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TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Commission on Trade in Goods and Services,
and Commodities
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Item 2 of the provisional agenda

PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND ANNOTATIONS

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II. ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Introduction

1. During its twenty-third special session, within the context of the UNCTAD XI Mid-term Review, the Trade and Development Board recommended that UNCTAD's consensus building pillar be strengthened *inter alia* by ensuring that, as appropriate, the Commissions take into account the work of expert meetings in their substantive policy dialogues, and by ensuring that, in order to advance the consensus-building process, intergovernmental meetings result in development-oriented outcomes including policy options, as mutually agreed (TD/B(S-XXIII)/7 (Vol. I), paras. 32 (b), (e) and (f)).

2. To this end, the Commission will have before it the reports of the expert meetings held during the previous months, as well as background documentation and other relevant documentation prepared by the secretariat identifying policy issues for discussion by the Commission.

Item 1. Election of officers

3. In accordance with rule 18 of the rules of procedure of the main Commissions of the Trade and Development Board, the Commission is to elect a Chairperson, five Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur from among the representatives of its members, taking into account the need to ensure equitable geographical distribution. Moreover, rule 19 of the rules of procedure states that the Bureau of the Commission is to consist of seven members (i.e. four members from Lists A and C combined, two members from List B and one member from List D, referred to in the annex to General Assembly resolution 1995 (XIX) as amended).

4. Accordingly, following the cycle of rotation established after UNCTAD IX, the bureau for the eleventh session of the Commission will be as follows: Chairperson from List B; Rapporteur from List A (Asia); and five Vice-Chairpersons (3 from list A and C combined, 1 from List B and 1 from List D).

Item 2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

5. The eleventh session of the Commission is scheduled for 19–23 March 2007. At the closing plenary of its tenth session (6–10 February 2006), the Commission approved the provisional agenda for its eleventh session and topics for expert meetings.

6. With regard to the organization of the work of the session, the Commission has five days available to it. It is suggested that the agenda items be taken up sequentially, with the first plenary meeting on Monday, 19 March, being devoted to procedural matters and introductory statements. This inaugural session will be followed by a high-level event on “Networking among RTAs of developing countries”.

Documentation

Item 3. Commodities and development

7. This agenda item was first introduced into the agenda of the Commission at the ninth session in view of the importance of the subject to developing countries and the priority given to it by the São Paulo Consensus. Under this agenda item, the Commission will examine selected critical policy areas for commodity sector development highlighted in the background document by the secretariat. The focus will be on areas of opportunity for addressing the challenges faced by those developing countries that rely or depend on commodities to a significant extent. The current high and volatile oil prices are one such challenge, and the report from the Expert Meeting on the Review of the Energy Sector will be an important component in setting out a framework of support for oil importers. Another policy area to be reviewed by the Commission will be the status and modalities of compensatory finance arrangements as a mechanism for addressing commodity price volatility. Further, the Commission will be briefed on the conclusions from the Expert Meeting on Enabling Small Commodity Producers and Processors in Developing Countries to Reach Global Markets.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.1/82	Commodities and development – Background note by the UNCTAD secretariat
TD/B/COM/1/EM.32/3	Report of the Expert Meeting on Enabling Small Commodity Producers and Processors in Developing Countries to Reach Global Markets
TD/B/COM.1/EM.31/3	Report of the Expert Meeting on the Participation of Developing Countries in New and Dynamic Sectors of World Trade: Review of the Energy Sector

Item 4. Market access, market entry and competitiveness

8. Under this agenda item, the Commission will have the opportunity to review progress in the work of UNCTAD in regard to non-tariff barriers (NTBs). As announced at the Expert Meeting on Definition, Classification and Quantification of Non-Tariff Barriers (September 2005), the Secretary-General of UNCTAD established a Group of Eminent Persons on Non-Tariff Barriers (GNTB), with the following terms of reference: (a) to make recommendations on the issues of definition, classification and quantification of non-tariff barriers (NTBs); (b) to define elements of and draw up a substantive work programme relating to collection and dissemination of NTB data, with a special focus on issues and problems faced by developing countries; (c) to provide guidance on further strengthening of the TRAINS database; (d) to review and make recommendations on capacity building and technical cooperation activities in favour of developing countries in the area of NTBs; (e) to provide policy advice on inter-agency collaboration and coordination on activities relating to NTBs; (f) to promote cooperation with the donor community; and (g) to prepare comprehensive recommendations on the follow-up of the work of the GNTB. The GNTB held its first meeting on 12 July 2006 and decided, *inter alia*, to establish a Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST) to provide substantive support to the work of the Eminent Persons, with UNCTAD and UNDP as co-convenors. The MAST held its first meeting at the World Bank Headquarters in Washington DC on 12 October 2006 to consider the issues of definition, classification and collection of NTBs data. The next meeting of the MAST, which is expected

to be hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization in the early part of 2007, will be devoted to finalizing substantive recommendations to the Eminent Persons on these issues.

