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Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget

Seventy-second session

Geneva, 30 November–2 December 2015

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

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 30 November to 2 December 2015

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

Review of the proposed UNCTAD Biennial Programme Plan for the period 2018–2019

(Agenda item 3)

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

Having considered the proposed UNCTAD Biennial Programme Plan for the period 2018–2019,

1. *Agrees with* the draft proposed UNCTAD Biennial Programme Plan for the period 2018–2019, as contained in document TD/B/WP(72)/CRP.1/Rev.1, without prejudice to the necessary adjustments in light of the outcome of the fourteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XIV);

2. *Recommends* to the Secretary-General of UNCTAD that he take full account of document TD/B/WP(72)/CRP.1/Rev.1 as the basis for his submission of the draft proposed UNCTAD Biennial Programme Plan for the period 2018–2019 to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for subsequent review by the Committee for Programme and Coordination and by the General Assembly of the United Nations;

3. *Requests* the secretariat to make arrangements for the revision of the draft proposed UNCTAD Biennial Programme Plan for the period 2018–2019 in line with the outcome to be adopted at the fourteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to be held in July 2016;

4. *Emphasizes* that technical cooperation requests from member States are an indication of the importance and relevance of the work of UNCTAD and in this regard notes with concern the resource constraints for the fulfilment of these requests;

5. *Recommends* that efforts be made to ensure adequate resources towards addressing issues relating to the work of subprogramme 5, without adversely affecting the other subprogrammes;

6. *Requests* the secretariat to ensure that the relevant views expressed by member States during intergovernmental deliberations in Geneva, Switzerland, are transmitted in a timely manner to the entities dealing with programmatic and budgetary issues.

II. Chair's summary

A. Proceedings

1. The seventy-second session of the Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget was held in Geneva from 30 November to 2 December 2015, to review the proposed UNCTAD Biennial Programme Plan for the period 2018–2019.

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: the Philippines on behalf of the Group of 77 and China; the United Republic of Tanzania on behalf of the African Group; Argentina on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries; Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union and its member States; Canada on behalf of JUSSCANNZ; Egypt on behalf of the Arab Group; Morocco; China; and Mexico.

C. Informal meetings

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

D. Action by the Working Party

1. Review of the proposed UNCTAD Biennial Programme Plan for the period 2018–2019 (Agenda item 3)

4. The Working Party considered document TD/B/WP(72)/CRP.1 entitled “Proposed UNCTAD Biennial Programme Plan for the period 2018–2019”.

5. The Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD provided an overview of the budgetary process and of how the UNCTAD Biennial Programme Plan related to this process. He detailed the ongoing efforts and plans of the UNCTAD secretariat to improve its results-based management orientation. In addition, he provided an update on the implementation of various management improvement initiatives. Finally, he expressed his willingness to hold regular briefings on management issues, upon request by member States.

6. Several regional groups and delegations discussed the role of UNCTAD in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and other relevant mandates, as well as the importance of ensuring that UNCTAD programme plans appropriately captured elements arising from these mandates.

7. Some regional groups acknowledged the steps taken by the secretariat to mainstream results-based management into its work and into the Biennial Programme Plan. In this context, some regional groups and delegations noted various elements that still needed improvement in the logical frameworks of the various subprogrammes. The representative of one delegation emphasized that the use of results-based management approaches should not become a constraint on the work of the secretariat. Two regional groups stressed that indicators and results defined in the Biennial Programme Plan were only one of several elements to be considered in assessing the performance of UNCTAD.

8. Several regional groups noted that the Biennial Programme Plan had been based on the Accra Accord, the Doha Mandate and other relevant mandates, and in this context observed that the Plan would have to be reviewed with a view to reflecting the outcome of UNCTAD XIV. The secretariat confirmed that arrangements would be made after UNCTAD XIV for the Working Party to review the Biennial Programme Plan accordingly.

9. Two regional groups highlighted the importance of mainstreaming gender equality into the work of UNCTAD and of ensuring the availability, wherever possible, of gender disaggregated data.

10. The representative of one regional group expressed appreciation for support received from UNCTAD, particularly noting activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

11. The representative of one delegation stressed that the Biennial Programme Plan should follow the principle of inclusiveness, taking due account of the international context and ongoing global developments, while avoiding an approach based on the harmonization of policies.

12. Some regional groups and delegations expressed their appreciation of the update on management issues provided by the Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD, and noted their willingness to continue the dialogue and contribute to the management improvement efforts of UNCTAD. In addition, they communicated their interest in the regular briefings on management issues offered by the Deputy Secretary-General.

13. Two regional groups encouraged the secretariat to make arrangements for the timely translation of publications and other documents, including by liaising with the relevant offices of the United Nations Secretariat in Geneva and New York.

14. The representative of one regional group called for closer cooperation between UNCTAD and the International Trade Centre, as the latter entity is also responsible for the implementation of subprogrammes under Programme 10: Trade and development of the United Nations Strategic Framework.

15. Some regional groups expressed concern regarding the mismatch between resources available to the UNCTAD secretariat and the aspirations of member States with regard to its work. The representative of one regional group highlighted the importance of a balanced and fair distribution of resources between subprogrammes and divisions, so as to ensure a faithful reflection of the priorities defined by member States.

2. Agreed conclusions (Agenda item 3)

16. The Working Party adopted agreed conclusions on the proposed UNCTAD Biennial Programme Plan for the period 2018–2019.

III. Organizational matters

A. Election of officers

(Agenda item 1)

17. At the opening plenary meeting, on 30 November 2015, the Working Party elected Mr. Fredrick Matwang'a (Kenya) as its Chair and Ms. Debora Ponce Ogáldez (Guatemala) as its Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur.

B. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

(Agenda item 2)

18. At the same meeting, the Working Party adopted its provisional agenda (TD/B/WP/276). The agenda was thus as follows:

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Review of the proposed UNCTAD Biennial Programme Plan for the period 2018–2019
4. Provisional agenda for the seventy-third session of the Working Party
5. Other business
6. Adoption of the report of the Working Party to the Trade and Development Board

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

(Agenda item 4)

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

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

(Agenda item 6)

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

Annex I

Provisional agenda for the seventy-third 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) Follow-up on evaluations: Progress report on the implementation of recommendations from the external evaluation of UNCTAD subprogramme 3: International trade
5. Provisional agenda for the seventy-fourth 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 UNCTAD attended the session:

Algeria	Kazakhstan
Austria	Kenya
Bangladesh	Latvia
Belarus	Lithuania
Côte d'Ivoire	Namibia
Ecuador	Nigeria
Estonia	Pakistan
Ethiopia	Philippines
Finland	Poland
France	South Africa
Gabon	Spain
Greece	Sudan
Guatemala	Switzerland
Guinea	Trinidad and Tobago
Iraq	Turkey
Italy	United Republic of Tanzania
Jamaica	United States of America
Japan	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Jordan	Yemen

2. The following intergovernmental organization was represented at the session:

European Union

¹ This attendance list contains registered participants. For the list of participants, see TD/B/WP(72)/INF.1.