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Addendum

Programme questions: proposed programme budget for 2022

(Item 3 (a))

Programme 10

Trade and development

1. During its sixty-first session, the Committee considered programme 10, Trade and development, of the proposed programme plan for 2022 and programme performance information for 2020 ([A/76/6 \(Sect. 12\)](#) and [A/76/6 \(Sect. 13\)](#)). The Committee also had before it a note by the Secretariat on the review of the proposed programme plan, by sectoral, functional and regional bodies ([E/AC.51/2021/9](#)).

2. The Chair drew the attention of the Committee to the statements of the Acting Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Executive Director of the International Trade Centre (ITC) introducing the programme. The Acting Secretary-General and the Executive Director responded to questions raised by the Committee during its consideration of the programme.

Discussion

3. Delegations expressed appreciation for the presentation of the programme and expressed general support for the proposed programme plans of UNCTAD and ITC. A delegation remarked that UNCTAD and ITC were challenged to refocus parts of their work in terms of the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Appreciation was expressed for the important role and endeavour of UNCTAD and ITC in supporting developing countries, especially African countries, in participating in global trade and economy. Appreciation was also expressed for the



priority consideration given to their needs and interests in the context of the global economy.

4. A delegation expressed commitment to supporting developing countries in integrating into the global economy and taking full advantage of available trading opportunities and indicated that UNCTAD had an important role to play in that respect. The same delegation expressed the view that UNCTAD was well placed to contribute to an inclusive and resilient recovery from the pandemic and stressed that, to do so effectively, it was important that UNCTAD remain focused on results-based management. In that regard, clarification was sought as to whether the programmed activities of UNCTAD could remain focused on its comparative advantage and avoid duplication with other United Nations entities.

5. With respect to the programme plan for 2022 covering subprogrammes 1 to 5, implemented by UNCTAD, a delegation noted with satisfaction that the plan was based on the UNCTAD mandate across its three pillars of research and analysis, technical assistance and consensus-building and included the description of the contribution to certain Sustainable Development Goals. The delegation expressed general support for the proposed programme activities of UNCTAD for 2022, with the provision that the end date of the COVID-19 pandemic and its midterm consequences for global trade, investments and other related areas could not be predicted, and therefore highlighted that those activities could be subject to adjustments. The delegation also highlighted, as another critical issue, that the UNCTAD quadrennial period of work would be based on the outcomes of the fifteenth UNCTAD session, scheduled for October 2022, after the session of the Committee for Programme and Coordination. In that regard, clarification was sought as to when an amended version of programme 10, incorporating the decisions and benchmarks of the fifteenth UNCTAD session, was intended to be presented for consideration by Member States, as well as the procedure for such consideration by the relevant intergovernmental bodies in Geneva and New York.

6. A delegation expressed appreciation that the proposed programme plan for 2022 included new results, such as tearing down trade barriers, improving the participation of African countries in regional and global value chains, supporting recovery and resilience and promoting the digital economy and logistics. The same delegation recommended that UNCTAD further support developing countries as a priority during the implementation of its programme and subprogrammes in the following year. Another delegation expressed the hope that UNCTAD, in the framework of its subprogrammes, would continue to pay attention to all groups of developing countries, including landlocked developing countries, and to economies in transition, in accordance with the provisions of the Nairobi Maafikiano and previous outcome documents.

7. Appreciation was expressed for the evaluations completed during 2020, especially those on informal cross-border trade for the empowerment of women, economic development and regional integration in Eastern and Southern Africa and on trade and agricultural policies to support small-scale farmers and enhance food security. The view was expressed that the evaluations were relevant to the work being done towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 2.

8. With regard to result 3, advancement of analysis and policy proposals for monitoring the debt situation of developing countries, under subprogramme 1, Globalization, interdependence and development, a delegation noted that the performance measure for 2022 included a proposal for multilateral measures for debt alleviation and a fairer debt rescheduling framework (table 12.5) as follow-up to the performance measure for 2021, which included the organization of an international debt conference. The same delegation sought clarification as to how UNCTAD

assistance for developing countries would be provided through multilateral measures for debt alleviation and a fairer debt rescheduling framework. Another delegation noted the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on planned activities for 2022, such as the cancellation of training activities for developing country policymakers held every year in Wuhan, China, the impact on the subprogramme's participation in Paris Club meetings and the rescheduling of the session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Financing for Development (para. 12.32). The delegation sought clarification as to whether those activities and meetings had ultimately been undertaken and what the meeting facilitation experience had been during the pandemic period. The same delegation congratulated a country for the online launch of its industrialization strategy and expressed appreciation for the continuation of work and delivery even during the pandemic.

9. Attention was also drawn to the concern that UNCTAD had recently stopped translating its analytical materials into Russian. In that connection, it was emphasized that various stakeholders in Commonwealth of Independent States countries used such materials in their work and research and that it was therefore necessary to seek opportunities to ensure the resumption of their translation into Russian.

10. With respect to the programme plan for subprogramme 6, Operational aspects of trade promotion and export development, implemented by ITC, a delegation took note of the Centre's performance in 2020 and expressed general support for the proposed plan for 2022. The same delegation expressed the view that, to have a clear picture of the Centre's work, the subprogramme should include detailed information about ITC technical assistance activities, including information aggregated by region and group. The delegation expressed the view that the Centre's programme of work for 2022 should focus more on the interests of middle-income countries and economies in transition and highlighted that they, during the pandemic, had faced a wide range of socioeconomic difficulties despite the shift of attention of the global community to the needs of the least developed countries and small island developing States. The delegation also expressed the view that middle-income countries and economies in transition could not rely on debt relief or increased flows of official development assistance and emphasized that, in those terms, aid for trade remained one of the few sources of growth for them in overcoming the consequences of the pandemic.

11. A delegation also expressed support for the work of ITC and recognized its unique mandate within the United Nations and World Trade Organization systems. The delegation expressed appreciation in particular for the Centre's ability to leverage resources to work on a wide range of important themes, in particular the economic empowerment of women, South-South trade and more sustainable global and regional value chains. The same delegation noted that 55 per cent of ITC country-specific technical assistance was targeted to the least developed countries and sought further clarification as to what particular challenges those countries would face in terms of building back better from the COVID-19 pandemic and how the Centre envisaged adjusting its technical assistance in that respect. The delegation also welcomed the Executive Director's commitment to integrate audit and evaluation recommendations into the Centre's body of work and to continuously develop and implement its programme in an efficient and effective manner.

Conclusions and recommendations

12. **The Committee acknowledged the efforts of UNCTAD to promote fairer, more inclusive and more sustainable globalization and to pursue a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable global economic environment.**

13. The Committee noted the efforts of ITC to increase the international competitiveness of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries, especially the least developed countries and countries with economies in transition, for inclusive and sustainable growth and development through trade.
 14. The Committee supported programme evaluation and self-evaluation activities to ensure the effective and efficient implementation of organizations' programmes of work.
 15. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly support the continuation of UNCTAD and ITC evaluation processes, alongside agreed management and reform initiatives of UNCTAD.
 16. The Committee noted the engagement of UNCTAD with the United Nations development system reform and encouraged the Organization to continue its active involvement with the process.
 17. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of Programme 10, Trade and development, of the proposed programme budget for 2022.
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