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Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget

Sixty-first session

Geneva, 23–25 July and 1–3 October 2012

Report of the Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget on its sixty-first session

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 23 to 25
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I. Agreed conclusions adopted by the Working Party at its sixty-first session

A. Review of the implementation of UNCTAD's communications strategy and publications policy

(Agenda item 3)

The Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget,

1. Takes note of the secretariat's report on the implementation of the communications strategy and publications policy, the report on the readership survey and other information supplied by the secretariat;
2. Notes the progress made in the implementation of the communications strategy and the publications policy, and encourages closer cooperation between the secretariat and the member States in their implementation;
3. Requests the secretariat to provide for immediate translation of executive summaries of UNCTAD flagship publications and for the delivery of working documents and presentations in a timely manner;
4. Encourages the secretariat to assess and report on the impact of its publications and to continue the promotion and outreach of all its programme publications via the appropriate means, in order to accommodate the different needs of its users;
5. Notes the ongoing efforts of the secretariat in developing the new website, and calls upon the UNCTAD secretariat to ensure that priority is given to keeping the website's content up to date, and to enhancing the site's functionality, accessibility and usability.

B. Review of the UNCTAD section of the proposed United Nations strategic framework for the period 2014–2015, in the light of the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Conference

(Agenda item 4)

The Working Party,

Having considered the Draft proposed UNCTAD Biennial Programme Plan for the period 2014–2015,

1. *Concurs* with the Draft proposed UNCTAD Biennial Programme Plan for the period 2014–2015 as contained in document TD/B/WP(61)/CRP.3/Rev.1;
2. *Recommends* to the Secretary-General of UNCTAD that he take full account of document TD/B/WP(61)/CRP.3/Rev.1 as the basis for his submission of the revised UNCTAD 2014–2015 proposed programme plan to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for subsequent review by the fifty-third session of the Committee for Programme and Coordination and by the United Nations General Assembly;
3. *Requests* the secretariat to ensure that the relevant views expressed by member States during intergovernmental deliberations in Geneva are transmitted in a timely manner to the entities dealing with programmatic and budgetary issues, in particular during the discussions with the Committee for Programme and Coordination to consider the programme on trade and development;
4. *Recommends* to the Trade and Development Board to convoke informal consultations on the terms of reference of the Working Party.

C. Review of the UNCTAD programme narrative for the biennium 2012–2013, in the light of the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Conference

(Agenda item 5)

The Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget,

Having considered the list of outputs approved by the United Nations General Assembly in the Programme Budget for the biennium 2012–2013 (section 12 – Trade and development),

1. *Concurs* with the reformulated list of outputs for UNCTAD for the biennium 2012–2013 as contained in document TD/B/WP(61)/CRP.2/Rev.1;
2. *Recommends* to the Secretary-General of UNCTAD that he take full account of document TD/B/WP(61)/CRP.2/Rev.1 and that he make arrangements for the implementation of the reformulated outputs.

II. Chair's summary

A. Opening statements

1. Opening statements were made by Mr. Petko Draganov, Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD; the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China; the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Asian Group; the representative of Mauritius on behalf of the African Group; the representative of Paraguay on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries; the representative of Cyprus on behalf of the European Union; the representative of Nepal on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries; the representative of Paraguay on behalf of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries; and the representative of China.

B. Informal meetings

2. The Working Party pursued its deliberations in an informal setting.

C. Review of the implementation of UNCTAD's communications strategy and publications policy

(Agenda item 3)

3. The Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD, Mr. Petko Draganov, presented the Report on the implementation of UNCTAD's communications strategy and publications policy (TD/B/WP/240) and the Report on the readership survey of main publications of UNCTAD in 2011 (TD/B/WP(61)/CRP.1).

4. Some delegations said that the new website had made it easier to find relevant reports and other documents, and that the site allowed more effective access to background material. Nevertheless, a still greater effort should be made to keep delegations and capitals better informed of UNCTAD activities, including the replacement of the ongoing and future activities calendar. Also, additional steps should be considered to make the site more user-friendly, including via an improved search function. The representative of a regional group requested that more information be provided on the work of each UNCTAD division, making clear the connections between that work and the Doha Mandate.

