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**FINANCING THE PARTICIPATION OF EXPERTS FROM DEVELOPING
COUNTRIES AND COUNTRIES WITH ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION IN
UNCTAD EXPERT MEETINGS**

Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

Background

1. At the Mid-term Review in Bangkok in April/May 2002, the Board established guidelines for the functioning of the intergovernmental machinery. With regard to financing the participation of experts in expert meetings, members agreed to find, by the end of 2002, a long-term solution for predictable financing of the participation of experts in intergovernmental expert meetings based on the principle of equitable geographical representation, beneficiary needs, in particular LDCs, and the expertise of the experts concerned. They agreed that approximately \$280,000 (at 2002 prices) per year would be required to allow 10 experts to attend the expert meetings in 2002 and 2003.
2. At its twentieth special session in January 2003, the Board agreed that, on an experimental basis, participation of experts in UNCTAD expert meetings would be financed on the basis of extrabudgetary contributions. It also agreed that there would be a reserve fund that would be used to finance participation at any expert meeting for which there were not sufficient extrabudgetary contributions. More specifically, the Board decided that: the funds currently available to finance participation in expert meetings should constitute the reserve

fund; the process of obtaining extrabudgetary contributions for the expert meetings for 2003 (and future years) should begin immediately; funding for each expert meeting should be secured not later than three months before the meeting takes place; if sufficient funding was not available for a meeting, use should be made of the reserve fund; it would discuss the working of the scheme, including if necessary the issue of the replenishment of the reserve fund, in late September 2003 and regularly thereafter on the basis of an evaluation provided by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, in the light of the criteria established by the Board at its nineteenth special session.

Expert meetings in 2003

3. By the end of September 2003, six expert meetings will have been held. Each meeting held so far has been completed successfully and has benefited from the participation of experts from developing countries and countries with economies in transition whose attendance has been financed under the scheme. A total of 58 experts will have been financed, with experts coming from all regions and particular attention being paid to experts from LDCs. The breakdown of the experts selected for financing, by country and by gender, is provided in the annex to this document. This year's experience may therefore be regarded as reaffirming the contribution of expert meetings to the work of UNCTAD, the importance of ensuring the participation of all groups of countries in the meetings, and the value of financing the participation of experts from developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

Funding

4. According to Board decision 474 (S-XX), participation of experts in expert meetings in 2003 was to be funded by extrabudgetary contributions, with the reserve fund to be used only if extrabudgetary contributions were not sufficient to cover all expert meetings. At the beginning of 2003, the reserve fund amounted to \$219,000.

5. On 4 February 2003, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD sent a note to member States requesting extrabudgetary contributions to finance the participation of experts in expert meetings. To date, however, only one contribution of \$10,000 dollars has been pledged (by Saudi Arabia). As a result, funding for the participation of experts in all six expert meetings financed so far this year has been drawn from the reserve fund. As far as the remaining two expert meetings are concerned, since, according to Board decision 474 (S-XX), funding for each expert meeting should be secured not later than three months before the meeting takes place, and since the last expert meeting of the year is less than three months away, it can only be assumed for the present that funding for the last two meetings will also have to be drawn from the reserve fund. At present, with six expert meetings having been funded, the reserve fund (including the \$10,000 pledge) stands at \$45,822, which is enough to finance 15 experts. This means that by the end of the year it can be expected that the reserve fund will have been exhausted.

Evaluation

6. The criteria established by the Board at its nineteenth special session referred to finding a long-term solution for predictable and regular financing of participation of experts in expert meetings. In this connection, it must be noted that extrabudgetary contributions have so far not been forthcoming on anything like the required scale and, as a result, the reserve fund is likely to be completely depleted at the end of the first year of the scheme. It is therefore not clear at the present time whether financing will be available to fund the participation of experts from developing countries and countries with economies in transition in expert meetings in 2004. It would thus appear that the experimental scheme based on extrabudgetary contributions agreed upon by the Board at its twentieth special session does not so far seem to meet the requirement of providing a long-term solution for predictable and regular financing of expert participation in expert meetings.

