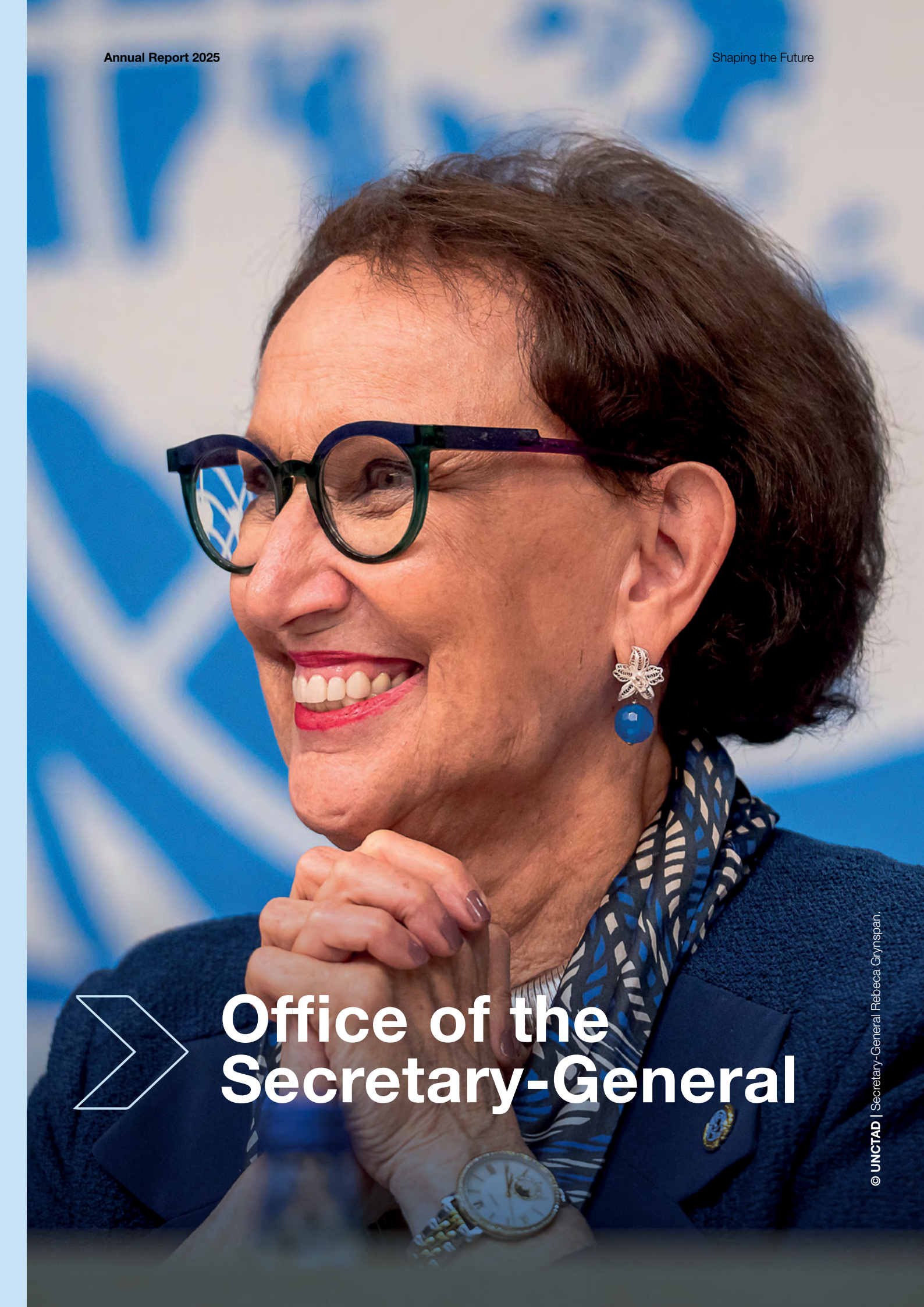
DEC 2025

Trade and Development Report 2025 "On the Brink – Trade, finance and the reshaping of the global economy"

United Nations principles for consumer product safety adopted by the General Assembly – UNCTAD to lead global implementation

9th session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on **Financing for Development**





Office of the Secretary-General

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As the world undergoes profound changes, UNCTAD must continue to evolve to respond to new realities and become more responsive, rapid and relevant.

 **Geneva Consensus**

Strategic focus



Supporting system-wide reform and shaping a more coherent and responsive institution **with focused attention where it matters most.**



Delivering UNCTAD16 and advancing a renewed multilateral vision through the Geneva Consensus, **strengthening the UNCTAD mandate to address global trade, finance and development challenges.**



Mobilizing impact and visibility: Enhancing outreach, partnerships and resource mobilization to scale development results.



UNCTAD provided real time analysis in a year of seismic change in global trade

Despite constrained resources, we delivered timely and high-impact analysis during a period of rapid shifts in global trade policy. When new tariff announcements began reshaping trade flows, UNCTAD responded immediately with innovative digital dashboards to enable countries to monitor the new tariffs they were facing, with Global Trade Updates and rapid assessments on the implications for developing countries and least developed countries. While activities in some areas were postponed or revised, careful attention was devoted to activities targeting developing countries, in particular the most vulnerable.

UNCTAD16

UNCTAD16 marked a key milestone in reaffirming the strategic direction of UNCTAD through the adoption of the Geneva

Consensus, strengthening its mandate to advance inclusive, resilient, and sustainable development in a rapidly evolving global economy. The Geneva Consensus reaffirmed the UNCTAD role across its core pillars and highlighted the urgency of addressing systemic challenges, including inequality, climate change, digital transformation and debt vulnerabilities. Guided by the leadership of the Secretary-General, it set a clear course for strengthening multilateralism, enhancing support for developing countries, and promoting more equitable and sustainable trade and development pathways, while reinforcing accountability, policy coherence, and results-oriented action across the organization. Results-based management will underpin the implementation of the four-year programme of work set out in the Geneva Consensus adopted in 2025, enabling UNCTAD to track results and outcomes and to report transparently on delivery against member State mandates.



A reformed institution

UNCTAD has played a central role in advancing system-wide reform in 2025. UNCTAD continued to demonstrate resilience and strategic focus amid significant organizational and global challenges. In response to the United Nations reform, 73 posts were abolished – nearly one fifth of the workforce.

The post reductions required a rebalancing of the organization and functions to preserve institutional sustainability and support mandate delivery during a period of systemwide reform.

Under the UN80 Initiative, UNCTAD co-led two of the 31 work packages – on Joint Knowledge Hubs and broader development pillar realignments, which aim at reconfiguring macroeconomic analysis capacities across the United Nations Secretariat to better support Member States, as well as provide more and improved support for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. In addition, it is an active member to the

work packages on expertise on demand (WP8), data (WP16) and environment (WP27). Together, these efforts reinforce UNCTAD leadership in shaping a more coherent, coordinated and responsive United Nations development architecture.

UNCTAD was deeply involved in other United Nations processes, particularly in advancing the Pact for the Future and shaping the Global Digital Compact. The institution also led initiatives on data governance and co-led digital transformation efforts with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). Additionally, UNCTAD contributed to various United Nations committees and task forces, ensuring coordination between Geneva and New York.

UNCTAD strengthened its leadership on critical energy transition minerals by co-chairing the United Nations Task Force established to implement the recommendations of the Secretary-General's Panel on Critical Energy Transition Minerals. Through high-level engagement across Africa, Asia and the Middle East, UNCTAD advanced global dialogue on local value addition, traceability and equitable



© UNCTAD | Secretary-General Rebeca Grynspan, Guy Parmelin, Federal Councillor, Switzerland, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Director-General, World Trade Organization (WTO)



benefit-sharing, promoting partnerships that help mineral-rich developing countries translate resource wealth into sustainable industrialization.

UNCTAD supported the Secretary-General's high-level expert group on Beyond GDP jointly with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General focusing on data innovation and in-depth statistical support.

Ambitious resource mobilization

UNCTAD continued to expand its partnerships and resource mobilization efforts. Engagement with non-traditional partners resulted in significant new financial commitments. These contributions will support future activities, including the World Investment Forum, the Global Supply Chain Forum and sought-after e-commerce projects that benefit the least developed countries (LDCs) and small island development States (SIDS).

Contributions also supported the participation of 22 ministerial representatives from LDCs and SIDS at UNCTAD16, further strengthening inclusivity in global dialogue.

Most improved performance award in advancing gender equality

UNCTAD continued to achieve new milestones and, in 2025, at the conclusion of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality, it was recognized as the best-performing entity within the Secretariat and received the Most Improved Performance Award. The strong commitment of UNCTAD to gender equality, reinforced by effective partnerships and collective efforts to advance the empowerment of all women and girls, underscored the important work that was being done to strengthen accountability across the institution.



© UNCTAD | Trade and Development Board, thirty-third special session





© UNCTAD | Rebeca Grynspan with Mariana Mazzucato at UCL IIPP Discussion on the Trade and Development Report 2025

Secretary-General Rebeca Grynspan Activity highlights

Strategic leadership in a time of global uncertainty

Throughout 2025, Secretary-General Rebeca Grynspan strengthened the role of UNCTAD at a pivotal moment for the global economy and the organization, firmly positioning UNCTAD as a leading voice for inclusive, sustainable development. She provided decisive strategic direction in shaping the UNCTAD policy agenda, deepening engagement with member States and reinforcing the institution as a trusted platform for solutions for vulnerable economies.

A defining milestone was UNCTAD's XVI Quadrennial Conference, which delivered the Geneva Consensus, a landmark outcome in which member States reaffirmed the

institution's vital role in the multilateral system. This road map addresses critical global challenges, including the need to uphold a rules-based international trading system and tackle debt crises, digital divides, the climate–development nexus and investment gaps. Emphasizing the Conference's political significance, the Secretary-General stated: **“This is what multilateralism looks like – not perfect, not easy, but possible. Always possible.”**

UNCTAD16 recorded the highest participation in its history, with over 170 national delegations and 80 ministers and vice-ministers. The Conference set out a renewed vision for a more resilient global economy to guide UNCTAD work across key areas, from inclusive and sustainable trade to LDC graduation support, digital capacity-building and financial architecture reform.



© UNCTAD | Secretary-General Rebeca Grynspan.

UNCTAD16 press conference: Launch of the Sevilla Forum on Debt



Addressing trade uncertainty and rising tariffs

UNCTAD continued to be recognized for fast, forward-looking analysis on global challenges. In 2025, Ms. Grynspan raised urgent concerns about escalating global tariffs, warning that new measures by major economies threatened growth, investment, and development in an already fragile, low-growth, high-debt environment. Speaking for the most vulnerable, she emphasized that they would face disproportionate shocks.

UNCTAD underscored the growing inequities created by tariff increases as vulnerable economies now face higher tariffs than developed countries. By framing tariffs as a development issue and not merely a trade concern, she elevated the

urgency of reforming global rules to ensure fairness and predictability. Her leadership positioned UNCTAD as a key advocate for tariff structures that support, rather than hinder, sustainable development and inclusive growth.

The Global Trade Update series produced monthly assessments on key issues such as aid at a crossroads, the cost of new tariff burdens, a world of debt and tariff disruption impacts on LDCs, allowed member States to have timely analysis during a very turbulent year.

UNCTAD underscored the need to reimagine trade as a more inclusive engine of development, particularly for small and vulnerable economies. The Secretary-General highlighted the resilience of global trade despite unprecedented policy uncertainty, driven by strong services growth, expanding South–South trade, and deeper regional integration.



Spearheading solutions for debt in support of developing countries

UNCTAD16 set the stage for United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, Minister Carlos Cuerpo of Spain, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs' Li Junhua and Secretary-General Rebeca Grynspan to jointly launch the **Sevilla Forum on Debt**, an inclusive global platform for dialogue and solutions on debt sustainability and reform. UNCTAD played a pivotal leadership role in shaping this outcome, positioning the institution as a central partner in designing a multi stakeholder mechanism to advance fairer, more predictable and development focused debt governance.

UNCTAD continued to advocate the need for systemic reform as developing countries faced record-high debt burdens, ensuring their priorities were reflected in the Forum's mandate by highlighting that

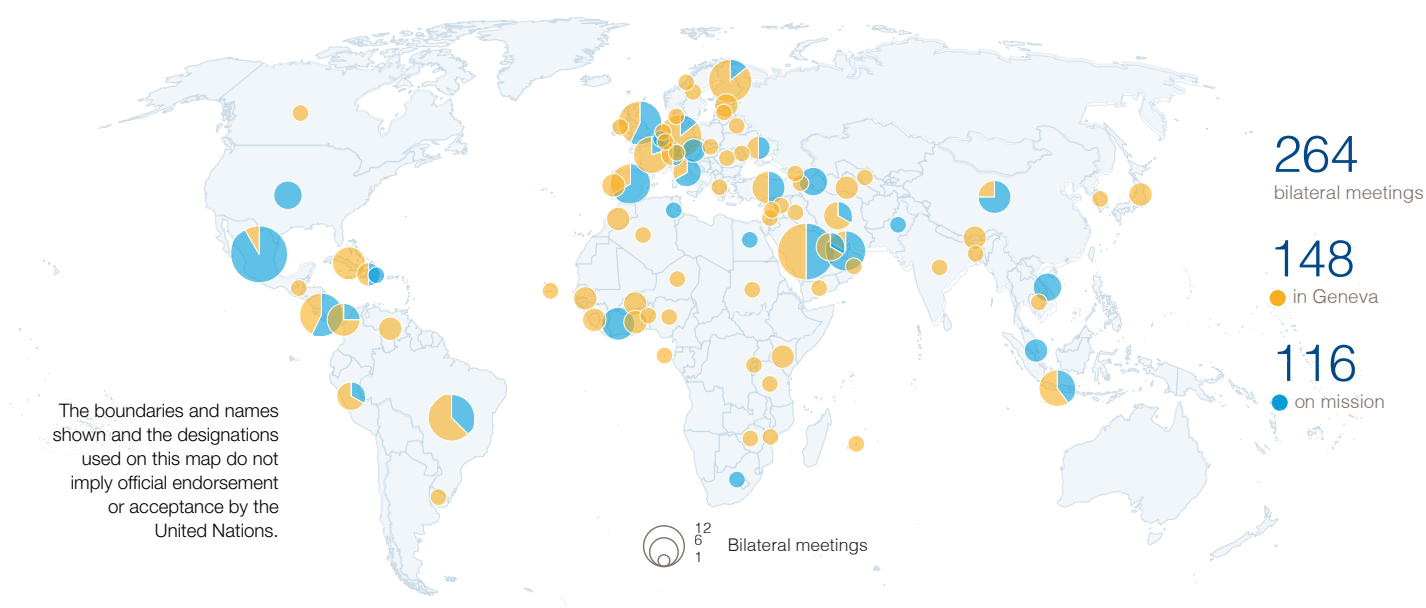
“markets are not suffering, people are. Countries are avoiding default not by growing their economies, but by slashing budgets for hospitals, schools and infrastructure resulting in 3.4 billion people living in countries that spend more on servicing debt than on health or education – 100 million more than last year. This isn't resilience – it's a slow erosion of development, one budget cut at a time.”