5. Several delegations stated that further efforts were needed to improve communication between UNCTAD and the Geneva-based missions, and it was noted that all conference documents should be sent electronically to the missions promptly and well in advance of meetings. In the case of reports of meetings and flagship documents, this would allow for their immediate distribution to other academic and interested stakeholders. More consultations and briefings with member States were requested, particularly before reports were published when individual States were mentioned in them, as was having electronic copies of such reports sent to those member States prior to publishing. It was important to have concise, well-written, timely and comprehensive summaries of major reports, focusing on matters of interest to developing countries in all official United Nations languages. Several delegations urged that UNCTAD provide more roundtables in developing countries geographically distant from Geneva in relation to the launch of these reports, as well as increase the dissemination of hard copies of reports in such countries. Finally, most regional groups agreed that member States should be consulted more extensively in choosing the topics of major reports in order to ensure that they focus on relevant development issues.

6. Several delegates stated that efforts to streamline the publications programme should not be at the expense of work on topics critical to developing countries. UNCTAD reports were valuable and helped to inform government on decision-making. The reduction in the number of publications should not decrease the analysis UNCTAD conducts on its mandated issues and upcoming challenges, including internationally agreed development goals, the Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 development goals.

7. Participants noted the positive results of the readership survey, and some delegations recommended that such surveys be continued, including the in-depth survey on the use of publications.

8. Most representatives of regional groups stated that important documents were too often distributed at the last minute. This practice should be changed.

9. Several delegates said that the branding policy adopted by UNCTAD was a valuable tool for making UNCTAD messages and activities more visible.

10. Although constraints were acknowledged, several delegations insisted that timely translation of reports and other publications should be carried out. Rapid translations of summaries or overviews were not a substitute for translating full reports.

D. Review of the UNCTAD section of the proposed United Nations strategic framework for the period 2014–2015, in the light of the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Conference

(Agenda item 4)

11. The secretariat presented proposals for inputs and changes to the programme narrative for the strategic framework for the period 2014–2015, in order to update the document in light of the outcomes of the thirteenth session of the Conference.

12. Several delegations presented proposals for the UNCTAD section of the proposed United Nations strategic framework for the period 2014–2015, after a full review of the document.

13. As confirmation of the value of the work undertaken by the Working Party, the discussions were successfully concluded as a result of the efforts of all delegations to ensure a faithful translation of UNCTAD's mandates, in particular the Doha Mandate as it reinforces the Accra Accord, into the proposed Biennial Programme Plan for the period 2014–2015. The proposed new language was in most cases previously agreed language.

14. The delegations reaffirmed the role of UNCTAD as the focal point in the United Nations for the integrated treatment of trade and development, and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development.

15. The delegations agreed on specific reformulations of and inclusions to the strategies, expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement of the proposed UNCTAD Biennial Programme Plan for the period 2014–2015, presented mainly by regional coordinators in consultation with their constituencies. During the negotiations, all parties showed flexibility to agree on issues concerning the financial and economic crisis; assistance to integrate and benefit all countries from the international trading system; commodities and food security; investment; science and technology for development including through technology transfer; and actions to promote the empowerment of women and inclusive and sustainable development.

16. Discussions aimed at also ensuring a balanced reflection of each country grouping in the document, taking into account the Doha Mandate, particularly paragraph 18, and the insertions in the document by the Committee for Programme and Coordination of the United Nations. The Chair requested further clarification of paragraph 18 by the secretariat, which was provided by the Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD.

17. Several delegations stated that there was a need for the secretariat to better convey the views of Geneva-based delegations to the Committee for Programme and Coordination during its consideration of the proposed UNCTAD Biennial Programme Plan.

18. The delegations agreed to recommend to the Trade and Development Board to convoke informal consultations on the terms of reference of the Working Party which remain uncompleted.

