



United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Distr.: General
2 March 2009

Original: English

Trade and Development Board

Trade and Development Commission

First session

Geneva, 11–15 May 2009

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

Promoting and strengthening synergies among the three pillars

Progress report on the implementation of the provisions of the Accra Accord related to key trade and development issues

Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

Executive summary

Paragraph 201 of the Accra Accord stipulates that the role of commissions is to, inter alia, promote and strengthen synergies among the three pillars of UNCTAD – namely consensus-building, research and analysis, and technical cooperation. To assist the Trade and Development Commission in this regard, the UNCTAD secretariat has prepared this progress report on its implementation in 2008 (unless indicated otherwise) of the provisions of the Accra Accord related to key trade and development issues, namely (a) paragraphs 89, 90 and 94–107 under section C of sub-theme 2 on key trade and development issues and the new realities in the geography of the world economy; and (b) paragraph 170 of sub-theme 3 on enhancing the enabling environment at all levels to strengthen productive capacity, trade and investment: mobilizing resources and harnessing knowledge for development. Support specific to least developed countries (LDCs) is also reported. UNCTAD contributed to generating evidence-based analysis, promoting constructive intergovernmental deliberations, and filling capacity gaps in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to help them integrate beneficially into the international trading system. There is close synergy promoted among the three in most areas of work, with one or two pillars emphasized in some, depending on the nature of work involved.

1. Paragraph 89 of the Accra Accord states: “UNCTAD’s contribution on trade and development should continue through analytical, consensus-building and technical assistance work in the areas of international trade in goods, services and commodities and the international trading system as provided below. UNCTAD should enhance its work on the linkages between trade and internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). UNCTAD should continue to cooperate closely with other international organizations and foster coordination of system-wide United Nations activities in the area of trade and development.”
2. Paragraph 96(d) of the Accra Accord states that UNCTAD should also “strengthen its work on the linkages between trade and internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals, including poverty reduction and gender equality.”
3. UNCTAD’s work on international trade is directed at strengthening the contribution of trade to the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs. In this regard, several development challenges emerged in 2008 and UNCTAD responded, through interdivisional collaboration, to assist developing countries and the international community address them through trade-related measures. These included the global food crisis, the changing energy economy, and climate change. The UNCTAD Secretary-General’s ad-hoc Task Force on the Global Food Crisis, established in May, articulated UNCTAD’s response, and contributed to the United Nations Secretary-General’s High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Crisis. It prepared the publication *Addressing the Global Food Crisis: Key Trade, Investment and Commodity Policies in Ensuring Sustainable Food Security and Alleviating Poverty* (UNCTAD/OSG/2008/1).
4. Mid-2008 witnessed rapid increases in oil prices that stimulated concerns about the possible impact on trade and development prospects of developing countries. The subsequent crash in energy prices towards the end of the year has not alleviated such concerns. With a view to providing a perspective on the changing energy economy and the implications for trade, investment and development, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD created an interdivisional Task Force on Energy, in July. This task force is producing a report (forthcoming) on the trade and development perspectives of the emerging global energy economy. It also contributed to the preparation of the secretariat’s report on Energy-related issues from the trade and development perspective (TD/B/C.I/2) for consideration at the first session of the Trade and Development Commission.
5. With the deterioration global financial and economic crises, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD created two ad hoc interdivisional task forces, on “Systemic Issues and Economic Cooperation” (November) and on “The Impact of the Economic Crisis on Trade and Development in Developing Countries” (February 2009).
6. The high-level segment of the fifty-fifth session of the Trade and Development Board considered the topic of “Trade and productive capacities for achieving internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals”. The background note prepared by the secretariat for this topic (TD/B/55/3) was drafted by an interdivisional task force set up by the Secretary-General. The Board’s deliberations were transmitted to the United Nations High Level Event on MDGs held in New York in October.
7. Contributions were also made by UNCTAD in respect of international trade to efforts aimed at enhancing international consensus on strengthening the development work of the United Nations, including to the United Nations General Assembly, and to the preparatory events for the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus. For the latter,

UNCTAD contributed to review sessions on chapters falling within its expertise, including on “International trade as an engine for development”, held in May in New York. It also participated in the Follow-up International Conference in Doha in November, wherein the input of the Trade and Development Board was circulated.

8. UNCTAD is a member of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators (IAEG) of the United Nations Secretariat. It provides data and analysis for the update of two indicators of MDG 8 on Market Access, namely, Indicator 38 (Proportion of total developed country imports from developing countries and least developed countries, admitted free of duty) and Indicator 39 (Average tariffs imposed by developed countries on agricultural products and textiles and clothing from developing countries). The IAEG prepared the *Millennium Development Goals Report 2008* and the United Nations Secretary-General’s annual report to the General Assembly on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration.