Data shaping decisions

Data and statistics continued to serve as a strategic asset of this institution. UNCTAD advanced work on services trade data, beyond GDP measurement, South–South cooperation metrics and illicit financial flows. These data sets increasingly serve as reference points for deliberations within the Group of 20, the United Nations General Assembly and national capitals. The Pact for the Future further reinforced these areas through new mandates.

A year of global engagement

Bilateral meetings held by the Secretary-General of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2025



Note: 264 bilateral meetings across 87 countries; meetings with international organizations are not mapped. Antarctica excluded.

High-level speeches and public engagements

Throughout the year, the Secretary-General strengthened the UNCTAD presence at the heart of the multilateral system delivering approximately **150 speeches and formal interventions**. The Secretary-General undertook **45 missions across all regions**, during which she **engaged with 116 high-level government representatives**. A further **148 bilateral meetings were held in Geneva**.

She engaged with global economic leadership at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Group of 20 Leaders' Summit and Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meetings, as well as at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank annual meetings to advance debt and finance discussions. At the 3rd United Nations Ocean Conference in Nice, France, she called for a comprehensive Blue Deal to support coastal communities. The prominence of UNCTAD at the Financing for Development Forum in Seville was a pivotal moment to advance development-centric global financial architecture reform. At the 30th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30), demonstrated how trade, investment and finance support climate-resilient development. She also

engaged with leaders at the Paris Peace Forum, the Abu Dhabi Global AI Summit and the Knowledge Summit in Dubai, among other events.

In addition, UNCTAD convened a series of high-profile events, including the 14th International Debt Management Conference in Geneva, which explored innovative solutions to help developing countries manage rising debt. The 9th United Nations Conference to Review All Aspects of the Set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices, the 28th Commission on Science and Technology for Development and the 8th Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy, all aimed at addressing digital divides and enhancing support for developing countries.

The Secretary-General's extensive engagements enabled her to disseminate the institution's research and promote its technical cooperation and capacity-building initiatives. These interactions demonstrated member States' strong interest in the institution's work and underscored its relevance in multilateral dialogue. They also enabled UNCTAD to strengthen its support for the prioritization and advancement of national development agendas.



© UNCTAD | 16th conference on trade and development (UNCTAD16)





© UNCTAD | Pedro Manuel Moreno,
Deputy Secretary-General, UNCTAD

Deputy Secretary-General Pedro Manuel Moreno Activity highlights

During 2025, Deputy Secretary-General Pedro Manuel Moreno advanced the UNCTAD mission to build a more resilient, equitable and sustainable global economy. Through sustained high level dialogue, strategic advocacy and organizational leadership, he strengthened the institution's global position and deepened engagement with Governments, regional bodies and development partners.

A key priority was shaping the strategic and programmatic preparations for **UNCTAD16**, to ensure the conference focused on strengthening the capacity of developing countries to navigate an increasingly

complex global landscape. Through extensive engagement with Governments and partners, he supported strengthened consensus and multilateral cooperation around the conference outcomes.

As Chair of the ASYCUDA Advisory Board, he reaffirmed the programme's strategic role in modernizing customs through digitalization, strengthening institutional capacities and advancing integrated trade facilitation. As Chair of the P166 Advisory Board, he also underscored the programme's contribution to strengthening policymakers' capacities in trade and development.



Enhancing synergies and efficiencies

The Deputy continued to guide interdivisional working groups to enhance coherence, synergies and the co-creation of substantive work, most notably concerning critical energy transition minerals, trade and the environment, publications, statistics coordination, partnership with the World Trade Organization and the Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Science Incubator that has been innovating greater efficiency and knowledge-generation tools across the house.

Promoting transparency and an inclusive workplace

Work continued to advance of the Internal Advocacy Working Group on Addressing Discrimination and Harassment in the

Workplace. Key actions included publishing quarterly staff mobility data to enhance transparency, strengthening internal communication, and deepening engagement with the Ombudsman to equip management with tools and guidance to effectively address workplace concerns.

Communications and External Relations

Strategic oversight by the Deputy guided UNCTAD's internal and external communications and external relations, which strengthened strategic outreach and partnerships, and enhanced the visibility and impact of its work across Member States, partners, the media and the wider public.



© UNCTAD | Pedro
Manuel Moreno speaks
at UN's first Biennial
Summit on financing
sustainable development



Guidance for action

Critical energy transition minerals

The Deputy Secretary-General co-chaired the United Nations Task Force on Critical Energy Transition Minerals established to implement the principles and actionable recommendations identified in the United Nations Secretary-General's Panel on Critical Energy Transition Minerals. This work strengthened the UNCTAD position as a key driver on this emerging global priority and especially for issues related to local value addition, benefit sharing and traceability.

The Deputy engaged extensively with global audiences on this topic, including at the Future Minerals Forum in Saudi Arabia, where he highlighted critical minerals as a historic development opportunity for the global South. At the South–South Intergovernmental Dialogue in Indonesia, he stressed the role of partnerships, public finance and global alliances in helping mineral-rich countries move from extraction to transformation; and during a key stakeholder meeting in Kenya, he underscored how the collective work of the Task Force enables developing countries to draw on the full expertise of the United Nations system to ensure the green transition is also a development transition.

Driving inclusive digital transformation

The Deputy Secretary-General played a key role in driving UNCTAD contributions on digital transformation and AI. At the 20th anniversary of the World Summit on the Information Society, Mr. Moreno emphasized that **“Twenty years ago, we dared to envision an information society for all. Today, we must dare to build it—an inclusive, empowering, and equitable digital future where technology becomes a bridge, not a barrier.”** At the national and regional levels, the Deputy also addressed beneficiaries of eTrade readiness assessments in Benin and Algeria,

and participants of the eTrade for Women Masterclass for Latin America and the Caribbean, and South-East Asia and the Pacific.

At the high-level week of the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly, Mr. Moreno highlighted the UNCTAD Digital Investment Catalyser designed to mobilize large scale public and private investment to close the digital infrastructure gap, especially in developing countries.

Enriching dialogue and partnerships

Mr. Moreno met with Commonwealth Trade Ministers in Namibia, underscoring the vital role of partnerships and dialogue, essential for addressing today's complex challenges.

In March 2025, the Council of the Global Research Centre of China held its inaugural meeting with Mr. Moreno as a distinguished council member, providing a key space for global research, dialogue and peer learning on development strategies across the global South.

Throughout 2025, the Deputy strengthened donor and partner engagement by chairing high-level advisory and partnership forums, fostering collaboration with governments, development partners, and international organizations, and advancing resource mobilization and strategic partnerships in support of UNCTAD's technical cooperation and development agenda.

Advancing development Beyond GDP

Championing more comprehensive measures of development that reflect vulnerability, sustainability, and structural transformation, Mr. Moreno supported several high level events and strengthened coordination across United Nations entities on Beyond GDP. His leadership helped position UNCTAD as a key partner in global discussions on redefining progress beyond traditional economic metrics.





Intergovernmental Outreach and Support Services

Enabling consensus, inclusivity and effective multilateral processes

In 2025, the Intergovernmental Support and Outreach Services played a central role in coordinating UNCTAD intergovernmental processes. As member States navigated increasingly difficult negotiations on trade and development priorities, UNCTAD ensured that processes remained inclusive, efficient and results-oriented.

The institution provided extensive support to member States by facilitating negotiations and delivering conference and outreach services, operating throughout the year as a trusted platform for dialogue, consensus-building and multilateral cooperation.

The XVI session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Throughout the year, a central priority was supporting the preparatory process and negotiations leading to UNCTAD16. Through structured facilitation, timely documentation and close coordination with member States, this led to the successful adoption of the Geneva Consensus, the institution’s four-year strategic framework that sets priorities

to advance inclusive, sustainable and resilient trade and development in a rapidly changing global economy.

Enhancing participation and outreach

A key priority was to broaden participation and strengthen engagement with stakeholders. Efforts focused on facilitating civil society participation in intergovernmental processes and supporting dialogue between member States and non-State actors. These initiatives contributed to more inclusive and representative discussions, reflecting the growing importance of multi-stakeholder engagement in addressing complex development challenges.

Operating within a context of constrained resources across the United Nations system, UNCTAD demonstrated adaptability and efficiency to its service delivery and introduced more flexible and cost-effective modalities, including the streamlined conference servicing processes and greater use of hybrid and digital solutions. These measures ensured that UNCTAD continued to deliver high-quality intergovernmental services without compromising inclusivity or effectiveness.



Intergovernmental outputs in numbers

The institution ensured the effectiveness and integrity of its intergovernmental processes and supported a wide range of formal meetings, negotiations and issued materials critical to support informed decision-making by its member States, including:

	137	official parliamentary documents issued
	16	intergovernmental meetings supported
	38	expert group meetings convened
	100+	publications produced
	7,651	accredited experts and participants engaged





Building on its more than 60 years of work, UNCTAD will continue to serve as a key forum for dialogue, consensus-building, research and analysis and technical cooperation.



Geneva Consensus





16th UN Conference on Trade and Development

20–23 October 2025

Shaping the future >

The generous support and valued partnership of the **Government of Switzerland** in hosting UNCTAD16 were instrumental in ensuring the successful delivery of the conference



THE MOMENT >

Four days that reset the compass

The sixteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development convened in Geneva at a time of profound shifts in the global economy — rising debt burdens, geopolitical tensions, uneven investment flows and rapid technological transformation that are reshaping trade, finance and development.

As UNCTAD's quadrennial conference and highest decision-making body, UNCTAD16 gave member States the opportunity to assess emerging realities and renew international cooperation. One message emerged clearly: globalization has generated significant gains, yet structural barriers still keep many developing countries from fully benefiting from trade, investment and technological change.

Policymakers engaged alongside development banks, academia, civil society and business — partnerships matching the complexity of the challenge.

171

member State delegations, a historic record for a United Nations conference on trade

80

ministers and vice-ministers of trade and economy

40+

high-level events, round tables and expert discussions



THE CONFERENCE, IN NUMBERS >

Geneva, measured.

24

expert panels

30

consultation meetings

7

ministerial round tables

6

ministerial meetings

5

specialized forums

4

high-level events

15

parallel events

8

exhibition zones

4

ministerial declarations



THE CENTREPIECE >

195

**member States.
A consensus reached.**

The Geneva Consensus

for a Just and Sustainable Economic Order

The central outcomes of UNCTAD16 were the adoption of the Geneva Consensus which sets UNCTAD's direction for the next four years, and of the Political Declaration which calls for a strengthening of the multilateral system and commits to building a global economy **that leaves no one behind**.



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A renewal of the organization's mandate and a reaffirmation of the international community's commitment to multilateral cooperation.

REBECA GRYNSPAN
SECRETARY-GENERAL

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

IT SETS IN MOTION >

- 1 Strengthening productive capacities
- 2 Mobilizing sustainable investment
- 3 Addressing debt vulnerabilities
- 4 Harnessing digital transformation
- 5 Services trade as the new frontier
- 6 Development at the centre of global governance



Shaping the



ure >

Where the work begins.

1 Trade

Countries reaffirmed the centrality of a rules-based, open, transparent and equitable multilateral trading system — and recognized quality trade in services as the new frontier for development, alongside more resilient supply chains, logistics and regional integration.

2 Investment

Confronting the decline and uneven distribution of global investment flows: stronger facilitation frameworks, policies that lower the cost of capital and ecosystems — from blended finance to risk-sharing — that multiply investment into renewable energy, digital infrastructure and sustainable industry.

3 Digital economy

Technological advances are creating opportunities and divides. Member States called on UNCTAD to support developing countries in building the skills, infrastructure and frameworks necessary to harness the digital economy and artificial intelligence.

4 Debt and finance

Facing a \$4 trillion annual Sustainable Development Goal financing gap and record debt servicing, member States agreed to establish a Borrowers' Platform based in UNCTAD — a new space for developing countries to build collective capacity and strengthen their voice in global debt discussions.

5 Leave no one behind

A dedicated graduation support programme for the least developed countries, tailored support for small island developing States facing climate disasters and soaring transport costs, and continued work on trade facilitation and transit corridors for landlocked developing countries.



OUTCOMES >

Looking ahead to the next four years

INITIATIVE	PARTNER	STATUS
BORROWERS' PLATFORM Sovereign debt · FfD4 follow-up	UNCTAD member States	NEW
SEVILLA FORUM ON DEBT Dialogue: borrowers · lenders · institutions	International community	LAUNCHED
DIGITAL ECONOMY FUNDING CHF 4 million · e-commerce for developing economies	Switzerland	CONFIRMED
DIGITAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT Data & measurement · women in digital · SMEs	Digital Cooperation Organization	SIGNED
9TH WORLD INVESTMENT FORUM Scaling sustainable investment globally	Qatar	2026
2ND UN GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN FORUM Resilient trade logistics · November 2026	Saudi Arabia Saudi Ports Authority	2026
LDC GRADUATION SUPPORT Dedicated programme · tailored SIDS & LLDC support	Member States	COMMITTED
COMMODITY DEPENDENCE DASHBOARD State of Commodity Dependence		NEW

LOOKING AHEAD >

The road map is set

UNCTAD16 reaffirmed the institution's central role as a platform for dialogue, analysis and cooperation on global economic issues. The Consensus is a renewal of the UNCTAD mandate.

UNCTAD will work with member States and partners to translate the commitments made in Geneva into practical action: expanding economic opportunity, strengthening resilience and supporting inclusive growth worldwide.

“



The "vital work" of UNCTAD is helping developing countries harness trade and development to drive their economies.

ANTÓNIO GUTERRES
SECRETARY-GENERAL
OF THE UNITED NATIONS





Management highlights





UNCTAD highly committed to the UN reform with **new record participation in 48 UNSDCF**s

The role of UNCTAD within the United Nations

New record high participation in Cooperation Frameworks, for improved coherence, impact and recognition at the country level.

In 2025, UNCTAD assistance delivered with partner agencies from the UN Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity continued to increase to reach a new record high with participation in **48 UN Sustainable Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs)**. This figure represents a significant share of UNCTAD assistance delivered through inter-agency operations at the country level. Through this assistance, UNCTAD addresses member States' requests to "further enhance UNCTAD collaboration with the UN Resident Coordinator system" and to continue its efforts in strengthening inter-agency and interdivisional cooperation to best respond to the current and future global challenges, and in achieving the 2030 Agenda.