9. For this item as well, the Commission will have before it the report of the Expert Meeting on the Energy Sector (29 November – 1 December 2006) organized in accordance with the São Paulo Consensus, which requested UNCTAD to convene sectoral reviews of new and dynamic sectors of world trade. Additionally, the Commission will be informed of UNCTAD's contribution to the conceptualization of Aid for Trade, particularly its relevance in regard to building competitive supply capacity. The publication entitled "Developing Countries in International Trade 2006-2007", which will contain the latest results of UNCTAD's Trade and Development Index, will also be before the Commission.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.1/83	Market access, market entry and competitiveness – Background note by the UNCTAD secretariat
TD/B/COM.1/EM.31/3	Report of the Expert Meeting on the Participation of Developing Countries in New and Dynamic Sectors of World Trade: Review of the Energy Sector
TD/B/COM.1/84	Developing Countries in International Trade 2006–2007

Item 5. Trade in services and development implications

10. Under this agenda item, the Commission will examine the role of trade in services in regional integration agreements in promoting development. This examination arises from the noticeable trend over the past decade in which economic integration at the regional and multilateral levels brought about through trade and investment liberalization agreements have been accompanied by significant increases in the trade of goods and services. The policy discussion on "Services, regionalism and development" will consist of a review of the main issues relating to the role that regional integration in the areas of trade in services, investment and finance and the improvement of regional infrastructure relating to services can play in terms of promoting regional growth, the development of developing countries' supply capacities, and development. It will also examine the experience of regional groupings with liberalization of trade in services and the main challenges to be tackled, including through ongoing work by UNCTAD, to facilitate regional arrangements with a view to supporting national development efforts. Both the liberalization and development dimension of the regional trade agreements covering services will be examined.

11. The Commission will be briefed on the outcome of the Expert Meeting on Universal Access to Services (14–16 November 2006) and the Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Logistics Services (13 July 2006).

Documentation

TD/B/COM.1/85	Trade in Services and Development Implications – Background note by the UNCTAD secretariat
TD/B/COM.1/EM.30/3	Report of the Expert Meeting on Universal Access to Services.

Item 6. Trade, environment and development

12. Under this item the Commission will address selected trade and environment issues that have received considerable attention in recent international policy discourse, and related UNCTAD activities in the context of paragraph 103 of the São Paulo Consensus. These include (i) UNCTAD assistance to developing countries in dealing with the implications of the mandate provided for in paragraph 31(iii) of the Doha Ministerial Declaration on liberalization of international trade in environmental goods and services; (ii) the results of recent studies and policy dialogues on environmental requirements and market access for developing countries carried out under UNCTAD's Consultative Task Force on Environmental Requirements and Market Access for Developing Countries; and (iii) key findings of ongoing UNCTAD work on standards, market access and MDG implementation in the field of organic agriculture in the context of the UNCTAD/FAO/IFOAM International Task Force on Harmonization and Equivalence in Organic Agriculture, and for East African countries under the UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity-building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development.

13. The Commission will also examine: (i) the challenges and opportunities of the biofuels option for developing countries, including analysis of trade, rural development, energy diversification, food security and climate change aspects; (ii) the BioTrade verification/certification scheme for product differentiation and recognition of the sustainability efforts undertaken by small and medium-sized enterprises involved in the production of goods and services derived from native biodiversity, (iii) trade, investment and technology transfer opportunities under various multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) of the Kyoto Protocol.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.1/86

Trade, Environment and Development –
Background note by the UNCTAD secretariat

UNCTAD/DITC/TED/MISC/2006/1

Report of the wrap-up workshop of the UK-DFID-funded UNCTAD Project "Building Capacity for Improved Policy Making and Negotiation on Key Trade and Environment Issues" and the 2006 Annual Session of UNCTAD's Consultative Task Force on Environmental Requirements and Market Access for Developing Countries, Geneva, 3–4 July 2006.

Item 7. Implementation of agreed conclusions and recommendations of the Commission, including post-Doha follow-up

14. The guidelines adopted by the Trade and Development Board in carrying out the Mid-term Review at its nineteenth special session, held in Bangkok from 29 April to 2 May 2002 (TD/B(S-XIX)/7), state that: "Commissions' agendas will continue to include an item

on follow-up and implementation of past recommendations. The secretariat will report on its implementation of recommendations addressed to it, and member States will be invited to report on their own implementation in statements to the Commission”.

15. In this context, the UNCTAD secretariat normally prepares a progress report on the implementation of agreed conclusions and recommendations adopted at the last (tenth) session of the Commission addressed to UNCTAD. However, as Member States did not adopt conclusions, the secretariat will provide a global progress report. Member States wishing to report on their own implementation of past recommendations will have an opportunity to present their experiences in this regard to the Commission. The UNCTAD secretariat will also provide an annual activity report on major outputs in 2006 of the Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.1/87

Progress report on the implementation of agreed conclusions and recommendations of the Commission, including the post-Doha follow-up: Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

UNCTAD/DITC/MISC/2006/14

DITC ACTIVITY Report 2006: Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

Item 8. Provisional agenda for the twelfth session of the commission

16. During its twenty-third special session, within the context of the UNCTAD XI Mid-term Review, the Trade and Development Board also recommended that UNCTAD’s consensus building pillar be strengthened *inter alia* by working towards ensuring that the agendas of the Commissions are topical and focused, including by concentrating on one or two major themes of mutual interest and, when requested, a policy review on a rotating regional basis. To this end, a draft provisional agenda for the twelfth session of the Commission will be submitted for consideration and approval.

Item 9. Other business

Item 10. Adoption of the report of the Commission to the Trade and Development Board

17. The report of the eleventh session of the Commission will be submitted to the Trade and Development Board.

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