9. As regards gender equality, UNCTAD convened an International Conference on Moving towards Gender Sensitization of Trade Policy in India (New Delhi, February). The report of the conference (UNCTAD/DITC/TNCD/2008/2) is being disseminated. Following the adoption by the Trade and Development Board of the topic “mainstreaming gender in trade policy” for a single-year expert meeting, UNCTAD is preparing the meeting scheduled for 10–11 March 2009 in Geneva.

10. Regarding technical assistance, UNCTAD supports several developing countries in developing national trade policies that promote export-driven strategies which also specifically integrate poverty reduction aspects. For example, the UNCTAD/United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID)/India Project on Strategies and Preparedness for Trade and Globalization in India laid a particular emphasis in 2008 on helping India to identify and address some poverty-sensitive areas in trade. UNCTAD is assisting Papua New Guinea in developing an endogenous trade policy that will focus on promoting exports and help achieve the MDGs. Similar support is being provided to Rwanda in developing a comprehensive trade policy framework that is pro-poor.

11. UNCTAD continues to cooperate closely with other international organizations and fosters coordination of system-wide United Nations activities in the area of trade and development. In respect of system-wide efforts to bring about greater coordination and synergy and to produce joint outputs, mention can be made of the International Trade Cluster (led by UNCTAD) of the Executive Committee of the Economic and Social Affairs (ECESA).¹ Members of the cluster coordinated their budgetary proposals on international trade for the United Nations 2010–11 programme budget preparations. International Trade Cluster members also contributed to the preparation, with the United Nations University, of a publication on Aid for Trade and Development – Global and Regional Perspectives (forthcoming). UNCTAD is also a member of (and takes the lead) in the Chief Executives Board Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity.

12. Paragraph 90(a) of the Accra Accord states that UNCTAD should “continue to monitor and assess the evolution of the international trading system and of trends in international trade from a development perspective, and in particular analyse issues of concern to developing countries, placing greater emphasis on practical solutions”.

13. UNCTAD prepared and serviced the Trade and Development Board’s deliberation at its fifty-fifth session in September under the agenda item “an evolution of the broader international trading system and of international trade from a development perspective”.

¹ ECESA aims to bring coherence and common approaches among United Nations entities engaged in normative, analytical and technical work in the economic and social field.

The deliberations were facilitated by the secretariat's note (TD/B/55/4). The main issues raised are reported in the President's summary (which was later provided to the United Nations General Assembly).

14. UNCTAD prepared the annual United Nations Secretary-General's report "International Trade and Development" to inform the General Assembly on recent developments in international trade. The 2008 report highlighted the negotiating issues emerging in the Doha negotiations in the run-up to and following the World Trade Organization (WTO) mini-ministerial meeting in July. In November, UNCTAD participated in the discussions of the sixty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly on the subject, together with the President of the Trade and Development Board.

15. UNCTAD provided analytical inputs into the *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2009*, published jointly with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional commissions.

16. Paragraph 90 of the Accra Accord states that UNCTAD should, inter alia, "(b) Continue its work on developments in the post-Doha work programme of particular concern to developing countries; (c) Help develop capacities in developing countries and countries with economies in transition to establish their own negotiating priorities, and their capacity to negotiate and implement bilateral, regional and multilateral trade agreements; ... (f) Promote coherence and consistency of regional trade agreements with the multilateral trading system; (g) Support and strengthen regional cooperation mechanisms."

17. UNCTAD assisted Geneva- and capital- based trade negotiators and policymakers in developing countries and country groupings in their preparations for participation in the Doha negotiations in the run-up to the July mini-ministerial meeting and its follow-up in December. Substantive support was provided to ministerial and other high-level meetings of regional groupings (Maseru, February).

18. UNCTAD provided advisory services, upon request, for the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) on ACP-European Union (EU) negotiations for economic partnership agreements (EPAs). Support was provided to the ACP States in Geneva on issues interfacing the Doha negotiations and negotiations of EPAs, including the developmental aspects of WTO rules on regional trade agreements, agriculture and non-agricultural market access, as well as services. In April, substantive support was extended to the African Union (AU) in preparation of its ministerial meeting on EPA negotiations. Technical support was provided to regional groups and individual ACP States in their preparation for EPA negotiations on specific technical issues. Substantive contribution was made at national and regional consultative events.

19. UNCTAD provided support in institution and capacity-building on services assessment and negotiations to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) member States. In 2008, UNCTAD contributed to various national and regional consultative meetings and technical workshops.