7. In its discussions on this issue, if it wishes to continue with the experimental scheme, the Board may wish to consider means of replenishing the reserve fund and ensuring extrabudgetary contributions for 2004. If it does not wish to continue with the experimental scheme, it may wish to consider alternative solutions that meet the criteria it established at its nineteenth special session (Mid-term Review).

Annex

Table 1

Cost of individual expert meetings, June – September 2003

Meeting Title and Dates	No of Experts	Total cost US\$	Average cost per expert - US\$
EM on Effectiveness of FDI Policy Measures 25–27 June 2003	10	29,930	2,993
EM on Definitions and Dimensions of Environmental Goods and Services 9–11 July 2003	9	27,828	3,092
EM on Policies and Programmes for Technology Development & Mastery 16–18 July 2003	10	31,696	3,170
EM on Market Access Issues in Mode 4 29–31 July 2003	9	27,871	3,097
EM on Measuring E-Commerce 8–10 September 2003	10	29,384	2,938
EM on Development of Multimodal Transport and Logistic Services 24–26 September 2003	10	37,359	3,736
TOTAL	58	184,068	3,174

Table 2

Breakdown of experts selected for financing by country

	Countries with economies in transition	Africa	Asia	Latin America and Caribbean	Least developed countries
	2 Moldova 1 Russia 1 Serbia and Montenegro 1 Romania	1 Algeria 1 Cameroon 1 Egypt 1 Gabon 1 Ghana 2 Kenya 1 Mauritius 1 South Africa	1 China 4 Indonesia 1 Iran 2 Malaysia 1 Pakistan 3 Philippines 1 Thailand 1 Viet Nam	1 Argentina 1 Chile 2 Colombia 2 Cuba 1 Ecuador 1 Jamaica 2 Nicaragua 1 Panama 1 Trinidad and Tobago	1 Angola 4 Bangladesh 1 Cape Verde 2 Ethiopia 1 Nepal 1 Guinea 1 Lesotho 1 Madagascar 1 Malawi 2 Mali 2 Uganda 1 Zambia
Total experts	5	9	14	12	18
Total countries	4	8	8	9	12
GRAND TOTAL participants: 58					
GRAND TOTAL countries: 41					

Table 3
Breakdown of experts selected for financing by gender

Meeting Title and Dates	Women	%	Men	%	Total No. Experts
EM on Effectiveness of FDI Policy Measures 25–27 June 2003	0	0	10	100	10
EM on Definitions and Dimensions of Environmental Goods and Services 9–11 July 2003	2	22	7	78	9
EM on Policies and Programmes for Technology Development & Mastery 16–18 July 2003	1	10	9	90	10
EM on Market Access Issues in Mode 4 29–31 July 2003	4	44	5	56	9
EM on Measuring E-Commerce 8–10 September 2003	2	20	8	80	10
EM on Development of Multimodal Transport and Logistic Services 24–26 September 2003	3	30	7	70	10
TOTAL	12	21	46	79	58

Table 4
Breakdown of experts selected for financing by country grouping

Meeting Title and Dates	Transition economies	%	Africa	%	Asia	%	Latin America	%	Total No. Experts	%
EM on Effectiveness of FDI Policy Measures 25-27 June 2003	1	10.0	4	40.0	3	30.0	2	20.0	10	100
EM on Definitions and Dimensions of Environmental Goods and Services 09-11 July 2003	1	11.1	2	22.2	4	44.4	2	22.2	9	100
EM on Policies and Programmes for Technology Development and Mastery 16-18 July 2003	1	10.0	4	40.0	3	30.0	2	20.0	10	100
EM on Market Access Issues in Mode 4 29-31 July 2003	0	0.0	3	33.3	3	33.3	3	33.3	9	100
EM on Measuring E-Commerce 08-10 September 2003	1	10.0	4	40.0	3	30.0	2	20.0	10	100
EM on Development of Multimodal Transport and Logistic Services 24-26 September 2003	1	10.0	4	40.0	3	30.0	2	20.0	10	100
TOTAL	5	8.6	21	36.2	19	32.8	13	22.4	58	100