Management commitments



100%
of 2025 audit
recommendations
implemented

To ensure robust and independent oversight of its activities, UNCTAD strictly adheres to all audit recommendations due in 2025 and has implemented 100% of them. Oversight is provided by several entities, including the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), the internal oversight body of the United Nations, and the United Nations Board of Auditors, through which Member States conduct external audits on a rotating basis. Over the past five years, OIOS has conducted five audits at UNCTAD, covering the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA), the implementation of the delegated authority framework, the Evaluation of the Regular Programme for Technical

Cooperation, the thematic evaluation of United Nations Secretariat support to the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Division on Investment and Enterprise. All recommendations due for 2025 have been fully implemented.

Financial disclosure programme

UNCTAD continued to adhere to the United Nations Financial Disclosure Programme, which is designed to identify, resolve and mitigate conflict-of-interest risks arising from staff members' personal financial assets, liabilities, investments and outside activities. All staff members at the director level and above, and those with specific financial and procurement responsibilities are required to complete a confidential online annual disclosure of their assets, liabilities, outside activities and affiliations for themselves, their spouses and dependent children.

Zero tolerance of sexual harassment and abuse

UNCTAD has made multiple commitments to keep staff and conference participants safe. It adheres to the initiatives of United Nations Secretary General António Guterres to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse, and the United Nations Model Code of Conduct to prevent harassment. As an institution, UNCTAD requires all its partners to affirm their zero tolerance for sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse, and firmly commits to preventing incidents. It also has a due diligence process that requires that prospective partners do not have any convictions, charges, or investigations relating to sexual abuse and/or harassment.



Working towards gender parity

UNCTAD continued to foster gender mainstreaming and equitable geographical representation among its staff. The proportion of female staff increased by 10 percentage points (from 33% to 43.2%) between December 2015 and December 2025. Progress on this front takes various forms and remains a priority for management. In 2025 the organization made significant progress in women's representation at the D-2 level, reaching 75% by the end of the year against the target of 50%.

Geographic diversity

Since Secretary-General Grynszpan assumed office in September 2021, UNCTAD made consistent, ongoing efforts towards broader geographic representation of its staff. The share of staff from less-represented regional groups has been steadily increasing. In 2025, the staff representation of three regions grew — Asia Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Eastern Europe, while that of Western Europe and others, as well as Africa, fell slightly.

Environmental responsibility

UNCTAD remains dedicated to helping combat climate change by integrating environmental sustainability into its facilities and operations. Since 2007, the United Nations Environment Programme annually collects and analyses environmental impact information for each United Nations entity. This data is published and available in the 2025 "Greening the blue" report. UNCTAD is a non-resident agency co-located at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. All operations are managed by the United Nations Office at Geneva, and this includes offsetting emissions, managing waste and water,

energy efficiency, sustainable cafeterias, park management and more. At UNCTAD, efforts are underway to become more sustainable. The organization eliminated all 400 printers and replaced them with network printers. Most desktop computers were replaced with laptops. It also created an enabling environment in which most files and workflows have been digitized. As a result, the organization significantly reduced printing-related emissions by consuming less supplies, paper and energy. It continues to learn from the COVID-19 pandemic to host and engage in virtual and hybrid events when appropriate. This reduces carbon emissions, thanks to less travel and the need for paper documents. Annual carbon offsets are now purchased through a centralized United Nations Secretariat initiative to compensate for UNCTAD's greenhouse gas emissions. In 2024, 100% of UNCTAD's calculated emissions were offset. Environmental reporting and offsetting follow the United Nations reporting cycle and are typically completed with a one-year time lag. UNCTAD services, including research and policy advice to clients throughout the world, are also available online as appropriate.

As part of the internal clearance process for new technical cooperation programmes, the organization has put into place a checklist on environmental aspects, to be completed by project managers.



+10%
increase of the
proportion of
female staff in
10 years



100%
of UNCTAD
emissions
offset through
UN climate
neutrality
initiatives



Communications and External Relations

A year of expansion, innovation and greater reach

In 2025, communication at UNCTAD entered a phase of accelerated growth, marked by a clear strategic focus: expanding global reach and strengthening the organization's position as a leading voice on trade and development driven by timely analysis and data. Across all platforms and products, communication efforts were guided by a commitment to accessibility, timeliness and relevance, ensuring that UNCTAD's analysis, data and policy messages reached wider and more diverse audiences.

This year was characterized not only by increased output, but by a qualitative transformation in how communication content is produced, distributed and consumed. A more integrated, data-driven and multilingual approach has enabled UNCTAD to scale its impact significantly, while maintaining coherence across channels. The results reflect a communication system that is both growing and able to deliver consistent, high-quality content at scale while adapting to rapidly evolving global information dynamics.

Social media Scaling reach and deepening engagement

UNCTAD's social media presence continued its strong upward trajectory in 2025, consolidating its role as a primary channel for global outreach. The organization welcomed 138,200 new followers across platforms, representing a 21% increase and bringing total reach to unprecedented levels.

Content published across X, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram reached **7.3 million people** directly, while partnerships with major platforms such as UN News and government channels extended that reach to **104 million people**. These partnerships have become a critical multiplier, significantly amplifying the visibility of key messages and flagship outputs.

Engagement metrics also showed robust growth. Interactions including comments, shares and likes increased by 18%, while the average engagement rate per post rose by 7%. These figures indicate not only a larger audience, but a more active and responsive one. With an average of three posts per day and nearly 7,000 posts published across platforms over the year, UNCTAD maintained a consistent and diversified content strategy tailored to different audiences and formats.

LinkedIn remained the organization's flagship platform, gaining 18,000 new followers (+10%) and reinforcing its position as the primary channel for professional and policy-oriented engagement. This reflects a deliberate shift toward targeting decision-makers, practitioners and experts within the global trade and development community.

Multilingual video production significant growth and multilingual reach.

Video has become a cornerstone of UNCTAD's communication strategy, and 2025 marked a significant leap in both production and reach. A total of **653 multilingual videos were produced during the year, representing an 81% increase compared to 2024**. We produced video explainers on trade and development key topics in **all 6 official languages but also in Swahili, Urdu, Hindi and Portuguese**. These videos generated nearly one million views, demonstrating strong demand for accessible, visual content.

Live engagement was also scaled up considerably. UNCTAD conducted 39 livestream sessions, enabling real-time participation from global audiences and enhancing the immediacy and relevance of its communication. This expanded use of video, both pre-recorded and live, has allowed the organization to communicate complex issues more effectively, while reaching audiences that increasingly rely on audiovisual formats.

Social media

138,200
new followers
↑ **+21%**

7.3 million
direct reach

Interactions increased by
↑ **18%**

18,000
new followers
↑ **+10%**

Video production



↑ **81%**
increase in
videos

Nearly
one million
views generated

39 livestream
sessions
conducted





68,546
subscribers
by year-end

Launch of “UNCTAD Insights” A new flagship weekly UNCTAD newsletter reaching 68,000 subscribers every week

A major highlight of 2025 was the consolidation of a single database for UNCTAD contacts and the subsequent launch of the weekly newsletter “UNCTAD Insights” in June 2025. This new publication represents a strategic shift toward more regular, curated communication with key stakeholders.

By the end of 2025 the newsletter was regularly sent to **68,546 subscribers**, including 9,246 direct subscribers and 59,300 followers via LinkedIn. A total of 28 editions were published on LinkedIn, complemented by 70 targeted campaigns sent directly to subscribers. These campaigns highlighted UNCTAD’s latest analysis, publications and events, providing a consistent and reliable flow of information.

“UNCTAD Insights” has quickly established itself as a central pillar of the organization’s communication ecosystem. By offering a concise, accessible and regular overview of UNCTAD’s work and publication, it strengthens engagement with core audiences while supporting the dissemination of key messages across platforms.



8.17
million
views

Robust website performance 8.17 million views in 2025

UNCTAD’s website continued to perform strongly in 2025, registering 8.17 million views, a 15% increase compared to the previous year. This growth reflects both increased demand for UNCTAD’s content and improvements in digital strategy and user experience.

Notably, traffic to news content grew by 3%, reaching 1.09 million views, despite a reduction in the number of stories published

(167 compared to 208 in 2024). This indicates improved efficiency and impact per story, with more targeted and higher-quality content generating sustained interest.

Meeting-related pages also saw an increase of 3%, reaching 376,000 views (excluding UNCTAD16). Publication pages experienced stronger growth, with a 13% increase to 1.56 million views, underlining the continued relevance of UNCTAD’s analytical outputs.

Flagship publications outreach Innovation, consistent multilingual context and expanding reach and downloads

Performance across flagship publications highlights a key trend in 2025: while page views remained broadly stable, downloads increased significantly, indicating deeper engagement with content.

Across all flagship reports, publication page views reached 617,337 (+0.8%), while downloads rose sharply to 1,068,194 (+18.4%). This suggests that users are increasingly accessing full reports and detailed materials, rather than only browsing summaries.

Several publications recorded particularly strong growth in downloads. The Technology and Innovation Report saw a 73.4% increase, while the Digital Economy Report grew by 53.1%. The World Investment Report and the Trade and Development Report also recorded solid gains in downloads, reflecting sustained global interest in UNCTAD’s core analytical work.

The Economic Development in Africa Report showed strong growth in both page views (+48.0%) and downloads (+25.8%), highlighting increased attention to regional development issues. Even where page views declined, as in the case of some reports, download figures often increased, reinforcing the overall trend toward deeper user engagement.



Users
access full
reports
and detailed
materials



Innovation A new Impact Project, the monthly Global Trade Update

One of the most impactful communication developments of 2025 was the transformation of the Global Trade Update into a monthly publication. Previously issued three times per year, this flagship analysis is now produced by the Division of International Trade and Commodities of UNCTAD on a regular monthly basis, significantly increasing its relevance and timeliness.

This shift has delivered remarkable results. Page views more than doubled, increasing by 103% from 62,588 in 2024 to 126,808 in 2025. Downloads grew even more dramatically, rising by 198% from 29,545 to 87,954.

The success of the monthly Global Trade Update demonstrates the value of more frequent, data-driven analysis in a rapidly changing global trade environment. By providing timely insights on current developments, UNCTAD has strengthened its role as a trusted source of information for policymakers, analysts and the media.

Media outreach Expanding global visibility

Media engagement remained a critical component of UNCTAD's communication strategy in 2025. A total of 68 press releases and 9 press conferences were produced, supporting the dissemination of key messages and reports.

These efforts resulted in **63,200 media impacts across all outlets, with a 15% increase in coverage in major global media.** In total, 1,386 articles were published in key outlets across 24 languages, reflecting the truly global reach of UNCTAD's communication.

English-language coverage accounted for 656 articles, followed by Spanish (310), French (254) and Arabic (69). Additional coverage was recorded in Portuguese, Chinese, Swahili, German, Russian and several other languages. This multilingual presence is essential to ensuring that UNCTAD's work resonates across different regions and audiences.



Global Trade Update

Downloads increased by
↑ 198%



63,200
 media impacts

↑ 15%
 increase in
 major media

1,386
 articles in
 24 languages





Social media

104M
accounts
reached

Video production

288
videos
produced

Livestreaming

32
sessions
broadcast

Photography

1,812
images
published

UNCTAD16 A landmark communication effort

The sixteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD16) represented a major milestone for communication in 2025. The scale, intensity and innovation of the communication campaign set new benchmarks for the organization.

Social media performance during UNCTAD16 was exceptional. Through partnerships, content reached 104 million accounts, five times higher than average levels. Engagement also surged, with 44,800 interactions recorded, twice the usual level. The campaign attracted 11,300 new followers, double the typical growth.

Over a two-week period, 1,020 social media posts were published in 10 languages, demonstrating an unprecedented level of multilingual output. Video production reached new heights, with 288 videos produced in just three weeks, equivalent to the organization's usual annual output. These videos generated 156,000 views, three times higher than average.

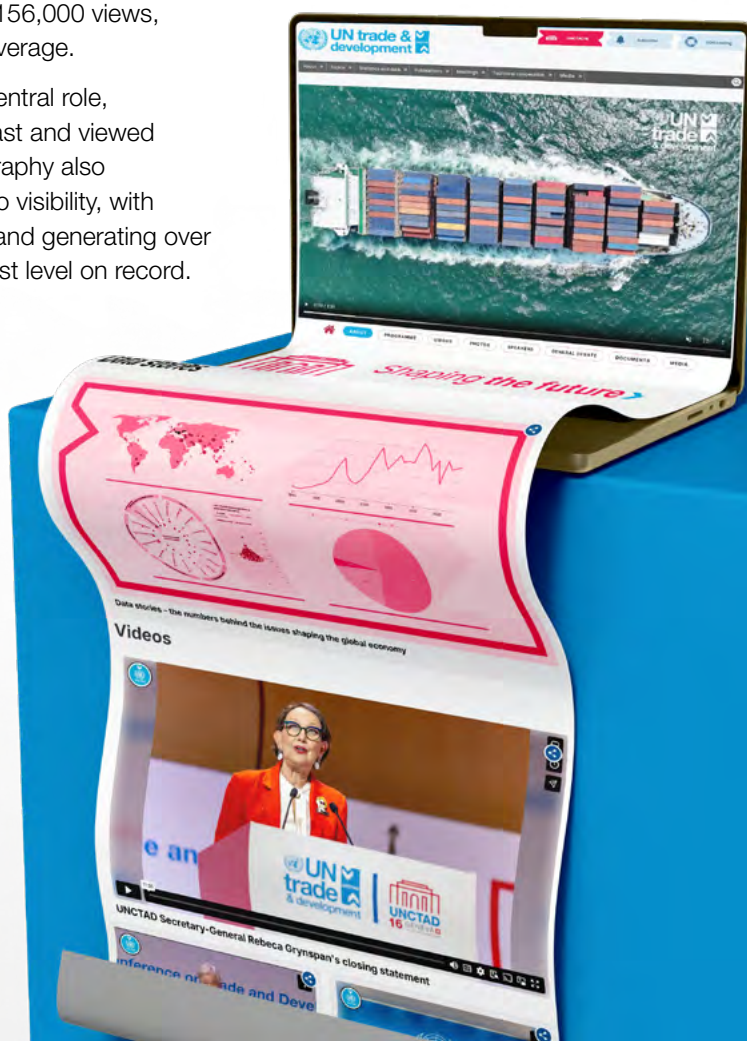
Livestreaming played a central role, with 32 sessions broadcast and viewed in 102 countries. Photography also contributed significantly to visibility, with 1,812 images published and generating over 360,000 views, the highest level on record.

