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Working Party on the Strategic Framework and
the Programme Budget
Seventy-fourth session
Geneva, 28 November–2 December 2016

Report of the Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget on its seventy-fourth session

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 28 November to 2 December 2016

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I. Agreed conclusions adopted by the Working Party at its seventy-fourth session

Review of the UNCTAD section of the proposed United Nations strategic framework for the period 2018–2019, in light of the outcomes of the fourteenth session of the Conference

(Agenda item 4)

Review of the programme narrative component of the draft proposed UNCTAD programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019

(Agenda item 5)

Review of the UNCTAD programme narrative for the biennium 2016–2017, in light of the outcomes of the fourteenth session of the Conference

(Agenda item 6)

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

Recognizing that the activities in the UNCTAD biennial programme plan and the programme budget should be implemented in accordance with the Nairobi Maafikiano and other given mandates,

Taking note of the Nairobi Azimio,

1. *Concurs* with the proposed UNCTAD biennial programme plan for the period 2018–2019, as contained in document TD/B/WP(74)/CRP.2/Rev.1, with the exception of the proposed realignment of subprogramme 1; the programme narrative component of the draft proposed UNCTAD programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, as contained in document TD/B/WP(74)/CRP.3/Rev.1; and the revised list of outputs for the biennium 2016–2017, under section 12 – Trade and development, as contained in document TD/B/WP(74)/CRP.4/Rev.1,
2. *Requests* the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to take full account of comments and inputs provided during the seventy-fourth session of the Working Party and documents TD/B/WP(74)/CRP.2/Rev.1 and TD/B/WP(74)/CRP.3/Rev.1 for the purposes of his submission of the revised proposed UNCTAD biennial programme plan for the period 2018–2019 and the proposed UNCTAD programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for subsequent consideration by the General Assembly of the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies;
3. *Requests* the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to take full account of document TD/B/WP(74)/CRP.4/Rev.1 and make arrangements for the implementation of the reformulated outputs;
4. *Recommends* that the Trade and Development Board, at its sixty-third session, consider the question of the realignment of subprogramme 1;
5. *Requests* the secretariat to ensure that the relevant views expressed by member States during intergovernmental deliberations at the seventy-fourth session of the Working Party, a subsidiary body of the Trade and Development Board, are transmitted in a timely manner to the entities dealing with programmatic and budgetary issues;
6. *Decides* to establish a process to revise the expected accomplishments of the secretariat, and the indicators of achievements and criteria and metrics of performance measures in the UNCTAD biennial programme plan, in order to better support the

implementation of the biennial programme plan and the programme budget, by the next session of the Working Party addressing the biennial programme plan;

7. *Notes* the late delivery of documents and the lack of explanatory notes regarding the implementation of the Nairobi Maafikiano in the UNCTAD biennial programme plan;

8. *Requests* the Trade and Development Board to convoke informal consultations to finalize the terms of reference for future sessions of the Working Party.

II. Chair's summary

A. Proceedings

1. The seventy-fourth session of the Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget was held in Geneva from 28 November to 2 December 2016.

B. Opening statements

2. The Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD made the opening statement. Statements were then made by the representatives of the following delegations: Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China; Namibia on behalf of the African Group; the Bahamas on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries; Slovakia on behalf of the European Union and its member States; Estonia on behalf of Group D; Japan on behalf of the JUSSCANNZ group; Bangladesh on behalf of the least developed countries; Egypt; Kenya; Nigeria; Morocco; Brazil; State of Palestine; Algeria; and Iraq.

C. Informal meetings

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

D. Action by the Working Party

1. Discussion on a new funding mechanism for UNCTAD technical cooperation activities (Agenda item 3)

4. The Working Party considered the document "Concept note on a funding mechanism for pending technical cooperation requests received by UNCTAD" (TD/B/WP(74)/CRP.1). The concept note proposed a mechanism to help bridge the gap between the number of requests for technical cooperation received and the available funding. The main aspects were the following: creation of regular project proposals to be sent to donors every two months by the secretariat; organization of semi-annual donor-recipient coordination meetings based on a specific programme (modality 1) or beneficiary country (modality 2); update of the online database of requests; and a review of the mechanism at a midterm high-level event.

5. The representatives of some regional groups stressed the importance of an active and coordinative role by the secretariat to better take into account the needs and planning cycles of donor and beneficiary countries. Several representatives and delegations emphasized that the criteria for programmes to be selected by the senior management of UNCTAD needed to be discussed in more detail. In addition, some representatives addressed the importance of an up-to-date request database, as well as the need for more details of the budgetary implications of the proposal. Furthermore, some representatives and delegations suggested

organizing the half-yearly meetings directly before or after sessions of the Working Party. One delegation, with regard to the secretariat's building on the outputs of meetings, stressed the necessity of improved reporting.