20. A number of analytical reports were prepared.

21. UNCTAD continued to develop knowledge and skills in developing countries and to strengthening their institutional capacities to deal with dispute settlement in international trade, investment and intellectual property. It produced and disseminated 40 training modules on trade and investment dispute settlement, and provided training to Government officials, lawyers and trade negotiators and other stakeholders. One training course was organized in Saudi Arabia in June on Dispute Settlement: Introduction to Dispute Settlement; Agreements on Antidumping, Subsidies, and Safeguards.

22. Paragraph 90(d) of the Accra Accord states that UNCTAD should "intensify its trade and trade-related technical cooperation and capacity-building activities. It should

strengthen its contribution to the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries and the Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Programme (JITAP).”

23. UNCTAD participated in implementing JITAP, with WTO and the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (ITC). The programme expired in December 2007 and in 2008 the partner agencies, together with beneficiaries and donors, met and discussed ways of strengthening capacity-building support to African countries in engaging in the multilateral trading system. African countries continued to benefit from general technical assistance provided by the respectively by the three implementing agencies and donors.

24. Paragraph 90(e) of the Accra Accord states that UNCTAD should “continue to provide and strengthen technical support to and cooperation with developing countries, according to their level of development, particularly LDCs and countries with economies in transition, prior to, during and in the follow-up to their WTO accession process”.

25. UNCTAD assists 19 acceding countries, including all acceding LDCs, in their WTO accession negotiations. Such assistance includes advisory services on policy and regulatory reform, institution-building, training of government officials, preparation of impact studies (global and sectoral), national multi-stakeholder consultative meetings, preparation of documentation and market access offers and logistical support. The main donors to this programme are Germany, Norway and the United Kingdom. UNCTAD’s work on WTO accession was evaluated positively by independent evaluators and commended by the Working Party on Medium Term Plan and Programme Budget, including at its fifty-first session.

26. Advisory services, field missions and capacity-building activities on WTO accession, including Geneva-based training, were undertaken by UNCTAD for the following countries: Afghanistan (March, May); Algeria (January, February, April); Azerbaijan (February, April, November); Belarus (October, November); Bhutan (February, May, June, September); Bosnia and Herzegovina (March, July); Cape Verde (November); Ethiopia (March, April); Kazakhstan (May); Iraq (November); the Lao People’s Democratic Republic (February, March, May); Sudan (February, September); the Syrian Arab Republic (June, October); and Yemen (May).

27. Paragraph 90(h) of the Accra Accord states that UNCTAD should “examine ways of improving the utilization of trade preferences and of making preference schemes more predictable, and continue its work on the issue of erosion of preferences”.

28. UNCTAD continued to promote awareness and understanding among developing countries to better utilize preferences available under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) through regular provision of information on a dedicated GSP website, compilation and updating of GSP trade data, publication of GSP handbooks and newsletters, and providing other technical and administrative services. Several GSP handbooks and a study on rules of origin are in preparation. Seminars on various GSP schemes and rules of origin were held for Yemen (15–16 May) and Iraq (November). The seminars benefited from cooperation with preference-granting countries and groups of countries (Canada, the European Commission (EC), Japan and the United States), and partner agencies such as WTO and the Inter-American Development Bank. It also produced an analytical report on “The Costs of Rules of Origin in Apparel: African Preferential Exports to the United States and the European Union” (UNCTAD/ITCD/TAB/40).

29. Paragraph 90(i) of the Accra Accord states that UNCTAD should “assist developing countries, in particular LDCs, in integrating trade and development concerns into their national development plans and poverty reduction strategies”.

30. UNCTAD is supporting efforts in several developing countries to develop national trade policies and measures as integral aspects of their national development strategies. Such support is being provided to Papua New Guinea and Rwanda. UNCTAD is also involved in One United Nations” pilot countries and the Enhanced Integrated Framework for LDCs that would also focus on integrating trade into national development plans.

31. Paragraph 90(j) of the Accra Accord states that UNCTAD should “assist structurally weak, vulnerable and small economies in their efforts to integrate into the multilateral trading system and to address their exposure to internal and external economic shocks”.

32. Through its support to Geneva- and capital- based trade negotiators and policymakers in developing countries in their preparations for participation in the WTO Doha negotiations, UNCTAD provides expert advice, upon request, on the specific developmental concerns of weak, vulnerable and small economies. Such support is also provided to groupings of involving such countries as the ACP States, which includes many small and vulnerable economies.

