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Trade and Development Board
Trade and Development Commission
Multi-year Expert Meeting on Services, Development and Trade:
the Regulatory and Institutional Dimension
Fourth session
Geneva, 23–24 February 2012
Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Provisional agenda and annotations

I. Provisional agenda

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
3. Services, development and trade: the regulatory and institutional dimension
4. Adoption of the report of the meeting

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

Item 1. Election of officers

1. It is recommended that the expert meeting elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur.

Item 2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

2. The provisional agenda for the expert meeting is reproduced in chapter I above. A detailed programme will be available one week before the meeting.

Documentation

TD/B/C.I/MEM.3/10 Provisional agenda and annotations

Item 3. Services, development and trade: the regulatory and institutional dimension

3. The fourth session of the multi-year expert meeting is being held under the decision taken at the forty-fourth executive session of the Trade and Development Board on 10 July 2008. The objective of the multi-year expert meeting is to assist developing countries, especially least developed countries (LDCs), and countries with economies in transition, in establishing policies as well as regulatory and institutional frameworks and cooperative mechanisms to support strengthening of their domestic services capacity and their efficiency, competitiveness and export capacity (para. 94(b), Accra Accord).
4. According to the decision of the Board, the fourth session of the multi-year expert meeting will (a) review trends and salient features of regulatory and institutional frameworks for infrastructure services (telecommunications, financial services, transport, energy and water supply), development and trade; (b) exchange experiences and best-fit practices for building human capital and institutional and regulatory frameworks based on sectoral and modal (including mode 4) case studies and policy reviews; and (c) assess their impact on development and identify practical solutions, options, capacity-building programmes and indicative guidelines/checklists of best-fit practices for policymakers and regulators. When addressing the above issues, particular emphasis will be given to the situation of Africa and of LDCs.
5. Infrastructure services sectors play an instrumental role in the economic and social development of all countries and have, in a number of cases, become an important component of their post-crisis recovery strategy. They have a strong impact on production, trade, economic competitiveness and the potential achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Moreover, competitive infrastructure services can act as a strong attraction for foreign direct investment. For infrastructure services to contribute successfully to the economic and social development of a country, the legal and regulatory environment must be supportive. Accordingly, the policy, regulatory and institutional framework of infrastructural services is becoming increasingly crucial to inclusive and sustainable development.
6. Building on the discussions undertaken and recommendations made in the first, second and third sessions held in 2009, 2010 and 2011, this meeting will examine the latest developments in infrastructure services, including new regulatory development therein, and seek to further clarify key issues related to establishing best-fit regulatory and institutional frameworks in the infrastructure services sectors in developing and least developed

countries. More specific attention will be given to the financial services sector where post-crisis regulatory reforms continue with possible implications for developing and least developed countries. The meeting will also address the interactions between regulation of and trade in infrastructure services. Finally, the meeting may provide guidance for UNCTAD's future work in this area.

7. To facilitate discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat has prepared an issues note. In addition, experts are encouraged to prepare brief papers on the subject under discussion. These papers will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received.

Documentation

TD/B/C.I/MEM.3/11 Services, development and trade: the regulatory and institutional dimension

Item 4. Adoption of the report of the meeting

8. The report of the expert meeting will be submitted to the Trade and Development Commission at its next session. The expert meeting may wish to authorize the Rapporteur, under the authority of the Chair, to prepare the final report after the conclusion of the meeting.

Input from experts

Experts nominated by member States are encouraged to submit brief papers (approximately 5–12 pages) as contributions to the work of the meeting. The papers will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received. They should be submitted to the UNCTAD secretariat in advance of the meeting, and addressed to Ms. Liping Zhang and Ms. Faustina Wilson Attobra, Palais des Nations, CH-1211, Switzerland; fax: 41 22 917 0044; e-mail: liping.zhang@unctad.org and faustina.attobra-wilson@unctad.org.