



**United Nations  
Conference  
on Trade and  
Development**

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TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
Forty-first session  
Second part  
Geneva, 20 March 1995  
Agenda item 7

**PREPARATIONS FOR THE NINTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE**

Provisional agenda and agreed annotations  
for the ninth session of the Conference \*

**Promoting growth and sustainable development in a globalizing and liberalizing world economy**

Meeting the challenge of maximizing the developmental impact of globalization and liberalization, while minimizing the risks of marginalization and instability. Towards this end, the Conference will deal with the following topics:

1. **Development policies and strategies in an increasingly interdependent world economy in the 1990s and beyond**
  - (a) Assessment of the development problematique in the current context
  - (b) Policies and strategies for the future
2. **Promoting international trade as an instrument for development in the post-Uruguay Round world**
3. **Promoting enterprise development and competitiveness in developing countries and countries in transition**
4. **Future work of UNCTAD in accordance with its mandate; institutional implications.**

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\* As approved by the Trade and Development Board at its 858th plenary meeting on 31 March 1995. The Board requested the Officer-in-Charge of UNCTAD to complete the provisional agenda with the customary procedural and administrative items. The Board also took note of the secretariat background note annexed hereto.

Agreed annotations to the provisional agenda for UNCTAD IX

Against the background of an assessment of trends in the world economy, in particular those related to the processes of globalization and liberalization, the Conference will consider national and international policy approaches and measures for promoting growth and sustainable development.

**Topic 1 (a)**

The Conference will make an assessment of the fundamental trends in the international economic system, notably the growing and deepening interdependence among countries and sectors of the economy, in the light of their consequences for the development process. The Conference will examine in particular the opportunities for growth and development offered by the processes of globalization and liberalization in interlinked areas of trade, technology, money and finance, investment, services, commodities and environment, as well as the risks and potentially negative consequences that might be involved in these processes. The Conference could also examine the new and emerging issues within its competence in the perspective of their implications for trade and development.

**Topic 1 (b)**

The Conference will consider relevant national and international policies and strategies which are needed to enable developing countries to take full advantage of the opportunities for growth and development offered by the new global context while minimizing the risks of new imbalances and instabilities, including in international financial markets, and the potential marginalization of the least developed countries and other weaker economies. In this context the Conference will take into consideration the relevant problems of interested economies in transition. The Conference would also consider appropriate international support measures for enabling the least developed countries to participate more effectively in the globalization and liberalization processes, while taking into account the outcome of the Mid-term Global Review on the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries in the 1990s. Similar measures could also be considered for low-income countries and other structurally weaker economies such as those in Africa, with the aim of improving economic conditions through raising income levels and export earnings.

In this connection, the objective should be to build consensus on the elements of development cooperation and appropriate development policy approaches and strategies, both at relevant national and international levels, required for the future. In that context, the Conference should also pay attention, *inter alia*, to issues related to the problems of unemployment, poverty alleviation and sustainable development; policies to expand and consolidate progress in access to markets; the role of government as well as the public and private sectors in the development process; resource flows and external debt. The Conference would also address new approaches to South-South economic cooperation, as well as the role and potential impact on development of regional economic groupings in the globalizing and liberalizing world economy.

### **Topic 2**

The Conference should focus on the consideration of concrete policies, measures and actions, both at relevant national and international levels, needed to promote the integration of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, into the international trading system. The Conference would consider relevant national and international measures to facilitate the integration of interested economies in transition into the international trading system. In particular, the Conference should cover the following areas: the impact of the Uruguay Round Agreements on development; measures to assist developing countries to benefit fully from trading opportunities arising from the Round while making proposals for translating into concrete action the commitments made at the Ministerial Meeting in Marrakesh regarding the least developed countries and net food-importing countries; promoting complementarity between UNCTAD and WTO with a view to addressing trade-related development concerns of the developing countries; the evolution of the generalized system of preferences; measures for capacity-building in trade efficiency, including access to information technologies; the implications of information technologies for trade; trade and environment; the interrelationship between trade and competition policy; capacity building in developing countries in services and trading opportunities in this sector; reduction of the instability and risks faced by the commodity-export-dependent developing countries; promotion of commodity diversification; and efficient management of natural resources.

