



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
25 September 2009

Original: English

---

Sixty-fourth session

## Report of the Trade and Development Board on its forty-seventh executive session\*

Geneva, 30 June 2009

---

\* The present document is an advance version of the report of the Trade and Development Board on its forty-seventh executive session, held at the United Nations Office at Geneva on 30 June 2009. It will appear in final form, together with the reports of the forty-fifth executive session, the forty-sixth executive session and the fifty-sixth session of the Board, as *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 15 (A/64/15)*.



## **I. Opening of the session**

1. The session was opened by Mr. Dian Triansyah Djani (Indonesia), President of the Trade and Development Board.

## **II. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work**

(Agenda item 1)

2. At its plenary meeting, the Board adopted the provisional agenda contained in document TD/B/EX(47)/1. Accordingly, the agenda for the executive session was as follows:

1. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
2. Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in favour of Africa
3. Matters requiring action by the Board arising from or related to reports and activities of its subsidiary bodies:
  - (a) Report of the Trade and Development Commission on its first session, and agenda for its second session
  - (b) Report of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission on its first session, and agenda for its second session
  - (c) Topics for single-year expert meetings for 2010
4. Other business
5. Report of the Board on its forty-seventh executive session

## **III. Chair's summary**

### **A. Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in favour of Africa**

(Agenda item 2)

3. The Board took note of the reports by the secretariat entitled "Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in favour of Africa" (TD/B/EX(47)/2) and "Food security in Africa: learning lessons from the food crisis" (TD/B/EX(47)/3).

4. Participants and presenters discussed and assessed the "Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in favour of Africa" report. Representatives acknowledged UNCTAD's contribution to development in Africa through the many activities within its mandate, ranging from trade facilitation, multilateral trade negotiations and service sector development, to debt management support, technology transfer, and capacity-building in the fields of investment, enterprise development and insurance.

5. All representatives recognized UNCTAD's support for development in Africa, welcoming any new initiatives that would further support current efforts, especially in light of the economic, financial, food and fuel crises. Several delegates noted that African countries were among the most vulnerable groups and were among those hardest hit by these crises, and they needed continued commitment by those who had pledged aid support. Sustained efforts to enhance social and economic conditions, in line with the Accra Accord, were emphasized. One representative

asked that UNCTAD provide more detailed analysis of the effects of the crises on Africa.

6. Some representatives expressed concerns about the title of the report, commenting that the phrase “in favour” carried certain connotations. A title such as “Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in support of Africa” would better reflect the fact that UNCTAD was established to serve developing countries, not to do them favours. The report emphasized technical cooperation, rather than research and analysis. Representatives suggested that research and policy analysis should be more readily available, as had been the case with the report of the Commission of Experts of the President of the United Nations General Assembly on Reforms of the International Monetary and Financial System (the “Stiglitz Commission”).

7. Many speakers called for increased support for Africa and the least developed countries (LDCs), especially in times of crisis. In this regard, several speakers recommended that subprogramme 5 be expanded, so that the Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes may have all the necessary resources to implement the Accra Accord in respect of LDCs and Africa. The LDC Group joined this consensus, asking that at least one dedicated session be scheduled in future expert meetings to discuss the special needs of LDCs.

8. Another speaker emphasized the need to deepen global coordination, promote trade, encourage cooperation, and expand South-South relations. The repeated calls for the integration of African countries into the rules-based global trading system emphasized how vital trade is in promoting the overarching objective of eradicating poverty in the context of sustainable development. UNCTAD’s role was highlighted in working with African countries to incorporate global trade initiatives into their national development strategies.

9. In an effort to help partner organizations to more fully understand the scope of UNCTAD activities, one representative suggested that future reports should list the monetary value of the projects it has undertaken, and if appropriate, explain how each project — especially newly-established projects — might be scaled up, spun off to another organization or discontinued. Those programmes considered eligible for spin-off could be adopted by governments as best practices. Research could trigger projects, and analysis could determine whether they should be validated and expanded through national governments, UNCTAD, or a partner organization. The same representative encouraged a communications strategy that would make analysis more accessible, perhaps through country profiles on the UNCTAD website.