6. The secretariat noted that the details of the mechanism would be revised to provide a greater focus on modality 1 as the more feasible approach. With regard to budget-related concerns, the underlying activities would be financed entirely by existing resources, with a focus on informal meetings (organized alongside existing meetings such as those of the Working Party), and no further resources would be diverted from other substantive technical cooperation activities. The outputs of donor–recipient coordination meetings would form the basis for drafting full, tailored project documents and more detailed follow-ups with donors and beneficiaries, to bring together funding sources and requests. In addition, the number of requests for specific products and/or programmes would be the main selection criterion, and further criteria would be discussed in consultation with donor countries and beneficiaries. Furthermore, the online database of requests, as an important source of information, would be updated and adjusted to better reflect the status of recent and valid requests, and copies of request-related correspondence would be included in the database. Recent and future projects and/or requests would benefit from the results-based management framework with regard to project design, financial and general reporting, and monitoring. A revised version of document TD/B/WP(74)/CRP.1 on the funding mechanism, incorporating the issues discussed and comments, was made available at the meeting. Further discussions would be necessary before the document could be adopted.

7. The Working Party requested the secretariat to continue its consultations with regional groups with a view to reaching a consensus on a new funding mechanism as soon as possible.

2. Agreed conclusions

(Agenda items 4, 5 and 6)

8. The Working Party considered the documents “Draft proposed UNCTAD biennial programme plan for the period 2018–2019” (TD/B/WP(74)/CRP.2), “Programme narrative component of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019” (TD/B/WP(74)/CRP.3) and “Revised list of outputs for the biennium 2016–2017, under section 12 – Trade and development” (TD/B/WP(74)/CRP.4).

9. The Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD provided an overview of the scope of the review by the seventy-fourth session of the Working Party and its relation to the overall budgetary process of the United Nations Secretariat. He elaborated on the main new elements and realignments proposed in the documents under consideration.

10. The representatives of several regional groups and delegations emphasized the importance of faithfully translating the mandate in the Nairobi Maafikiano and other relevant mandates into the programme of work of UNCTAD. Many delegations, referring to specific areas of important and strengthened work stemming from the Nairobi Maafikiano – including support for the least developed countries, gender mainstreaming, financing for development, assistance to the Palestinian people and electronic commerce and the digital economy – expressed their opinion that such areas should be meaningfully captured in the programme of work of UNCTAD.

11. The Working Party adopted agreed conclusions on the proposed UNCTAD biennial programme plan for the period 2018–2019, the programme narrative component of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 and the revised list of outputs for the biennium 2016–2017.

III. Organizational matters

A. Election of officers

(Agenda item 1)

12. At the opening plenary meeting, on 28 November 2016, the Working Party elected Ms. Tehmina Janjua (Pakistan) as its Chair and Mr. Taavo Lumiste (Estonia) as its Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur.

B. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

(Agenda item 2)

13. At the same meeting, the Working Party adopted its provisional agenda (TD/B/WP/282). The agenda was thus as follows:

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Discussion on a new funding mechanism for UNCTAD technical cooperation activities
4. Review of the UNCTAD section of the proposed United Nations strategic framework for the period 2018–2019, in light of the outcomes of the fourteenth session of the Conference
5. Review of the programme narrative component of the draft proposed UNCTAD programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019
6. Review of the UNCTAD programme narrative for the biennium 2016–2017, in light of the outcomes of the fourteenth session of the Conference
7. Provisional agenda for the seventy-fifth session of the Working Party
8. Other business
9. Adoption of the report of the Working Party to the Trade and Development Board

C. Provisional agenda for the seventy-fifth session of the Working Party

(Agenda item 7)

14. At its closing plenary meeting, on 2 December 2015, the Working Party approved the provisional agenda for its seventy-fifth session (see annex I).

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

(Agenda item 9)

15. At the same meeting, the Working Party authorized the Rapporteur to finalize the report on its seventy-fourth session.

Annex I

Provisional agenda for the seventy-fifth 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) External evaluation of UNCTAD subprogramme 4: Technology and logistics
5. Provisional agenda for the seventy-sixth 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 of the following States members of the Working Party attended the session:

Austria	France
Belarus	Senegal
Brazil	Uganda
Estonia	Zimbabwe

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

Algeria	Japan
Bahamas	Kenya
Bangladesh	Madagascar
Belgium	Mexico
Bhutan	Namibia
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Oman
Burundi	Pakistan
Cambodia	Poland
Chile	Slovakia
Congo	Somalia
Djibouti	Sweden
Ecuador	Togo
Greece	Tunisia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Turkey
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

3. Representatives of the following non-member observer State attended the session:

State of Palestine

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

African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States

European Union

5. The following non-governmental organization was represented at the session:

International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development

¹ This attendance list contains registered participants. For the full list of participants, see TD/B/WP(74)/INF.1.