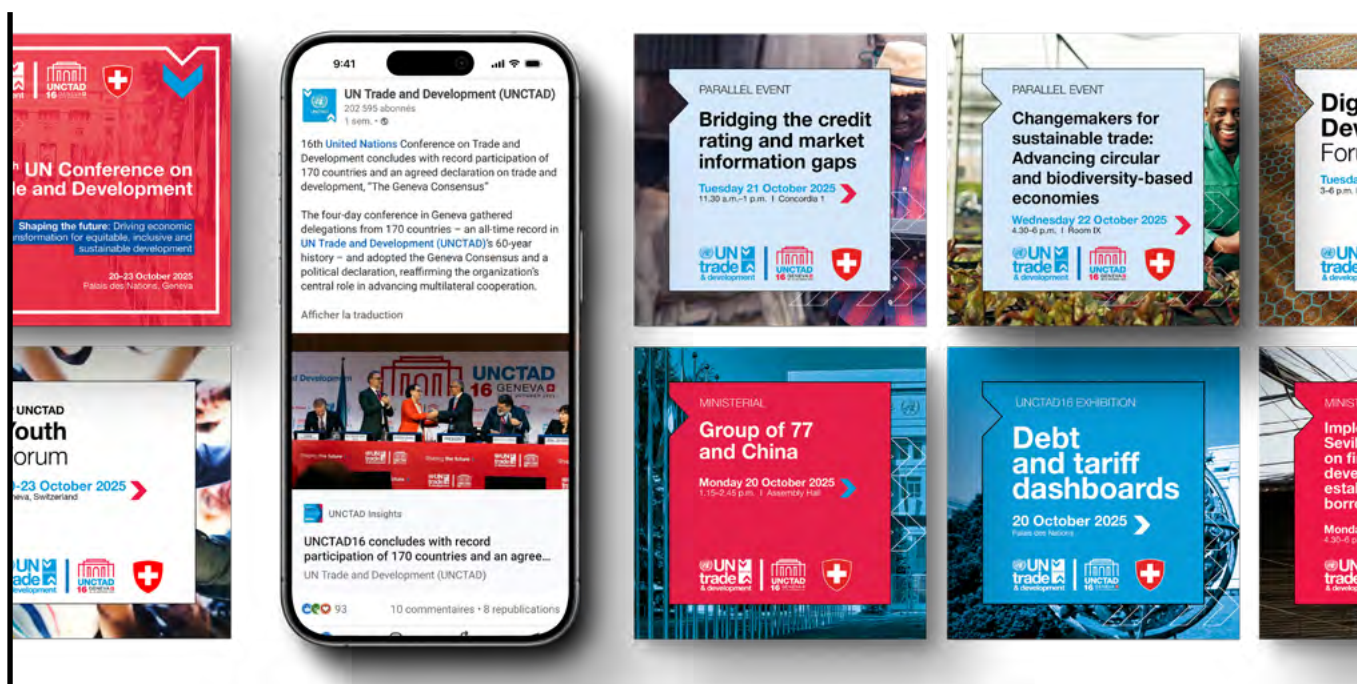
Digital innovation

UNCTAD16 also marked a major step forward in digital innovation. A new integrated web platform was developed for the conference, serving as a model for future events. This platform combined efficiency, user-friendly design and cost-effectiveness, and is expected to become the standard for UNCTAD's major conferences and forums.

The platform attracted 153,000 views, accounting for nearly half of all meeting-related traffic in 2025. It featured integrated livestreaming, allowing users to access live sessions directly from the site, as well as an intuitive layout highlighting ongoing events.

More than 200 videos were added during the conference, making it the largest video integration in UNCTAD's history. This innovation significantly enhanced the visibility of member State statements and other key content.





Communication results 2025 A stronger, more connected communication ecosystem marked by strategic innovation and brand alignment

The achievements of 2025 reflect a communication function that is both expanding and evolving. Across social media, video, publications, media outreach and digital platforms, UNCTAD has significantly increased its reach, strengthened engagement and enhanced the impact of its work.

A key achievement in 2025 was the completion of UNCTAD's rebranding across all publications and communication formats. This established a consistent and modern visual identity, strengthening clarity, recognition and coherence across platforms, driving innovation and reinforcing the organization's visibility and credibility.

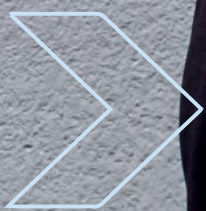
The launch of new products such as "UNCTAD Insights", the transformation of the Global Trade Update, and the success of the UNCTAD16 communication campaign

demonstrate a clear capacity for innovation and adaptation. At the same time, sustained growth in core metrics from website traffic to publication downloads underscores the continued relevance of UNCTAD's content.

Internal communication One voice

In 2025, internal communication at UNCTAD was a driving force for connection and engagement across the organization, fostering a cohesive culture among colleagues across offices, buildings, and hybrid spaces. These efforts deepened staff engagement and reinforced a shared sense of purpose, amplifying UNCTAD's impact through a more informed and connected community.

A major milestone was the launch of the "Insider", UNCTAD's internal newsletter, which provided staff with regular updates on organizational priorities, key achievements and ongoing initiatives. This was complemented by monthly internal events which showcased new projects, report launches and strategic developments, alongside staff profile videos that brought a human dimension to UNCTAD's work.



Major publications

Research and analysis are a key pillar of UNCTAD's work. In 2025, the organization released 101 publications, including official and non-official documents. Additionally, 137 parliamentary documents were published.

Through evidence-based and data-driven analysis, UNCTAD helps inform policy actions at global and national levels and improve economic, social and environmental outcomes for all.

101

PUBLICATIONS

were released, including official
and non-official documents



137

PARLIAMENTARY
DOCUMENTS

were published.

Flagship publications



World Investment Report 2025

International Investment in the Digital Economy

The **World Investment Report 2025** delivers a sobering message: global foreign direct investment fell by 11 per cent in 2024, to \$1.5 trillion. Infrastructure investment is slowing and industrial investment is under strain, with developing countries, those most in need, being left behind.

This year's report explores how international investment can help bridge that divide. It offers practical guidance to help governments attract and direct capital toward inclusive growth – advancing the Global Digital Compact and the Sustainable Development Goals.



4

videos in

10

languages

↑ 100%



Technology and Innovation Report 2025

Inclusive Artificial Intelligence for Development

The **Technology and Innovation Report 2025** featured artificial intelligence as a transformative force for development, with uneven global access risking wider inequalities. It calls for inclusive AI governance, stronger digital infrastructure, and investment in skills and data systems.

The report emphasizes enabling developing countries to harness AI for productivity, innovation, and sustainable development while ensuring equitable benefits and international cooperation.



3

news stories
sent to

26,400

journalists

↑ 95%



450,000
people reached
through UNCTAD
accounts
↑ **22%**



Review of Maritime Transport 2025

Staying the Course in Turbulent Waters

The **Review of Maritime Transport 2025** highlighted a challenging year for global shipping, with trade growth slowing in 2025 to about 0.5% amid geopolitical tensions and economic uncertainty. Disruptions are forcing longer shipping routes, causing delays and raising costs, as well as emissions. The report notes shifting trade patterns, especially in energy and critical minerals, and increasing pressure on supply chains.

It emphasizes the urgent need for more resilient, efficient, and environmentally sustainable maritime transport systems worldwide.



+67%
downloads
recorded on
the website



The Least Developed Countries Report 2025

Are Services the New Path to Structural Transformation?

The **Least Developed Countries Report 2025** emphasized that services are becoming a major part of LDC economies, now accounting for nearly half of output, but have not delivered strong development outcomes. Growth remains slow, productivity low, and most jobs are informal and low-skilled. LDCs also struggle to compete in digital services trade.

The report's key message is that services can support development only if linked to productive sectors and backed by investment, skills, and effective policies.



Covered by
711
outlets
↑ **62%**
in **17**
languages



Trade and Development Report 2025

On the Brink – Trade, Finance and the Reshaping of the Global Economy

The **Trade and Development Report 2025** highlighted a global economy “on the brink,” where the growing influence of financial systems is reshaping trade and development outcomes. It stresses that over 90% of global trade now depends on finance, making economies highly sensitive to financial volatility and policy shifts. Growth remains weak and uncertain, with developing countries most exposed.

The report urges better alignment of trade, finance, and development policies, through global reforms, is essential to build resilience and reduce inequality.





Economic Development in Africa Report 2024

Unlocking Africa's Trade Potential – Boosting Regional Markets and Reducing Risks

The report, published in February 2025, focused on Africa's untapped potential in services trade, especially digitally enabled sectors. It stresses that services can drive diversification, jobs, and resilience if supported by infrastructure, skills, and regulatory reforms.

The report emphasizes that strategic investment and policy alignment are essential to unlock inclusive, sustainable growth across the continent.



47 media attendance at the press conference

► **28** in Abidjan

► **19** online

Rapid assessments: UNCTAD's real-time analysis in a shifting global economy



Aid at the crossroads

Trends in official development assistance

The report, released on 9 April 2025, highlights rising aid pressures from crises and geopolitics. Although volumes grow, funds shift toward emergencies and domestic use. It warns that aid effectiveness is at risk without refocusing on long-term development, poverty reduction, and vulnerable countries.

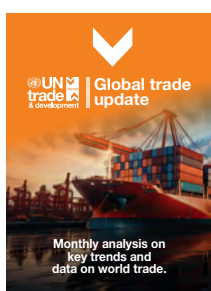


Report on UNCTAD assistance to the Palestinian people

Developments in the economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

The report provided an evidence-based assessment of recent economic developments, the impact of ongoing conflict and occupation, and policy recommendations to support recovery, resilience and sustainable development.

Other top-performing publications



The Global Trade Update series

In 2025, the series was expanded to a monthly publication offering timely insights on key trends in world trade. It delivers up-to-date analysis on the evolution of imports and exports for different regions and economic sectors and examines evolving trade policy issues and their implications for economic development in a rapidly changing global trade environment.

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International development cooperation, of which official development assistance is a key component, continues to make a significant contribution to sustainable development in developing countries.

 Geneva Consensus

Technical Cooperation Programmes

UNCTAD provides technical assistance tailored to the needs of the developing countries with a special focus on least developed countries and countries with the greatest needs.

- In 2025, UNCTAD had **203 projects** with expenditures amounting to **\$58.9 million**.
- 75 countries benefited from 106 national projects, **including 43 projects for the least developed countries**.
- **78 technical cooperation requests** received from 57 countries and territories and one regional organization in 2025.*

An Integrated Toolbox for practical solutions and support

UNCTAD's technical cooperation toolbox combines cutting-edge data, digital and policy solutions and institutional support to help developing countries navigate trade, finance and climate challenges.

Its practical tools enabled Governments to improve policymaking, attract investment, strengthen resilience to global shocks, and build productive capacities for long-term economic transformation.

Capacity-building remained a central pillar of UNCTAD's technical cooperation. UNCTAD's training programmes covered trade policy, digital transformation, gender and statistics, reaching thousands of participants globally. Complementary initiatives, including trade and gender e-learning, eTrade for Women masterclasses and capacity-building for trade negotiators, supported more inclusive participation in economic development.



Building resilient and inclusive economies

Programmes supported economic diversification and value addition through tools such as rapid diagnostics deployed in countries including Madagascar, Namibia and Zambia, identifying opportunities in critical energy transition minerals and green value chains. Business facilitation reforms – such as the streamlining of procedures in special economic zones – reduced administrative burdens and improved the investment climate, while support for small and medium sized enterprises strengthened their integration into regional and global value chains.

Technical cooperation also advanced inclusive and sustainable outcomes. Projects supported renewable energy investment, climate finance strategies and green industrial policies, while initiatives such as eTrade readiness and digital entrepreneurship programmes empowered policymakers, women and small businesses to better harness the digital transformation. Work on climate-resilient development, sustainable finance and South–South cooperation further strengthened countries' capacity to pursue just transitions.



* Provisional 2025 data includes 59 cleared requests and 19 more under review on the date of drafting.



ASYCUDA Automating customs in 100+ countries

The UNCTAD Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) is an integrated customs management system for international trade and transport operations in a modern automated environment. It is present in **103 countries and territories, including 37 LDCs**.

The ASYCUDA Programme has helped countries accelerate customs clearance via computerization, increase customs revenue – often the major contributor to national budgets – by ensuring that all goods are declared, that duty and tax calculations are correct, and that duty and exemptions, preference regimes, etc., are correctly applied and managed.



Debt Management and Financial Analysis System Programme Strengthens 63 countries' capacity to manage national debt

UNCTAD's Debt Management and Financial Analysis System Programme (DMFAS) supports Government's capacity to manage their debt effectively and sustainably, in support of poverty reduction development, transparency and good governance.

DMFAS 7, the most recent version of the debt management software launched in 2025, strengthened countries' capacity to record, monitor and analyse public debt, enhancing transparency and supporting more effective risk management and fiscal planning.

In 2025 DMFAS was operating in **63 countries, including 24 LDCs**.



EMPRETEC Supporting entrepreneurship

The UNCTAD Empretec programme supported a more inclusive and sustainable business community with new skills, in particular those required to accompany digital transformation and the green transition. It has trained over 550,000 entrepreneurs across over 40 countries in the global South, equipping entrepreneurs with business skills and access to funding and networks. Empretec has helped transform ideas into viable enterprises, many of which have become key contributors to job creation and innovation in their communities.

In 2025, Empretec 2.0 marked a major evolution of UNCTAD's flagship entrepreneurship programme, modernizing its methodology and expanding its focus to provide tailored support for entrepreneurs and high-potential startups in key development sectors.

TiSSSTAT and MyACTA **Developing digital tools to fill data gaps**

Data and digital tools further reinforced results, especially in countries that suffer from data gaps and lack the IT capacity to sustain data provision. UNCTAD has developed digital tools to empower countries collect and disseminate more detailed and accurate trade statistics. TiSSSTAT empowers national authorities to collect and compile services trade data online from businesses, ensuring globally harmonized results. Innovative tools such as the My Africa Cross-Border Trade Assistant (MyACTA) improved the measurement of informal trade, enabling easier reporting for small scale traders. (Similar tools are being developed to enable easy reporting of data on South-South cooperation and analysis of Illicit Financial Flows.)



TrainForTrade **Boosting the digital economy in small island developing States**

Many small island developing States (SIDS) continue to face barriers to participating fully in the digital economy, including gaps in e-commerce legislation, limited digital skills and weak data systems. In response, UNCTAD's TrainForTrade programme delivered blended learning courses on e-commerce, digital identity and digital trade statistics to 920 participants (60 per cent women) from 58 countries and territories. The initiative generated 18 policy recommendations validated by 25 SIDS and contributed to concrete reforms, including draft e-commerce legislation in Mauritius and digital economy strategy development in São Tomé and Príncipe. Through multilingual training materials, expert partnerships and peer learning, the project strengthened digital capacities and supported more inclusive and resilient digital transformation across SIDS.



The COMESA Investment Report is a remarkable achievement for the COMESA Secretariat; it is not merely a report, but a guideline and a road map for the years ahead.

Secretary-General of COMESA
2025





Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes



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We recognize the importance of enhancing productive capacities for the least developed countries to attain sustainable and irreversible graduation with momentum.

 **Geneva Consensus**

Strategic focus



Transforming least developed countries' economies towards and beyond graduation.



Delivering holistic strategies to build productive capacities and kickstart structural economic transformation in vulnerable economies.