10. Of the many activities commended, the Empretec programme was singled out by one delegate, who stated that entrepreneurship could be a driver of economic recovery, contributing to efforts to jump forward in development goals.

11. The secretariat concluded the session by emphasizing the difficulty in providing in-depth description of UNCTAD’s activities in support of Africa, given cost and time constraints. UNCTAD needs to get regular feedback from countries. The lessons drawn from representatives’ comments underscored the need to:

(a) provide member States with information on activities and offer quantitative analysis;

(b) examine the effects of initiatives by means of regular reviews, even though it is not always possible to reflect the reality on the ground since countries do not always provide information;

(c) identify resources to implement the many good suggestions offered by representatives.

## **B. Panel on African Food Security: Lessons from the Recent Global Food Crisis**

(Agenda item 2)

12. The afternoon session (from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. on 30 June 2009) was the venue for the Panel on African Food Security: Lessons from the Recent Global Food Crisis.

13. Opening remarks were made by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, Mr. Supachai Panitchpakdi. The keynote address was delivered by Mr. Akinwumi Adesina, Vice-President, Policy and Partnerships, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, Nairobi, Kenya. The panellists were Mr. John Gyetuah, Deputy Minister for Trade and Industry, Accra, Ghana; Mr. Marcel Mazoyer, Comparative Agriculture and Agricultural Development, National Agricultural Institute, Paris, France; and Mr. Jean Feyder, Permanent Mission of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Mr. David Nabarro — Assistant Secretary-General, Coordinator for the Global Food Security Crisis and Avian and Pandemic Influenza, United Nations System Influenza Coordination (UNSIC) — was the discussant. The presentations were followed by an interactive debate.

14. This paragraph presents the issues that were raised, as summarized by Mr. David Nabarro.

(a) Principles:

(i) The conditions that created the food security crisis in 2008 are still present, and we should not talk about it as something that is past.

(ii) Agriculture is key to the resilience of communities in Africa and in other parts of the world, to help them to face crises of many different kinds.

(iii) Africa can not only feed itself, but can also contribute to the requirements for food in many other parts of the world. And yet, at the moment, Africa is a net food importer.

(iv) Agriculture has to move from being a way of life for the majority of Africa's farmers, into becoming a business.

(b) What is the present situation and how have we got there?

(i) Africa's communities are food-insecure; they don't produce enough food, they don't access enough food, they don't utilize the food they do access, and there are high rates of malnutrition, particularly among women and children.

(ii) In much of Africa, food systems continue to be thoroughly dysfunctional. They have been characterized by extraordinary volatility and a long history of artificially depressed prices, which have created extremely adverse conditions

for Africa's farmers and have discouraged investment in improved productivity.

(iii) There has, therefore, been economic underperformance by African farmers at the local level. In addition, the very adverse trading environment has created, in recent years, a really global disadvantage for African agriculture.

(iv) The impact of this has been long-term social and economic handicap for African people, with chronic hunger and malnutrition leading to physical and mental underperformance, even many years after the episodes of undernourishment have occurred.

(c) A new paradigm:

(i) A new paradigm is emerging, with smallholder farmers and rural communities right at the heart, and with farmers' organizations being able to access increased value of their produce.

(ii) Women's interests and the interests of vulnerable people are coming to the centre of the discussion.

(iii) Breadbasket development must benefit smallholder farmers and trigger system-wide change.

(iv) The provision of smart subsidies for improved inputs and technologies is leading to the capacity for African farmers to have a supply response. We have seen examples of this in Malawi, in Rwanda, and in parts of Ghana, although there is much more to be done.

(v) There is recognition that current trading systems place substantial disadvantage on African countries, and that much attention needs to be paid to them if they are to function as they should. There are real opportunities now in the World Trade Organization for moving forward with agreements on agriculture.

(d) What progress are we seeing?

(i) We are seeing a great deal of interest in moving from underinvestment in agriculture to prioritizing agriculture and food security.