E. Review of the UNCTAD programme narrative for the biennium 2012–2013, in the light of the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Conference

(Agenda item 5)

19. The secretariat presented proposals for inputs and changes to the programme narrative for the biennium 2012–2013 in order to update the document in light of the outcomes of the thirteenth session of the Conference.

20. The delegations presented proposals for the UNCTAD programme narrative for the biennium 2012–2013, in the light of the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Conference, after a full review of the document.

21. As confirmation of the value of the work undertaken by the Working Party, the discussions were successfully concluded as a result of the efforts of all delegations to ensure a faithful translation of UNCTAD's mandates, in particular the Doha Mandate as it reinforces the Accra Accord, into the proposed UNCTAD programme narrative for the biennium 2012–2013.

22. The delegations agreed on specific reformulations of and inclusions to the outputs of the UNCTAD programme narrative for the biennium 2012–2013, covering the five subprogrammes and related components.

23. The representative of the regional group for landlocked developing countries proposed an ad hoc expert meeting on the review of the Almaty Programme of Action under output 7 (a) (vii) of subprogramme 5. This proposed ad hoc expert meeting was approved, as an equivalent event had been convened the previous year for small island developing States.

III. Organizational matters

A. Election of officers

(Agenda item 1)

24. The Working Party elected Ms. Judith Arrieta Munguía (Mexico) as its Chair and Ms. Gabriela Bennemann (Germany) as its Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur.

B. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

(Agenda item 2)

25. The Working Party adopted its provisional agenda (TD/B/WP/239). The agenda was thus as follows:

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Review of the implementation of UNCTAD's communications strategy and publications policy
4. Review of the UNCTAD section of the proposed United Nations strategic framework for the period 2014–2015, in the light of the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Conference
5. Review of the UNCTAD programme narrative for the biennium 2012–2013, in the light of the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Conference
6. Provisional agenda for the sixty-second session of the Working Party
7. Other business
8. Adoption of the report of the Working Party to the Trade and Development Board

C. Provisional agenda for the sixty-second session of the Working Party

(Agenda item 6)

26. The provisional agenda for the sixty-second session of the Working Party was adopted at the fifty-fifth executive session of the Trade and Development Board (see annex I).

D. Adoption of the report of the Working Party to the Trade and Development Board

(Agenda item 8)

27. The Working Party authorized the Rapporteur to finalize the report on its sixty-first session.

Annex I

Provisional agenda for the sixty-second session of the Working Party

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Review of the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD and their financing
4. Evaluation of UNCTAD activities
 - (a) Evaluation of UNCTAD activities: Overview
 - (b) Evaluation report of UNCTAD's programme on science and technology for development
 - (c) Progress report on the implementation of recommendations from the evaluation of UNCTAD's technical cooperation activities dedicated to least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and other structurally weak, vulnerable and small economies
5. Provisional agenda for the sixty-third session of the Working Party
6. Other business
7. Adoption of the report of the Working Party to the Trade and Development Board

Annex II

Attendance¹

1. Representatives from the following States members of the Working Party attended the session:

Belarus
China
Ethiopia
Germany
Iran (Islamic Republic
of)
Kenya
Mexico
Nepal
Peru
Switzerland
Viet Nam

2. Representatives from the following States members of UNCTAD but not members of the Working Party attended the session:

Algeria	Mali
Angola	Mauritius
Austria	Morocco
Barbados	Nigeria
Benin	Panama
Botswana	Paraguay
Brazil	Philippines
Bulgaria	Poland
Burundi	Sri Lanka
Costa Rica	Thailand
Côte d'Ivoire	United Arab Emirates
Cyprus	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Zambia
Dominican Republic	
Ecuador	
Egypt	
El Salvador	
Estonia	
Finland	
India	
Indonesia	
Iraq	
Italy	
Kazakhstan	
Lesotho	
Lithuania	
Madagascar	

¹ For the list of participants, see TD/B/WP(61)/INF.1.

3. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented at the session:

European Union

Organisation internationale de la Francophonie

4. The following United Nations organs, bodies and programmes were represented at the session:

International Trade Centre