Enhancing the understanding of trade's role **in reducing poverty and inequality.**



Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes advanced its work to support the effective integration of Africa, LDCs, landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and SIDS into the global economy. In the context of persistent vulnerabilities, global uncertainty and widening inequalities, the division focused on strengthening productive capacities, promoting structural transformation and enhancing resilience. Its work was anchored in a holistic approach to productive capacities, linking trade, investment, finance, technology and institutional development.

Delivering evidence-based policy solutions

High-quality, evidence-based research continued to inform policymaking across priority areas, including trade, poverty and inequality, productive capacities, economic diversification, illicit financial flows, value addition and regional value chain integration.

The division's flagship *Economic Development in Africa Report 2024 - Unlocking Africa's trade potential: Boosting regional markets and reducing risks*, examined how to unlock Africa's trade

potential by strengthening regional markets and reducing exposure to external shocks, and held its global launch in Côte d'Ivoire.

It also produced *The Least Developed Countries Report 2025 - Are services the new path to structural transformation?* which explored the role of services as a driver of structural transformation in LDCs.

Targeted research was also produced on trade and inequality, SME development, productive capacities, and transport and transit facilitation. These analytical outputs supported national policymaking and contributed to international policy debates.



© UNCTAD | Secretary-General Rebeca Grynspan launched the *Economic Development in Africa Report 2024* in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

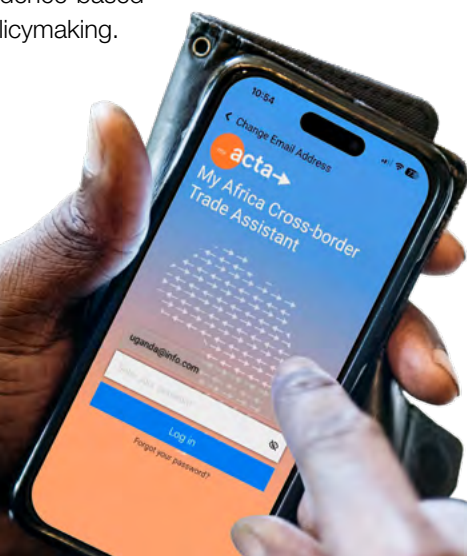
Strengthening negotiating capacity and multilateral engagement

Continued support was provided to developing countries in strengthening their participation in the multilateral trading system. In 2025, the division organized two executive training programmes for members of the LDC Group at the World Trade Organization, focusing on key negotiating areas such as rules of origin and trade.

These training courses enhanced the technical capacity of participants and supported preparations for the 14th World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference. By strengthening negotiating skills and policy understanding, UNCTAD contributed to more effective engagement of LDCs in international trade discussions.

Promoting regional integration and SME participation

In 2025, UNCTAD supported SME integration into regional value chains in Benin, Burundi, Cabo Verde, the Central African Republic, Togo and Uganda. It developed the My Africa Cross-Border Trade Assistant (myACTA) application to modernize data collection on informal cross-border trade and validated six national studies identifying sectors with regional comparative advantages and SME constraints. Pilot testing of myACTA in Benin generated detailed transaction-level data, demonstrating its potential to improve the measurement of informal trade and support evidence-based policymaking.



Supporting LDC graduation and resilience

Continued support was provided to countries preparing for graduation from LDC status, with a focus on ensuring sustainable development outcomes. In 2025, preparation of Vulnerability Profiles was initiated for Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. Inception missions carried out in Tanzania and Uganda, engaged national stakeholders and strengthened awareness of graduation implications.

The division also validated the Vulnerability Profile of Djibouti alongside a study on the “Analysis of the Impact of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) on the Industrial Development of Djibouti” in May 2025, bringing together 65 participants from government, private sector and development partners.

In September 2025, UNCTAD and UNIDO, in collaboration with the Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Cooperation of Senegal trained 20 participants in the context of support on graduation with momentum. The Senegalese Government requested UNCTAD to provide advisory services on the diagnostic of Senegal's industrial policy, with an aim to support policy design and formulation, and the country's smooth transition strategy.

© UNCTAD | UNCTAD16 panel calls for new mechanisms to boost productive capacities and financial resilience in developing countries.

Strengthening productive capacities and structural transformation

Work on strengthening productive capacities remained central to efforts to support structural transformation. The third generation of the Productive Capacities Index was updated with data for 195 economies covering the period 2000–2024. The publication of Statistical Guidelines on the index was also presented to the 56th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission.

In collaboration with national ministries, UNCTAD validated the National Productive Capacities Gap Assessments and Holistic Productive Capacities Development Programmes for Zimbabwe and Mozambique, strengthening national strategies to enhance productive capacities and structural transformation.

Contributions to Togo's Production Transformation Policy Review, developed in collaboration with international partners, helped strengthen policy coherence and reform efforts.

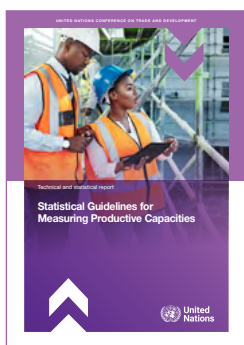
Addressing inequality and promoting inclusive development

Work on the intersection of trade, inequality and poverty was further strengthened. UNCTAD organised a policy dialogue in collaboration with the Geneva Office of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and brought together government officials, international organizations and experts to identify actionable measures to address inequality and promote inclusive growth in Africa and LDCs.

Advancing trade facilitation and rules of origin

In November 2025, UNCTAD delivered the ADB–UNCTAD Rules of Origin Forum in Manila, “Advancing Convergence and Simplification of Rules of Origin in Asia and the Pacific.” The Forum explored options to align and simplify Product Specific Rules of Origin across the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA), the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, and the (ASEAN) +1 agreements.

© UNCTAD | Secretary-General Rebeca Grynspan addressed the UNCTAD16 Ministerial Meeting of the Group of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in Geneva



► Advancing a climate-resilient blue economy in Southern Africa

The division began implementing the Mainstreaming climate-resilient blue economy in the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem Region (the BCLME IV Project) in Angola, Namibia and South Africa. The project is delivered with financing from the Global Environment Facility, in cooperation with United Nations Development Programme, the Benguela Current Commission Secretariat and other stakeholders.



► Supporting green and resilient transitions in the Caribbean

Implementation of the UN development account project “Stronger and Greener Productive Capacitive Capacities for Just Transitions in Caribbean SIDS” contributed to the implementation of UNCTAD’s SIDS Strategy through its work on the SIDS Satellite Productive Capacities Index.

► Translating illicit financial flows data into policy action

The division advanced the policy phase of its joint project with UNCTAD Statistics on measuring tax and commercial illicit financial flows (IFFs) in Ghana, Namibia and Zambia, with funding from the Open Society Foundation. Following a February 2025 data and policy expert group meeting, reviewing methodologies and the Triple-A policy framework, national policy workshops were held in Namibia, Zambia and Ghana to translate IFF measurement results into concrete policy options. These meetings gathered policymakers and experts to assess national IFF risks, validate targeted responses, and inform country policy reports and national strategies to curb IFFs and strengthen domestic resource mobilization.

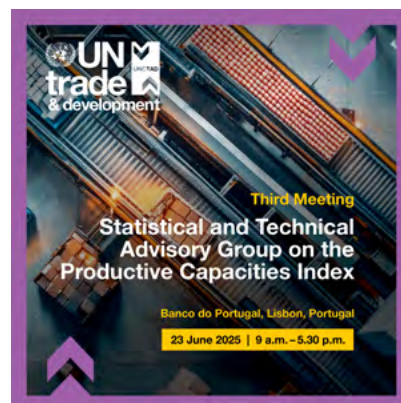


IMPACT PROJECTS



► Strengthening global collaboration on productive capacities

The third meeting of the Statistical and Technical Advisory Group (STAG) on the Productive Capacities Index (PCI) was held in June 2025 in Lisbon, with the support of Banco de Portugal. The event organized by UNCTAD brought together 34 experts from key partner institutions and academia.



► Expanding outreach and visibility across Africa

UNCTAD's **Regional Office in Africa** enhanced outreach to Addis Ababa-based stakeholders, including the African Union and member States, while expanding communication efforts across the continent to enhance visibility and engagement. UNCTAD and the Southern Africa Development Cooperation Parliamentary Forum initiated a targeted training programme for Parliamentarians aimed at strengthening the role of Parliaments in advancing regional trade integration through the African Continental Free Trade Area and Southern Africa Development Cooperation protocols, ensuring that regional trade integration promotes inclusive and sustainable economic development.

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... J'apprécie au nom du Gouvernement l'engagement de la CNUCED à mobiliser son expertise et à recourir à ses partenaires techniques et financiers pour accompagner la République Démocratique du Congo dans cet ambitieux programme de la diversification économique avec pour objectif de disposer d'un éventail des produits à forte valeur ajoutée issus des diverses filières : secteur agro-industriel , industriel, et la transformation minière.

H.E. Mr. Julien Paluku Kahongya, Ministre du Commerce Extérieur,
Ministère du Commerce Extérieur, République Démocratique du Congo
(Letter of 19 July 2025)



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The in-depth and substantive discussions highlighted the growing significance of digital solutions in today's trade environment. These discussions have proven to be increasingly relevant, with origin interconnectivity acting as a key enabler in navigating trade facilitation in various regional trade agreements. We anticipate potential future collaboration aimed at furthering our understanding of the intricate complexities surrounding the global implementation of Rules of Origin. Your valuable support, alongside the esteemed support of UNCTAD for the WCO and its initiatives is deeply appreciated and we trust that it will continue to be highly beneficial for both parties.

Gael Grooby, Acting Director, Tariff and Trade Affairs, World Customs Organization
(Letter of 19 February 2025)

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On behalf of the World Trade Organization (WTO) LDC Group, I would like to express our sincere appreciation for the longstanding and strategic support provided by UNCTAD in strengthening the voice and negotiating capacity of LDC delegates at the WTO

H.E. Ms. Kadra Ahmed Hassan, Ambassador and Permanent Representative, Republic of Djibouti
(Letter of 7 May 2025)





Division on Globalization and Development Strategies



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We affirm that international trade and comprehensive development strategies can catalyse structural transformation and sustainable development.

 **Geneva Consensus**

Strategic focus



Analyzing global economic trends and informing member-States of the state of the global macroeconomy, international trade, finance and integration challenges.



Providing knowledge and capacities on the links between **climate, finance and economic development challenges** of developing countries.



Managing rising sovereign debt risk amid global shocks and high borrowing costs.



Strengthening South-South cooperation to support coordinated policy approaches to green industrialization strategies and just transitions across developing countries.



In 2025, the Division on Globalization and Development Strategies advanced its work at a critical juncture for the global economy, marked by policy uncertainties, heightened debt vulnerabilities, constrained fiscal space, and growing climate and development financing needs. Against this backdrop, the division strengthened its role as a key provider of integrated policy analysis, technical assistance and intergovernmental support to help developing countries navigate complex and interconnected global challenges. A central pillar of the work was addressing the escalating debt crisis facing many developing economies.

Debt management through innovation

A major milestone in 2025 was the launch of DMFAS 7, the latest generation of UNCTAD's debt management system. Designed to respond to the increasing complexity of public debt portfolios, DMFAS 7 strengthens countries' capacity to record, monitor and analyse debt data, enabling more effective risk management and informed policymaking. The rollout of the system marked an important step toward improving debt transparency and supporting evidence-based decision-making in debt management offices across developing countries.

Aligning financing strategies with sustainable development priorities

At the country level, implementation of its Sustainable Development Finance Assessments continued and was expanded to four SIDS, including Cabo Verde, Comoros and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Countries' progress toward climate-related Sustainable Development Goals and targets is hindered not only by limited financial resources, but also by external vulnerability, high financing costs, growth constraints, narrow fiscal space, and limited institutional capacity. These assessments are a key tool that supports governments in aligning national financing strategies with debt sustainability considerations and development priorities.

© UNCTAD | UNCTAD16
press conference: Launch of
the Sevilla Forum on Debt



Borrowers' Platform

Shaping global solutions to systemic debt challenges

UNCTAD played a pivotal role in shaping global discussions on debt and development finance. In 2025, it served as the secretariat to the United Nations Secretary-General's Expert Group on Debt, contributing to the formulation of 11 priority actions to address systemic debt challenges. These actions, spanning multilateral reforms, enhanced international cooperation and stronger national frameworks, informed the outcomes of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development. One of the most significant was the call to establish a Borrowers' Platform, a mechanism designed to strengthen knowledge sharing among debtor countries and enhance their voice in international fora. The inclusion of this initiative in the Sevilla Commitment marked a major step forward in rebalancing global financial governance and enhancing the participation of developing countries in shaping debt solutions. Looking ahead, UNCTAD will serve as the secretariat to this member State-driven platform.

Mobilizing finance for sustainable development

The division deepened its work on mobilizing sustainable development finance, with a particular focus on climate finance. Recognizing that current levels and structures of climate finance remain insufficient to meet the needs of developing countries, it produced new research to inform international policy debates and reform efforts.

Advancing reforms in the global financial architecture

In light of the current inadequate provision and mobilization of climate finance for developing countries, the division carried

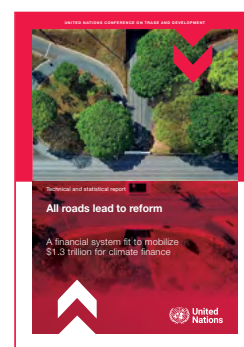
out research and analysis and published: *All roads lead to reform: A financial system fit to mobilize \$1.3 trillion for climate finance*. The report highlighted the structural limitations of the international financial architecture in delivering adequate and accessible climate finance, particularly for adaptation and loss and damage. The findings fed into broader international discussions, including the "Baku to Belém Roadmap" presented ahead of COP30, emphasizing that achieving climate goals requires not only increased funding, but also a transformation of financial systems to ensure equity, predictability and effectiveness.

Green industrialization and structural transformation

Beyond global analysis, the division strengthened its support for policy coordination, cooperation and peer learning at regional and national levels. In Asia and Latin America work advanced on green industrialization and structural transformation through a combination of research, policy dialogue and technical cooperation. Over 30 research outputs and policy papers were produced, including the launch of a policy brief on *Harnessing regional integration and green industrial policy for enhancing sustainable development in Latin America*. These efforts were complemented by workshops and events aimed at building the capacity of policymakers to design and implement strategies for resilient and low-carbon growth.

Intra-BRICS trade cooperation

The division has strengthened its work on global South cooperation notably on regionalization and implications to development strategies, particularly focusing on intra-regional merchandise trade and policy cooperation among BRICS members.