(ii) There is much interest in increased involvement in agriculture systems in Africa by businesses: local agri-businesses, and also regional and global businesses. African leaders are showing willingness to bring in the private sector.

(iii) Much effort is being undertaken to improve access to inputs and to markets, particularly through improved infrastructure such as ports and roads, feeder roads at the local level, post-harvest storage opportunities and processing.

(iv) There is a huge movement calling for fairer trade in agriculture, particularly in Africa.

(e) Promise:

(i) There is a huge African consensus for what has to be done.

- (ii) There is a recognition that something must be done about land acquisitions, and about trying to reduce the extent to which outsiders are acquiring land.
- (iii) There is much interest in ensuring that people are at the centre of trading and marketing systems and improved production.
- (iv) Overseas assistance is moving towards increased investment.
- (f) Partnership and participation:
  - (i) Wonderful new partnerships are emerging. The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) is one of the shining examples of what is available, but there is much more going on.
  - (ii) There is currently discussion and negotiation in Rome about a new revitalized committee on food security that brings together the public sector, the private sector, the voluntary sector, and farmers' organizations, and which has real promise.
  - (iii) We have an opportunity for coherence between 22 United Nations system organizations, including the Bretton Woods institutions, UNCTAD, the World Trade Organization and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.
  - (iv) There is an absolute determination not to repeat the mistakes of the past.

**C. Matters requiring action by the Board arising from or related to reports and activities of its subsidiary bodies**

(Agenda item 3)

15. The Board took note of the statement by Bangladesh on behalf of the LDCs that the LDCs would join the consensus on the topics for expert meetings only on the understanding that future expert meetings would have at least one session dedicated to the special needs of the LDCs in relation to the topic of the meeting.

**D. Report of the Trade and Development Commission on its first session, and agenda for its second session**

(Agenda item 3 (a))

**Report of the Trade and Development Commission on its first session**

16. The representative of Cuba, Mr. Fidel Ortega, speaking in his capacity as Rapporteur of the Trade and Development Commission, presented the Report of the Trade and Development Commission on its first session (TD/B/C.1/5).

17. The Board took note of the report and endorsed the agreed conclusions contained therein.

18. It was noted in the statement made by the representative of the Group of 77 and China — which was also supported by the statements of the African Group and the LDC Group — that due to time constraints, the Trade and Development Commission had been unable to arrive at an agreed outcome on the recommendations put forward by expert meetings and to support member States to

engage in constructive discussions to identify ways and means that could enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of commission meetings.

**Draft provisional agenda for the second session of the Trade and Development Commission**

19. The Trade and Development Board approved the following draft provisional agenda, as presented in document TD/B/EX(47)/L.2, for the second session of the Trade and Development Commission:

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Reports of expert meetings:
  - (a) Reports of the multi-year expert meetings — (titles to be added)
  - (b) Report of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Competition Law and Policy
  - (c) Reports of the single-year expert meetings — (titles to be added)
4. Successful trade and development strategies for mitigating the impact of the global economic and financial crisis
5. The contribution of tourism to trade and development
6. Promoting and strengthening synergies among the three pillars
7. Other business
8. Adoption of the report of the Commission to the Trade and Development Board.

**Topics for the second session of the Trade and Development Commission**

20. The Trade and Development Board approved the following topics, as presented in document TD/B/EX(47)/L.2, for the second session of the Trade and Development Commission:

1. Successful trade and development strategies for mitigating the impact of the global economic and financial crisis
2. The contribution of tourism to trade and development

**E. Report of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission on its first session, and agenda for its second session**

(Agenda item 3 (b))

21. The representative of Angola, Mr Rui Livramento, speaking in his capacity as Vice-Chair of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission, presented the Report of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission on its first session (TD/B/C.II/5).