### **Topic 3**

The Conference will focus on the identification of concrete policies, measures and actions, both at relevant national and international levels, needed to create and promote entrepreneurship and an enabling environment for the development of internationally competitive enterprises, taking into account the promotion of small

and medium-size enterprises and their financing. Policy measures will be considered in an integrated manner covering areas such as encouragement of domestic and foreign investment; development of technological capabilities and transfer of technology; privatization and public-sector reform; interrelationship between competition and enterprise development.

#### **Topic 4**

The Conference will assess the work completed by UNCTAD since its eighth session, as well as the institutional reforms adopted at that session. The Conference will also consider the future role of UNCTAD, including its relationship with other international institutions to generate synergies among them. On the basis of UNCTAD's mandate and with a view to strengthening the United Nations system, the Conference should enable UNCTAD to become a more effective instrument for promoting development and the full integration of the developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, into the world economy and the international trading system. The Conference should take into consideration the need for the integration of the interested economies in transition into the world economy and the international trading system. Taking also into account the outcomes under topics 1, 2 and 3, the Conference would decide on the work programme implications and on the structures and orientations of the intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD.

The Conference will also consider, in accordance with the relevant decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, UNCTAD's contribution, within its competence, to the follow-up to the outcomes of major United Nations Conferences, including inter alia the World Summit for Social Development.

Annex

**Background to the provisional agenda for UNCTAD IX**

Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

1. The world economy appears to be fundamentally characterized by two closely linked, but distinct, processes: economic globalization and liberalization. These processes offer great opportunities for growth and development, but also entail risks of instability and marginalization both among and within nations. The challenge for national and international policy is to move in directions that maximize the developmental impact of globalization and liberalization while minimizing the risks of marginalization and instability. This challenge might serve as the basis for the formulation of the agenda of UNCTAD IX.

2. UNCTAD IX would thus consider relevant national and international policies and strategies for promoting growth and sustainable development against the background of a broad assessment of important trends in the world economy, which takes full account of the complex interlinkages among sectors and issues. At the same time, the fact should be recognized that, while a number of problems are common to all developing countries - and indeed, in some cases, to developed countries as well - some countries appear to be in need of special attention in the new context. Thus, particular consideration will have to be given to the problems of the LDCs, which must face globalization and liberalization from a situation of constraint stemming from infrastructural insufficiencies, debt overhang, commodity dependence, etc. Similar consideration should also be given to low-income countries and other weaker economies such as those in Africa.

3. The Conference should further aim at identifying concrete policies, measures and actions, at national and international levels, that can make a positive contribution to the goal of allowing developing countries, as well as countries in transition, to profit from the opportunities offered by a globalizing and liberalizing world economy, while minimizing risks and difficulties. This effort could be envisaged in the context of innovative and dynamic formats, with the involvement of the private sector, business, labour, academia, NGOs, local government, etc. Decision-making powers, however, would remain vested in member States. Thematically, consideration of concrete policies, measures and actions could be structured around a small number of basic topics that would stem from, but would however not necessarily exhaust, the wide range of issues covered in the discussions on broad trends in the world economy.

4. Special attention should be given to taking advantage of the opportunities offered by South-South cooperation. In a context characterized by rapid growth and economic dynamism in some developing regions and countries, and growing developing-developed country regional links, significant possibilities for complementarity and cooperation present themselves and should be fully explored.

5. The Conference will also provide an opportunity for member States to assess the institutional reforms adopted at UNCTAD VIII, and to consider the future role of UNCTAD in order to enhance its effectiveness. The Conference would also decide on the future orientation of the work of UNCTAD's intergovernmental bodies.

6. The goals of further strengthening international economic cooperation for development, based on the concept of Partnership for Development as defined in the Cartagena Commitment, and of confidence-building among countries for the promotion of growth and sustainable development, should guide the preparations for the Conference.

7. The Conference will also be guided by the outcomes of the major United Nations Conferences in the field of development that will have taken place since UNCTAD VIII. These include the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the United Nations International Symposium on Trade Efficiency. The Conference will also take into account in its deliberations the Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the Agenda for Development and the subsequent intergovernmental debate on this subject.