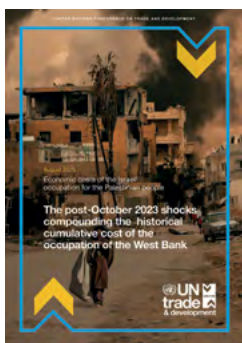
Assistance to the Palestinian People

UNCTAD continued to provide assistance to the Palestinian people in areas of its mandate including capacity-building, trade policy, trade facilitation, fiscal management, development strategies, and investment and enterprise development.

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 77/22, UNCTAD prepared the United Nations Secretary-General's report, Economic Costs of the Israeli Occupation for the Palestinian People: The Post-October 2023 Shocks Compounding the Historical Cumulative Cost of the Occupation of the West Bank, published in September 2025. Its findings informed discussions among Member States and contributed to enhanced understanding of the challenges facing economic recovery and sustainable development in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

In November 2025, UNCTAD also released its Report on UNCTAD Assistance to the Palestinian People, which examined the worsening social and economic conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The report garnered extensive media coverage, driven by the objectivity of its economic data, rising public interest, and growing relevance to trade and development. It reached 2.6 million users on social media—a 282 per cent increase from 2024—while web views rose by 28 percent over the same period.

Pursuant to its mandate, as renewed by Member States, UNCTAD will continue to monitor and report on socioeconomic conditions and the economic cost of the occupation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, covering both the scale of destruction and the prospects for recovery.



IMPACT PROJECTS

► Fostering dialogue and consensus on development finance

UNCTAD also continued to serve as a platform for intergovernmental dialogue and consensus-building. The ninth session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Financing for Development brought together policymakers and experts to advance discussions on key financing challenges and opportunities. The session identified five strategic pillars for action, including improving blended finance governance, strengthening debt management, enhancing access to financial markets and scaling up targeted technical assistance. By bridging analysis, policy dialogue and technical assistance, the division helped translate global debates into practical solutions tailored to country needs.



► Building capacity for climate and finance negotiations

Capacity-building remained a core component of the division's work in 2025. It delivered targeted training for climate negotiators, enhancing their understanding of the interlinkages between climate finance, development and economic policy. A total of 53 negotiators from 31 countries participated in these workshops, strengthening their ability to engage in international negotiations and advocate for development-oriented outcomes.



► Promoting regional integration and green industrial policy

In May 2025 the Secretary-General, launched the project Integration and industrial policy for transformational change and resilience in Latin America in Mexico City, calling for a new era of regional integration and urging leaders to move from commitments to action. The project supports countries in advancing green industrial policies and strengthening resilience by leveraging the region's natural and human assets. It promotes South-South trade and investment as drivers of diversified, sustainable growth, while helping countries identify priority sectors, design coordinated industrial and trade strategies, and develop regional value chains in low-carbon and high-potential industries.

► Conducting policy strategies research and sharing for the global South

In January 2025, the division launched a new project themed as policy strategy research and knowledge sharing for the global South. The project aims to help countries in the global South devise better policy strategies through conducting research and analysis, transferring knowledge, sharing findings and experiences, and promoting peer learning among developing nations. Beyond research and analysis, the project also organizes policy dialogue and capacity building events to facilitate peer learning and promote the voice and role of the global South in international economic governance.



IMPACT PROJECTS





Division on International Trade and Commodities

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Creating an enabling domestic trade environment, including through cooperation, enhanced transparency, good governance and the rule of law, can help economies to better integrate into international trade.

 **Geneva Consensus**

Strategic focus



Making trade work for sustainable and inclusive

development: Supporting countries to identify opportunities, navigate an uncertain trade environment, design effective trade policies, and build institutions that translate trade into sustainable development outcomes.



Reducing commodity dependence and increasing

value addition: Promoting export diversification, and participation in regional and global value chains, and strengthening developing countries' data availability.



Promoting inclusive markets:

Strengthening competition, consumer protection and trade and gender frameworks to ensure the gains from trade and development are broadly and fairly shared.



Realizing sustainable trade: Designing trade policies that consider social, economic and environmental priorities to unlock significant and inclusive economic wins, including in growing low-carbon, climate-resilient markets



In 2025, the Division on International Trade and Commodities focused on delivering practical solutions and policy-relevant insights to support developing countries in moving up value chains, diversifying their economies and making trade work more effectively for people, producers and consumers, and the planet.

Rapid response **The Global Trade Update**

A key achievement was the transformation of the Global Trade Update into a monthly flagship product. Designed to respond rapidly to evolving global trade dynamics, the publication provided concise, accessible and visually engaging analysis of emerging issues, from trade fragmentation and supply chain disruptions to environmental policies and shifting trade patterns. By combining timely analysis with clear communication, it has strengthened the visibility of UNCTAD's trade data and policy insights, amplified its voice in global debates, and generated strong media engagement, positioning the organization as a leading source of authoritative and policy-relevant trade analysis.

The Global Trade Update has become a key analytical reference in UNCTAD's research portfolio, providing timely analysis of global trade trends and serving as a platform for research and analysis aimed at a wide audience. Its findings are regularly featured on major United Nations news platforms and cited in flagship publications. In 2025, each issue recorded an average of 8,461 views, reflecting strong global readership and policy relevance.

Identifying economic diversification and value addition opportunities

The division also moved from analysis to action on economic diversification and value addition. The division issued a Guide for Policymakers to identify value-addition and export diversification opportunities in **low-carbon green export**, including critical energy transition minerals and related sectors.

Expanding data transparency and trade intelligence tools

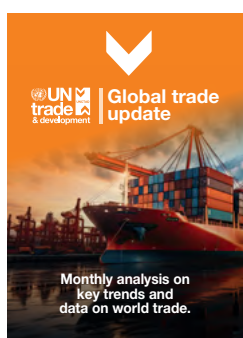
On the data side, it expanded its global non-tariff measures database to cover 152 countries, representing more than 95 per cent of global trade. The TRAINS platform continued to grow as a key transparency tool for policymakers, researchers and businesses, helping reduce information costs and improve understanding of regulatory requirements and technical barriers to trade. Technical assistance also helped countries strengthen regulatory frameworks, resolve non-tariff barriers and improve regional trade mechanisms, including under the **African Continental Free Trade Area**.

Promoting ocean sustainability through trade

UNCTAD helped launch and operationalize the United Nations Global Seaweed Initiative and contributed to international efforts to link trade policy with climate, sustainable seaweed aquaculture and ocean sustainability objectives

Safeguarding fair and competitive markets in a digital economy

The 9th United Nations Conference to Review All Aspects of the Set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices was held in July 2025 with the participation of over 500 participants – ministers, diplomats and civil society leaders – from more than 100 countries, called to safeguard fair, open, competitive and consumer-centred markets as digital transformation profoundly reshapes consumption patterns, supply chains and the global economy.



► Driving structural transformation on diversification and value addition

UNCTAD advanced its Rapid Assessment projects on value addition and economic diversification in Namibia, Zambia and Madagascar, helping countries identify concrete opportunities to move beyond commodity dependence and strengthen productive capacities. The projects supported the design of actionable policy recommendations on skills, infrastructure, investment, standards and regional value chains, while strengthening national and United Nations coordination on diversification strategies and sustainable industrial development.

The Division also started implementing a capacity-building project that aims to strengthen the economic, environmental and social sustainability of the arabica coffee value chain for trade in Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand and Vietnam through inclusive traceability. Coffee is a key agricultural commodity that supports the livelihoods of millions of people in developing countries, including women stakeholders, and where sustainable value addition can play a key development role.



► Strengthening the trade dimension of the ocean economy

UNCTAD hosted the 5th United Nations Ocean Forum, bringing together more than 500 stakeholders to build consensus on trade and ocean economy issues and to develop trade-policy recommendations. The outcome was 15 Trade policy-oriented recommendations which contributed to discussions at the 3rd United Nations Ocean Conference in Nice, helping strengthen the trade dimension of the ocean economy agenda and support international policy coordination.

► Influencing national consumer protection reform

In Paraguay, UNCTAD provided an advisory opinion on sustainable consumption in May 2025, which was incorporated into the **draft reform of the country's consumer protection law** currently under parliamentary consideration. The direct inclusion of UNCTAD's recommendations in the legislative process demonstrates the practical impact of its analytical and advisory support on national consumer protection frameworks.



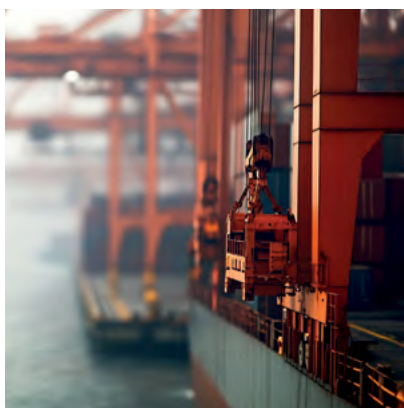
IMPACT PROJECTS



IMPACT PROJECTS

► Advancing regional trade dispute settlement mechanisms

In 2025, UNCTAD developed and further improved dispute settlement mechanisms to address non-tariff barriers. With Central European Free Trade Agreement parties, UNCTAD supported the negotiations of a dispute settlement mechanism and developed a strategy for private sector regional trade challenges. With AfCFTA member States, a cutting-edge mechanism was developed and implemented. To strengthen regional integration and transparency, the module on Regulations in UNCTAD's Trade Portal for Pacific countries has been revised and linked to TRAINS database in 2025.



► Enhancing data-driven policymaking in services trade

UNCTAD developed the Primer on Data for Trade in Services and Development Policies, a practical guide explaining how services trade is defined, measured and used for policymaking. Covering over 20 key datasets, it helps policymakers analyse digitally deliverable services, modes of supply and services in value chains. The Primer was validated by more than 30 member States and launched at the China International Fair for Trade in Services 2025.

► Advancing gender-inclusive trade capacity-building

In 2025, UNCTAD's trade and gender e-learning programme marked its 10-year milestone, supporting a broader shift towards more inclusive trade policies. Launched in 2015 with the support of the Government of Finland, the programme has trained more than 2,500 policymakers and practitioners from 170 countries, nearly two thirds of them women, equipping them with practical tools to assess the differentiated impacts of trade and design gender-responsive policies.



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We extend our sincere appreciation to you for supporting the Workshop Series on Economic Diversification: The Creative Economy, held from July 1st to 7th, 2025. Your team's engagement greatly enriched the dialogue. The perspectives brought to this series offered technical depth, strategic vision, and inspiration that will inform and shape the Maldives' path forward in developing a creative economy that is diverse, resilient, and future-ready

The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Republic of Maldives

© UNCTAD | Workers at pineapple fiber decortication plant outside Nairobi, Kenya





Division on Investment and Enterprise

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It is important to strengthen the international investment environment and promote relevant cooperation on investment, including through the modernization of international investment regimes, taking into account in particular the vulnerabilities of developing countries.

 **Geneva Consensus**

Strategic focus



Supporting international investment in **the digital economy**



Promoting stronger, more coherent investment policy frameworks for sustainable development



Advancing global investment and investment de-risking for **sustainable development**



The division is the UN focal point for issues related to investment and enterprise development which are crucial for sustainable and inclusive growth, economic diversification and job creation. In 2025, it continued to deliver high-quality research and policy analysis on foreign direct investment, responding to a rapidly evolving global landscape shaped by value chain reconfiguration, technological change and rising geopolitical and environmental challenges.

International investment in the digital economy

UNCTAD's flagship the World Investment Report 2025 highlighted the continued expansion of the digital economy as the fastest-growing sector globally, while underscoring the high concentration of investment flows. It found that 80 per cent of greenfield digital-sector projects in the Global South were concentrated in just 10 countries.

The report emphasized that while foreign direct investment can help narrow the digital divide, its benefits are not automatic. Infrastructure readiness, digital capabilities, regulatory frameworks and market conditions all influence both the attraction of investment and its development impact.

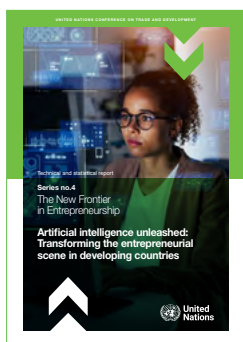
It called for a coordinated, multi-stakeholder agenda, including strengthened international cooperation, targeted policy toolkits, and increased investment in digital infrastructure and skills, alongside multilateral rules that better reflect the needs of developing countries.

side event on strengthening de-risking mechanisms for sustainable investment brought together export credit agencies, development finance institutions and the wider development community to advance practical solutions. This engagement contributed to the first formal recognition of export credit agencies' role in the Sevilla Commitment and catalyzed a new Berne Union initiative on blended finance in line with UNCTAD's recommendations on political risk insurance. The initiative aims to develop practical risksharing structures to mobilize private capital for sustainable investment and marks a new phase of cooperation between UNCTAD and the export credit agency community.

Harnessing AI for entrepreneurship

Targeted support was provided to entrepreneurs in harnessing the potential of AI. While entrepreneurs increasingly recognize AI as a transformative force, many face challenges in understanding how to integrate it into their day-to-day businesses and identify areas where it can deliver real value. To address this, UNCTAD launched a dedicated course on AI for the Empretec community and published a comprehensive report outlining an entrepreneurship policy framework for AI adoption.

UNCTAD has also embedded AI-tools into its digital single window solutions and information portals that support developing countries in facilitating start-ups and expansion.



De-risking investment for sustainable development

In 2025, UNCTAD's pioneering analytical work on derisking investment for sustainable development, particularly on the role of political risk insurance, contributed to concrete policy impact at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in Seville. A dedicated

Promoting high quality sustainability reporting

In 2025, the Development Account Project Strengthening Sustainability Reporting to Foster Sustainable Finance and Investment in Selected Developing Countries in Asia and Latin America supported Cambodia, Ecuador, Peru, and the Philippines in assessing their reporting infrastructure and designing action plans aligned with international standards. 2025 also saw the eighth edition of the ISAR Honours, a global programme that celebrates and promotes outstanding policy, institutional, and capacity-building initiatives to advance high-quality, transparent, consistent, and comparable sustainability and Sustainable Development Goal reporting worldwide.



IMPACT PROJECTS

► Supporting the G20 on trade, investment and finance

UNCTAD played a leading role in supporting South Africa's 2025 G20 Presidency in the Trade and Investment Working Group. It produced the Presidency's sole outcome report, Harnessing Investment Policies for Clean Energy, Digital Transformation, and Public Health. The report offers G20 members and their partners a pragmatic and flexible policy tool to help align investment flows with clean energy development, digital transformation, and public health objectives. In recognition of this contribution, the G20 Trade and Investment Ministerial Statement of 10 October 2025 (Gqeberha, South Africa) cited the report and Chair's Summary further noted: *"G20 Members acknowledge the invaluable contribution of the United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in the development of the report."*



IMPACT PROJECTS



► Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa Regional Investment Policy Review

UNCTAD produced a regional Investment Policy Review of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa in response to its Commission's request, covering the six member States: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and the Republic of Congo. The review provides a comprehensive assessment of the region's investment landscape, highlighting strong natural resource endowments and post-pandemic recovery while underscoring persistent structural vulnerabilities. To address these challenges, the review set out targeted, actionable policy recommendations to support ongoing Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa reforms. These focused on improving the business environment, advancing industrialization and diversification through the regional master plan, and revising the Community Investment Charter to attract more sustainable and diversified investment.