22. The Board took note of the report and endorsed the agreed conclusions contained therein.

**Draft provisional agenda for the second session of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission**

23. The Trade and Development Board approved the following draft provisional agenda, as presented in document TD/B/EX(47)/L.2, for the second session of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission:

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Reports of expert meetings:
  - (a) Reports of the multi-year expert meetings — (titles to be added)
  - (b) Report of the Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting
  - (c) Reports of the single-year expert meetings — (titles to be added)
4. The role of States: efficiency in public investment for development — sharing best practices
5. Investment in the agricultural sector with a view to building productive capacities
6. Promoting and strengthening synergies among the three pillars
7. Other business
8. Adoption of the report of the Commission to the Trade and Development Board

**Topics for the second session of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission**

24. The Trade and Development Board approved the following topics, as presented in document TD/B/EX(47)/L.2, for the second session of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission:

1. The role of States: efficiency in public investment for development — sharing best practices
2. Investment in the agricultural sector with a view to building productive capacities

**F. Topics for single-year expert meetings for 2010**

(Agenda item 3 (c))

25. The Trade and Development Board approved the following topics for single-year expert meetings for 2010 (to report to both Commissions), as presented in document TD/B/EX(47)/L.2:

1. Green and renewable technologies as energy solutions for rural development
2. The contribution and effective use of external resources for development, in particular for productive capacity-building

#### **IV. Other business**

(Agenda item 4)

26. The Board welcomed Cambodia and Kyrgyzstan as members of the Trade and Development Board.

27. The Board approved the holding of a second UNCTAD public symposium with civil society in 2010.

28. The Board took note of the changes to the calendar of meetings and requested the secretariat to issue a revised calendar promptly, indicating the dates of the approved single-year and multi-year expert meetings.

#### **V. Report of the Board on its forty-seventh executive session**

(Agenda item 5)

29. At its closing plenary meeting, the Trade and Development Board authorized the Rapporteur to finalize the report on its executive session.

## Annex I

### Attendance<sup>†</sup>

1. Representatives of the following States members of the Trade and Development Board attended the session:

Algeria	Kenya
Argentina	Kuwait
Angola	Lebanon
Austria	Lesotho
Azerbaijan	Luxembourg
Bangladesh	Madagascar
Belarus	Malaysia
Belgium	Mauritius
Brazil	Mexico
Burkina Faso	Morocco
Burundi	Mozambique
Cameroon	Nepal
Chile	Nigeria
China	Pakistan
Colombia	Paraguay
Congo	Peru
Côte d'Ivoire	Poland
Cuba	Portugal
Czech Republic	Romania
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Russian Federation
Dominican Republic	Saudi Arabia
Egypt	Singapore
Ethiopia	South Africa
Finland	Spain
France	Sri Lanka
Germany	Sudan
Ghana	Sweden
Greece	Switzerland
Haiti	Thailand
Honduras	Turkey
India	Uganda
Indonesia	Ukraine
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	United Republic of Tanzania
Israel	United States of America
Italy	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Japan	Zimbabwe
Jordan	
Kazakhstan	

---

<sup>†</sup> For the list of participants, see TD/B/EX(47)/Inf.1.

2. Representatives of the following States members of UNCTAD that are not members of the Trade and Development Board attended the session:

Cambodia

3. The following observer attended the session:

Palestine

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

African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States

African Union

Economic Community of Central African States

European Community

5. The following specialized agencies and related organizations were represented at the session:

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

World Intellectual Property Organization

World Meteorological Organization

6. The following non-governmental organizations were represented at the session:

*General category*

Ingénieurs du monde

Lutheran World Federation

Ocaproce Internationale

Village Suisse ONG

7. The following panellists participated in the meeting:

Mr. Akinwumi **Adesina**, Vice-President, Policy and Partnerships, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, Nairobi, Kenya

Mr. Jean F. **Freymond**, President, Network for Governance, Entrepreneurship and Development

Mr. Marcel **Mazoyer**, Comparative Agriculture and Agricultural Development, National Agricultural Institute, Paris, France

Mr. David **Nabarro**, Assistant Secretary-General, Coordinator for the Global Food Security Crisis and Avian and Pandemic Influenza, United Nations System Influenza Coordination

Ms. Margaret **Nyirenda**, Director of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resources, Southern African Development Community Secretariat