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COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
FOR DEVELOPMENT

Fourth session
Geneva, 17 May 1999
Agenda item 12

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ITS FOURTH SESSION

Draft Report

A. Opening of the session

1. The Commission on Science and Technology for Development held its fourth session in Geneva from 17 to 21 May 1999. The Commission held ... meetings (the 1st to the ...th meetings) and a number of informal meetings.

2. In his introductory statement, the **Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD** said that scientific and technological advances had profoundly changed the way people lived, and had improved the quality of life in some countries. However, the benefits of scientific knowledge and technology were not available to all, and it would only be by bridging the disparities in the standards of living between countries that international peace and development could be achieved. The importance of the Commission's role, therefore, as a global policy forum and adviser to the economic and Social Council and the General Assembly on scientific and technological issues could not be overstated.

3. The substantive theme of the current session had been well chosen: there was much to be gained from science and technology partnerships and networking in both a North-South and a South-South context, as underlined at the successful Partners for Development meeting in Lyon in November 1998, which had promoted cross-border and cross-sectoral partnerships between all development actors.

4. It was imperative that the international community should consider ways and means of facilitating the use of new technologies: United Nations agencies were already actively advancing the applications of new technologies in the areas of education, health care, environmental management, trade facilitation, agricultural production, administration and telecommunications.

5. The mastery of technology had become the defining element of sustainable economic and social development. It was therefore fitting that the current session should be addressing the issue of biotechnology, which, if appropriately directed, could help to combine sustainable development with increased output. Meanwhile, the common vision, which it would also be addressing, would provide a long-term perspective on the direction of the work of the Commission in the new millennium.

6. The **Director of the Division on Investment, Technology and Enterprise Development** said the so-called “new working style” followed by the Commission for the last five years or so had worked rather well in terms of the active participation of members of the Commission in the carrying out of the work programme and fund-raising, but had not been as effective in terms of diffusing the Commission’s outputs. A newly created website could help to enhance the diffusion of those outputs in the forthcoming inter-sessional period.

7. The combination of a major issue, such as biotechnology, and a “minor” theme, such as agriculture, had proved an effective way of approaching a single field of activity from multiple and complimentary perspectives, and the Commission might like to take a similar approach to the development of a work programme for the next inter-sessional period. In connection with that programme, she noted that the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1998/46, had called on the Commission to focus more on capacity-building and the transfer of technology, and had encouraged it to examine activities with practical applications, as well as to cooperate more closely with, *inter alia*, the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Trade and Development Board and the UNCTAD secretariat.

B. Attendance

8. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolutions 1998/46 and 1998/47 of 31 July 1998, the membership of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development was reduced from 53 to 33. Members are to be elected by the Economic and Social Council according to the following geographical distribution: eight members from African States; seven members

from Asian States; four members from Eastern European States; six members from Latin American and Caribbean States; and eight members from Western European and other States.

9. In its resolution 1998/47, the Council decided that there would be a drawing of lots for all seats, whether vacant or not, to stagger the terms of office of the new members according to the following pattern:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| African States | Four members for four years; four members for two years; |
| Asian States | Four members for four years; three members for two years; |
| Eastern European States | Two members for four years; two members for two years; |
| Latin American and Caribbean States | Three members for four years; three members for two years; |
| Western European and other States | Four members for four years; four members for two years. |

10. The session was attended by _____ States members of the Commission. Observers from other States Members of the United Nations and from non-member States and representatives of specialized agencies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations also attended. A list of participants is given in annex ____.

C. Election of officers

11. On 22 February 1999 the Commission elected, by acclamation, the following officers for its fourth session:

Vice-Chairpersons: Mr. Bernd Michael Rode (Austria)
Mr. Arnoldo Ventura (Jamaica)
Ms. Rolanda Predescu (Romania)

12. At the first meeting of its fourth session, on 17 May 1999, the Commission elected, also by acclamation, Mr. Henri Hogbe Nlend (Cameroon) as Chairperson.

D. Agenda and organization of work

13. At its first meeting, on 17 May 1999, the Commission decided to include in its provisional agenda a new agenda item entitled "Election of the Chairperson of the fourth session". The Commission then adopted its provisional agenda for the session (as contained in document E/CN.16/1999/1) as orally amended (see annex ____).

14. At the same meeting, the Commission also approved the organization of work for the session (see E/CN.16/1999/1/Add.1).

E. Documentation

15. The documents before the Commission at its fourth session are listed in annex ____ .

[to be completed]