► Promoting investment in renewable energy

Together with partners, UNCTAD is leading a project to deliver technical assistance to promote and facilitate finance and investment in renewable energy, supporting Ethiopia, Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles and the United Republic of Tanzania in their energy transition journey. By equipping investment promotion agencies and infrastructure project leads with the tools to design, identify and promote bankable projects to overcome one of the key barriers to Africa's energy transition. The initiative reflects UNCTAD's commitment to strengthening Africa's ability to secure financing for renewable energy, supporting countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and amplifying Africa's voice in the global energy transition.





► Future investment global dialogue

In September 2025, UNCTAD, in partnership with the China International Fair for Investment and Trade, organized the first Future Investment Conference which took place in Xiamen, China. The Conference facilitated global dialogue and collaboration on international investment and technological innovation. With a focus on navigating the shifts in global investment dynamics and the restructuring of value chains, the Conference addressed the impact of geopolitics, rapid technological change, the evolving landscape of industrial policies, and the rising demand for sustainable and responsible investments.

► Streamlining business facilitation

UNCTAD supported the Jamaica Special Economic Zones Authority in streamlining complex administrative procedures involving four government ministries into a single digital platform. More than 20 forms and processes for its operators, developers and other users were consolidated into one online interface with a unified payment system for administrative fees. The platform enables data sharing across agencies and significantly reduces processing time for investors, improving efficiency and the overall investment environment in Jamaica.



► Sustainable Stock Exchange for children's rights

In 2025, UNCTAD and the United Nations Children's Fund joined forces with the world's stock exchanges to strengthen the integration of children's rights into global capital markets. The initiative seeks to inspire stock exchanges, investors, and listed companies to place children at the heart of their sustainability strategies.

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The comprehensive analysis and policy guidance provided by UNCTAD... through its annual World Investment Report, Global Investment Trends Monitor, and Investment Policy Monitor... provide critical insights that enable our countries to navigate complex global investment trends and align our national strategies towards achieving the SDGs.

Asia Pacific Group

5 May 2025

IMPACT PROJECTS





Division on Technology and Logistics

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Resilient transportation systems, including regional transportation systems, diversified trade routes and transport corridors, are essential for deepening regional and interregional integration processes and critical to accelerating the integration of developing countries into the global economy.

 **Geneva Consensus**

Strategic focus



Driving digital transformation and innovation for development **by promoting inclusive AI governance, digital infrastructure, data systems and innovation ecosystems** in developing countries.



Strengthening resilience, sustainability and inclusivity of global transport and supply chains through policy dialogue, research and analysis of maritime transport, transport and transit corridors, shipping disruptions, trade facilitation, related policy and legal advice and capacity-building activities, tools, and initiatives including TrainForTrade.



Modernizing trade facilitation and customs systems through deploying digital technologies to enhance **efficiency, transparency, security and cross-border e-commerce governance**



Building capacity for inclusive participation in the digital economy by supporting **policymakers and entrepreneurs in digital trade readiness, e-commerce development and evidence-based policymaking**.



In 2025, the Division on Technology and Logistics advanced its work at the intersection of digital transformation, trade facilitation and sustainable transport systems. As global trade and development landscapes continued to evolve rapidly, shaped by technological change, supply chain disruptions and environmental pressures, the division focused on equipping developing countries with the tools, data and capacities needed to build resilient, inclusive and future-ready economies aligned with member States' development priorities.

Harnessing AI and digital technologies for development

A major focus in 2025 was advancing the role of artificial intelligence and digital technologies in supporting inclusive and sustainable development. Through its technology and innovation workstream, UNCTAD contributed to global policy discussions on AI governance, data management and digital infrastructure, with a strong emphasis on ensuring that developing countries can fully participate in and benefit from emerging technological transformations.

The launch and global dissemination of the ***Technology and Innovation Report 2025: Inclusive AI for Development*** marked a key milestone. Presented through more than 30 events worldwide, the report provided comprehensive analysis of the socioeconomic implications of AI and offered policy guidance to help countries navigate opportunities and risks across the AI lifecycle.

UNCTAD also supported multilateral processes on digital governance, including facilitating the establishment of a Working Group on Data Governance under the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. The group conducted extensive multistakeholder consultations and prepared synthesis notes for a forthcoming United Nations General Assembly report on fundamental data principles, interoperability of data systems at different levels, sharing of data benefits and data flows.

Modernizing customs and trade facilitation systems

Trade facilitation remained a cornerstone of the division's work in 2025, with the *ASYCUDA* programme continuing to deliver transformative digital solutions to customs administrations worldwide. By leveraging advanced technologies, ASYCUDA supported countries in modernizing trade processes, improving compliance and enhancing the efficiency and security of cross-border transactions.

In 2025, ASYCUDA provided technical assistance to more than 100 economies, generating US\$29.7 million through 38 new and extension projects. Key innovations included the rollout of ASYCUDA's next-generation systems, which collectively strengthened digital trade ecosystems and facilitated more integrated and transparent trade procedures.

In addition, over 3,000 government officials and private sector operators were trained, strengthening institutional capabilities and enabling countries to better implement digital trade solutions. Measurable impacts were recorded across multiple countries, including significant reductions in processing times, increases in customs revenue and improved trade connectivity.





© UNCTAD | Rebeca Grynspan, Secretary-General of UNCTAD, at the Abu Dhabi Global AI Summit.

Strengthening transport, logistics and supply chain resilience

UNCTAD continued to play a leading role in supporting more resilient, sustainable and inclusive transport and logistics systems. The division provided evidence-based analysis, policy advice and capacity-building to help countries navigate ongoing disruptions and structural shifts in global supply chains.

The *Review of Maritime Transport 2025* provided critical insights into global shipping trends, regulatory developments and supply chain challenges, serving as a key reference for policymakers and industry stakeholders. Complementing this analytical work, the division advanced initiatives to support the digital and environmental transformation of ports and logistics systems.

The Sustainable Smart Ports for Africa initiative delivered concrete results in 2025, including validated assessments, national roadmaps and targeted capacity-building in key port hubs such as Tema, Tanger Med and Port Louis. These efforts supported countries in enhancing port efficiency, reducing environmental impacts and integrating digital technologies into port operations.

The TrainForTrade programme also expanded its reach, engaging 4,913 participants from 191 countries. A record 3,887 participants completed trade statistics courses, highlighting growing demand for data-driven policymaking in trade and logistics. Also the TrainForTrade's Port Management Programme trained 983 port professionals from 31 countries. Additional initiatives supported SIDS and other vulnerable economies in strengthening digital economy capacities and trade facilitation mechanisms.

Building capacity for effective participation in global governance

The P166 programme continued to strengthen the capacity of developing country delegates to engage effectively in international economic policymaking. In the context of UN-wide liquidity constraints, the programme adapted its delivery model by shifting to cost efficient hybrid delivery, ensuring continuity of training for Geneva-based delegates. In 2025, 166 delegates completed training during seven courses designed to enhance their understanding of complex trade and development issues and strengthen their ability to participate in negotiations and policy discussions.

Advancing digital economy readiness and inclusion

UNCTAD strengthened its work on digital economy development, supporting countries

in building digital trade readiness, developing e-commerce strategies improving measurement and fostering inclusive digital ecosystems.

In 2025, three new eTrade Readiness Assessments were completed in Algeria, Zimbabwe and Indonesia, while Ghana, Mauritania, Samoa, Timor Leste, and Trinidad and Tobago received support in developing national e-commerce strategies. These initiatives helped countries identify policy priorities, strengthen governance frameworks and enhance coordination across stakeholders. To further advance implementation, UNCTAD expanded its support to partner countries adopting the eTrade Reform Tracker, with Fiji, Peru, Samoa and Solomon Islands advancing substantially in its deployment.

Capacity-building activities also expanded significantly. Training workshops delivered jointly with the IMF, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), WTO, and other UN partners reached 131 statistics and central bank officials from 56 countries, strengthening the foundations for evidence-based digital economy policymaking.

The eTrade for Women masterclasses continued to empower entrepreneurs, with two masterclass sessions bringing together 46 women entrepreneurs from 16 countries and fostering business innovation, including through AI integration and digital services expansion.

The eTrade for all platform was upgraded, attracting over 100,000+ users a two-fold increase from 2024, and reinforcing its role as a central hub for digital development collaboration.

The division also contributed to the development and launch of the UN Digital Cooperation Portal under the Global Digital Compact, promoting coherence and coordination across 14 UN entities.



© UNCTAD at the UN80 Expo

► Delivering measurable impact in trade facilitation

ASYCUDA-supported countries recorded significant gains, including:



Afghanistan

93% reduction in the number of physical papers attached with exemption consignment



Eswatini

69% reduction in customs processing time in 2021–2025



The Gambia

21% increase in customs revenue in 2024–2025, **96%** since implementation of ASYCUDAWorld in 2022



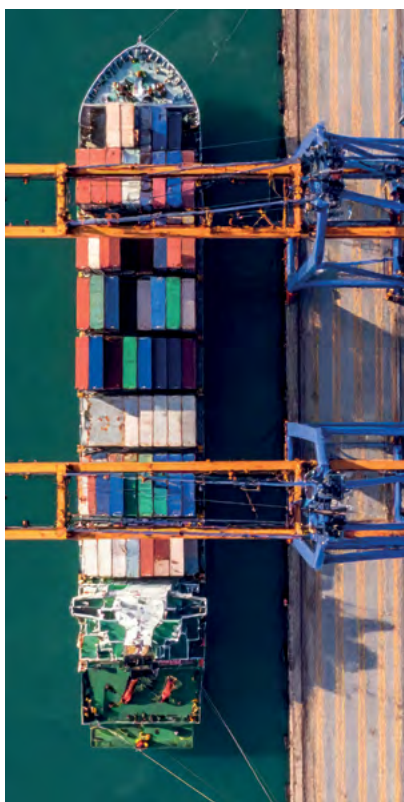
Iraq

25% increase in customs revenue in 2024–2025



Turkmenistan

90% increase in rail container traffic in 2024–2025, showing the country's growing role as a transit hub in Central Asia



► Trade facilitation reforms and capacity building

Through the TrainForTrade programme, 920 participants from small island developing States were trained in e-commerce, digital identity, and statistics, generating 18 policy recommendations to support digital economy development in SIDS. Legal and regulatory advisory services contributed to international processes under the International Maritime Organization, International Labour Office, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and United Nations Commission on International Trade Law.

In Africa, the Smart Ports initiative advanced port modernization through assessments, workshops, energy transition task forces and tailored capacity-building in three countries. The Accelerate Trade Facilitation programme supported 82 countries and trained over 3,500 officials, with more than 30 countries adopting the Reform Tracker tool to monitor and advance trade facilitation reforms.

IMPACT PROJECTS



IMPACT PROJECTS

► Advancing innovation ecosystems

The Science, Technology and Innovation Parks initiative delivered national innovation roadmaps in Ghana, Mongolia, Mozambique and Uzbekistan, supporting long-term innovation ecosystem building through strategic planning, infrastructure development and policy reform. It also generated policy recommendations that are not only applicable to beneficiary countries, but also to other developing countries. The initiative has sparked growing interest among developing countries and generated strong demand for new technical assistance projects.



► eTrade for all

The 4th eTrade Implementation Review highlighted progress in establishing e-commerce strategies and governance frameworks. The eTrade for Women communities expanded to over 400 members, supporting women digital entrepreneurs to strengthen and scale their businesses including through AI adoption, digital innovation and expanded market opportunities.

Engagement through eTrade for all remained strong, with 21 partners actively contributing to assessments, policy development, implementation support and capacity-building activities, reinforcing coordinated efforts for inclusive and evidence-based digital economy policymaking.



“

Scientific parks, incubators and STI accelerators play a key role in improving technological performance and innovation. Shared experiences are useful to us for achieving our development goals....

H.E. Ms. Aminata Zerbo Sabane, Burkina Faso Minister of the Digital Transition, Post and Electronic Communications
7 April, 2025







Statistics, Data and Digital Service

“

High-quality, disaggregated data and statistics are essential for the effective development of policy and informed decision-making.

 **Geneva Consensus**

Strategic focus



Advancing global measurement of South–South cooperation by enabling the first comparable data under a United Nations framework



Advancing the Beyond GDP agenda from mandate to measurement by supporting the development of a conceptual framework and country-owned dashboard



Scaling trade-statistics capacity for evidence-based policymaking and expanding the Trade in Services Statistics Information System (TiSSTAT) to modernize data collection and strengthen services trade statistics.



Leveraging AI and data innovation for evidence-based climate action.



In 2025, UNCTAD strengthened its role as a global leader in trade and development statistics, advancing data systems, analytical tools and digital innovation to support evidence-based policymaking. As global challenges grow more complex, spanning climate change, digital transformation, debt vulnerabilities and structural inequalities, the demand for timely, high-quality and comparable data has intensified. Against this backdrop, the Statistics, Data and Digital Service focused on closing critical data gaps, strengthening national statistical systems and enhancing countries' capacity to translate data into actionable policy insights, supported by digital tools.



From statistics to stories making development data more accessible and actionable

Global gateway to trade and development statistics

In 2025, UNCTAD strengthened its role as a global gateway to trade and development statistics with the full rollout of the UNCTAD Data Hub. The Hub became one of UNCTAD's most visited platforms, providing access to all UNCTAD statistics and offering Data Insights, continuously updated in pace with UNCTADstat advance release calendar. It also supported more than 22 Data Stories, expanding the visibility of UNCTAD's data with analytics.

The General Assembly (A/RES/80/156) reiterated the call for strengthened UNCTAD support in this area.

Enhancing services trade statistics capacity

Major progress in enhancing services trade statistics capacity was achieved. Two e-learning courses were organised with UNCTAD's TrainForTrade programme, DESA and the World Trade Organisation, training 3,625 participants from 218 economies, bringing total participation to over 18,000 since 2016.

Global measurement of South–South cooperation

A major breakthrough was the first-ever submission of South-South cooperation data by nine countries using the UN Framework developed by countries of the Global South. More than 60 countries have requested support, and a Community of Practice was launched at the Forth International Conference of Financing for Development in Seville to facilitate peer learning. South-South cooperation was advanced through further events held in 2025, including the Statistical Commission, a global webinar, UNCTAD16, regional and national workshops. Participants reached over 450 and the significant release of the UN Framework Manual, enabling countries to compile and report Sustainable Development Goal indicator 17.3.1.

In 2025, countries continued to increasingly adopt TiSSTAT, a digital tool developed by UNCTAD to enable collection and compilation of internationally harmonized services trade data from businesses. Benin and Côte d'Ivoire carried out a full data compilation, while Caribbean countries launched pilot tests. The Southern African Development Community regional workshop was held and trained 46 participants. Demand for its use increased with nearly 50 countries requesting support to start using TiSSTAT as their national tool for compiling services trade statistics.



Advancing the Beyond GDP agenda

UNCTAD provided analytical and statistical support to the HighLevel Expert Group on Beyond GDP, in collaboration with UN DESA, United Nations Development Programme and the Executive Office of the Secretary General. It co-organized side events at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development to launch a Global Alliance on Beyond GDP together with the Government of Spain, OECD and the Ibero-American General Secretariat and 30 countries, and co-organized two events at the World Social Summit to facilitate youth engagement with the United Nations Office at Geneva Beyond Lab. At the summit, the Group released an interim report outlining a conceptual framework on inclusive, equitable and sustainable wellbeing toward developing a dashboard of Beyond GDP indicators for launch at the 80th General Assembly in May 2026.

Strengthening connectivity analysis and trade data use

UNCTAD's Trade-and-Transport Dataset became a practical tool for connectivity analysis and trade facilitation, helping landlocked developing countries improve connectivity and apply digital solutions to facilitate trade. UNCTAD joined the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States in a four-workshop series "From Data to Policy" that were carried out in Burundi, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, and Zimbabwe, with support from the Agenda 2023 Sub-fund.

Advancing maritime trade data and analysis

A major milestone was the publication of a new seaborne trade dataset, as a result of joint work with Division on Technology and Logistics, providing countrylevel maritime trade statistics for the first time. Built from UN Comtrade, it offers a clearer picture of global cargo movements, enabling countries to monitor trade performance, assess integration into supply chains, and inform port and transport investment decisions. The data reveal the rising share of developing economies in global maritime trade and capture long-term shifts from liquid to dry cargo, as well as provide critical data the impacts of recent trade disruptions.

Providing data on critical minerals for development

Released in June, the SDG Pulse 2025 presented UNCTAD's first comprehensive analysis of critical minerals, assessing global production patterns, trade flows, and market concentration. This analysis, resulting from joint work with the Division on International Trade and Commodities, provides an evidence-based tool to identify minerals essential for national development and energy and digital transition.

Supporting Sustainable Development Goal financing through data tools

Another significant development was that UNCTAD estimated the cost of achieving child-related Sustainable Development Goals and designed a costing tool together with UNICEF, to enable data-driven analysis of resource needs to advance national development priorities more effectively. The tool enables countries to align planning and budgeting with development priorities and will inform a new project to be launched with the Economic Commission for Africa in 2027.



Toward a dashboard measuring **what truly matters beyond GDP**



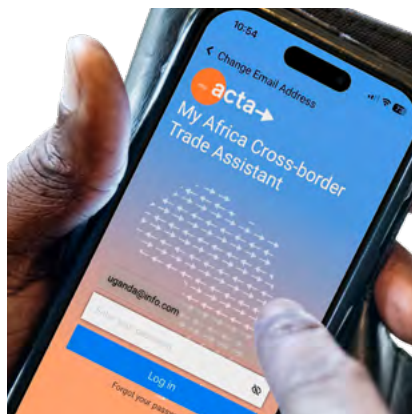
Mapping critical minerals essential for energy, digital and development goals



IMPACT PROJECTS

► Delivering first global data on South-South cooperation

A global project quantify South-South cooperation, led by UNCTAD with UN Regional Commissions, enabled nine Latin American countries to share their first South-South data, as they began applying the new Manual for the UN Framework. In addition, Namibia, Nigeria and Jordan tested the Framework with preliminary data, and additional pilots were under way. An e-learning course with five modules was developed for broader outreach in 2026.



► Improving measurement of cross-border trade

UNCTAD advanced the measurement of informal cross-border trade by developing the **My Africa Cross-border Trade Assistant (MyACTA)**, a digital mobile application, jointly with the Africa and Least Developed Countries Division. This enabled piloting African countries to capture real-time, transaction-level information directly from small traders, enabling inclusion of informal trade in official statistics.

► Turning illicit financial flows data into policy action

UNCTAD's Triple-A framework for illicit financial flows was applied in three African pilot countries, resulting in concrete benefits from data for policy: Zambia established an unit within ZamStats to measure illicit financial flows; Namibia identified priority actions on withholding taxes for cross-border services; and Ghana agreed on a regulatory action plan in a project for the measurement of tax and commercial illicit financial flows supported by the Open Society Fund. A global project on measuring and curbing illicit financial flows with UN Regional Commissions enabled training for national technical working groups in Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ghana and Mexico's national statistical office. With over 40 countries requesting support to track illicit finance, UNCTAD, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and partners launched a Community of Practice at FfD4 to track these hidden flows for evidence-based policy, and e-learning modules were developed.



© UNCTAD | Dr. Audrey Smock Amoah, Director-General of the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) during the "National Workshop on Illicit Financial Flows for Policy Formulation"



► Leveraging artificial intelligence and data for climate action

A new Development Account project on evidence-based climate action through artificial intelligence (AI) and data innovation was launched for Caribbean SIDS. At the 3rd UN Oceans Conference, UNCTAD showcased the project, and in Barbados, 50 stakeholders established a roadmap for integrating automatic identification system satellite data into national greenhouse gas emissions statistics. Work will expand to Belize, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Dominican Republic in 2026.



► Strengthening services trade statistics in the Caribbean

In the Caribbean, Dominica and Grenada launched pilot surveys on services trade using TiSSTAT, within a joint project to strengthen evidence-based services trade policy by UNCTAD and ECLAC and regional partners. Work also focuses in particular on creative services with the new TiSSTAT Playground enabling countries to explore the system prior to full-scale deployment. A new development account project will expand TiSSTAT to digital services trade and trade-related gender data with ECLAC and Asia-Pacific countries from 2026.

IMPACT PROJECTS





New York Office





In 2025, the New York Office strengthened UNCTAD's engagement at the centre of multilateral policymaking. By supporting participation in key United Nations processes and deepening dialogue with member States and partners, the office ensured that trade and development perspectives were effectively reflected in global discussions. Operating as a bridge between Geneva and New York, the office played a critical role in promoting integrated approaches to development and reinforcing UNCTAD's visibility and presence within the United Nations system.

Shaping global development agendas

The office supported UNCTAD's active engagement in major intergovernmental processes, including the participation of the Secretary-General and senior leadership in an array of high-level events, including the United Nations General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the High-level Political Forum and the Financing for Development process, among others, ensuring strong representation of the organization's priorities.

UNCTAD played a prominent role in the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, contributing substantive and technical inputs to the negotiations. The outcome, the Sevilla Commitment, reaffirmed UNCTAD's role in addressing interconnected issues of trade, finance, investment, technology and sustainable development. It also called for strengthened engagement on trade, including the establishment of a biennial high-level meeting on trade within the follow-up process.

Advancing digital and financing priorities

The office supported UNCTAD's engagement in global discussions on the digital economy, particularly in the context of the 20-year review of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS+20). Analytical contributions highlighted the need to address digital divides and ensure that digital transformation supports inclusive and sustainable development.

Debt sustainability remained a key priority. The office facilitated the dissemination of UNCTAD's analytical work on debt and supported dialogue with member States on financing challenges. These efforts contributed to advancing policy discussions on more equitable and sustainable financial systems.



Strengthening partnerships and dialogue

The New York office continued to serve as a hub for engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including member States, United Nations entities, parliamentarians, academia, civil society and the private sector. Through briefings, events and extensive consultations, it promoted UNCTAD's analytical work and facilitated knowledge exchange. These interactions strengthened partnerships and contributed to a shared understanding, both internally and externally, of development challenges and policy solutions.

Supporting intergovernmental outcomes

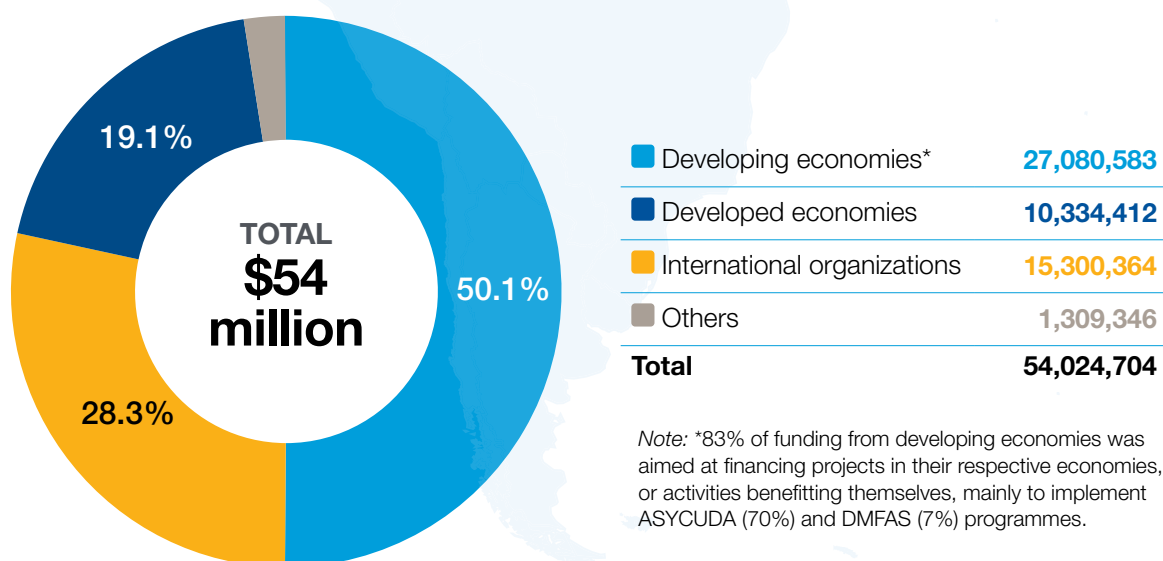
Sustained engagement contributed to UNCTAD's impact on intergovernmental processes. Its inputs were reflected in resolutions adopted by the Second Committee of the General Assembly on key issues such as debt sustainability, international trade, investment, commodities, information and communication technologies, and science, technology and innovation.



Financial reporting

Where the funding comes from

Voluntary contributions by contributor group
Share of **\$54 million** dollars, 2025



\$54 million

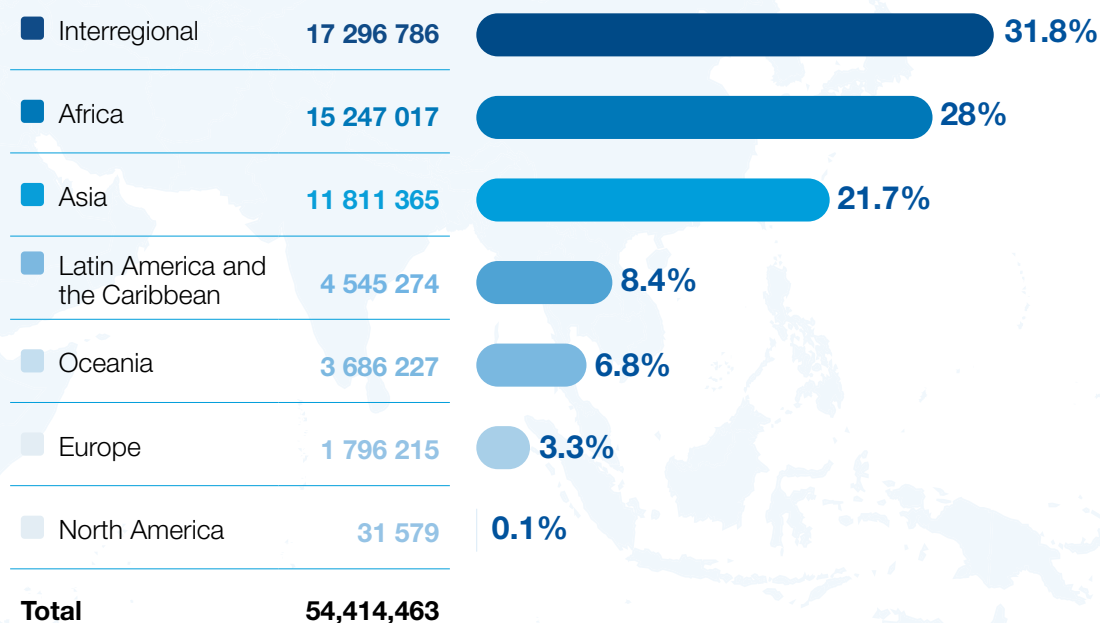
Voluntary contributions
received in 2025

\$54.4 million

Total extrabudgetary
expenditures in 2025

➤ Where it is delivered

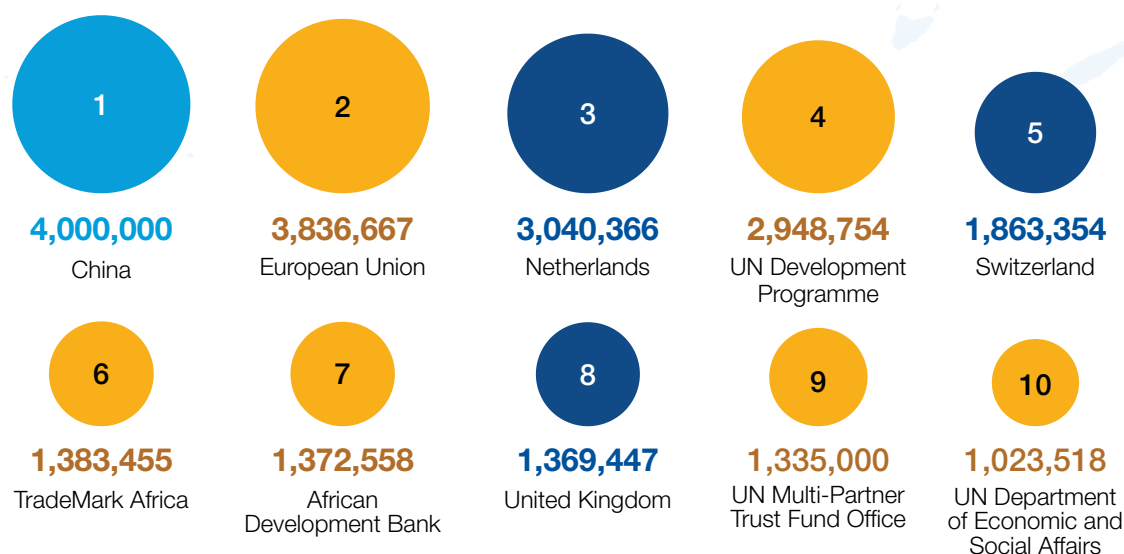
Extrabudgetary expenditures by region
Share of **\$54.4 million** dollars, 2025



➤ Top 10 contributors

Voluntary contributions, 2025

● Developing ● Developed ● International organizations



Note: The main donors exclude contributors who provide funds for self-financed projects or activities.

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