33. Paragraph 94 of the Accra Accord states: “UNCTAD should strengthen its comprehensive work on services, trade and development by: (a) Enhancing its analysis of the capacity of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to increase their participation in global services production and trade; (b) Assisting developing countries and countries with economies in transition in establishing regulatory and institutional frameworks and cooperative mechanisms to support strengthening of their domestic services capacity and its efficiency and competitiveness; (c) Providing support in national services assessment and policy reviews; (d) Examining issues relating to the liberalization of trade in services and its development impact, including at the regional level; (e) Giving attention to multilateral rule-making in services, taking into account the interests and concerns of developing countries; (f) Fostering recognition of qualifications and standards; (g) Providing support to multilateral and regional negotiations on services; and (h) Strengthening services data and statistics.”

34. Technical assistance and customized support, including specialized training, was extended by UNCTAD to policymakers and negotiators in developing countries and country groupings – such as the LDCs, African Group, SADC and the Andean Community – in defining national and regional strategies and policies to build services supply capacities, and in preparing themselves for the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and other trade negotiations in respect of both market access and rule-making negotiations. A regional workshop on trade in services for Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración (ALADI), member States was organized, in cooperation with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in Chile in November.

35. Support was also provided with regard to the assessment of trade in service through National Services Policy Reviews. Such reviews in 2008, with DFID financial support, were launched in (a) Uganda on construction, insurance and professional services; (b) Kyrgyzstan on energy and tourism services; and (c) Nepal on education, information and communication technology (ICT) and tourism services. National consultative workshops were held in Uganda (September) and Kyrgyzstan (November).

36. In addition to region-specific studies noted previously for SADC and the Andean Community, a report was prepared on “Infrastructure Services, Development and Trade: the Regulatory and Institutional Dimension” (TD/B/C.I/MEM.3/CRP.1).

37. Following the adoption by the Trade and Development Board of the multi-year expert meeting topic of “Services, development and trade: the regulatory and institutional dimension”, the first session is being prepared (Geneva, 17–19 March 2009).

38. Paragraph 95 of the Accra Accord states: “Without prejudice to the work undertaken in other forums and in cooperation with other organizations, UNCTAD, within its mandate and in relation to the contribution of migrants to development, should conduct research and analysis on the potential benefits and opportunities of trade, investment and developmental links between countries of origin of migrants and their communities abroad.”

39. Paragraph 170 of the Accra Accord states: “Without prejudice to the work undertaken in other forums and in cooperation with other organizations, UNCTAD, within its mandate, should continue to analyse the potential of migrants’ remittances to contribute to development. It should focus on ways to expand the access of migrants to financial services, maximize the benefits derived from such remittances and minimize the cost through appropriate policies, while respecting their character as private funds.”

40. UNCTAD is a member of the inter-agency Global Migration Group (GMG). It contributed to a workshop on labour migration (March) and the International Symposium on International Migration and Development (June), in the run-up to the High-Level Dialogue on Migration (September). UNCTAD also contributed to relevant analyses and meetings on migration organized by partner agencies. It also provided inputs to the United Nations Secretary-General’s report on International Migration and Development, as well as the GMG Report on Human Rights and Migration. From May to December, UNCTAD held the chair of the GMG and coordinated its work in the preparation of the Global Forum for Migration and Development (October, Manila). UNCTAD also contributed to a paper entitled “Mauritius pilot project on circular migration: labour market needs in receiving countries” delivered at the EC–Mauritius Workshop on Circular Migration (September). Through these activities, UNCTAD raised the importance of potential benefits and opportunities of trade, investment and developmental links between countries of origin of migrants and their communities’ abroad.

41. Paragraph 96(a) of the Accra Accord states that UNCTAD should also “help strengthen the participation of developing countries in dynamic and new sectors of world trade”.

42. During 2005–08, UNCTAD was engaged in a public–private partnership with Royal Philips Corporation to explore possibilities and prerequisites for establishing an energy-saving light-bulb industry in the Southern African region (the “Amandla project”). As a result, Royal Philips Corporation announced the establishment of its joint venture with Southern African companies to manufacture energy-saving lamps, as well as recycling plant in Lesotho. With support from Norway, UNCTAD has been undertaking international research, case studies and technical cooperation on ways to strengthen participation of selected developing countries, particularly LDCs and African countries, in dynamic and new sectors of world trade. This project will be completed with a comprehensive publication in 2009.

43. UNCTAD launched implementation of a Development Account project on enhancing effective participation of developing countries in dynamic and new sectors of international trade. This project builds upon lessons learned from UNCTAD’s intergovernmental reviews of dynamic and new sectors of world trade (conducted in 2005–07), including specific requests from member States. The project will focus on three subregions and three countries in each of developing regions (Africa, Asia and Latin America) and on one subregion with countries with economies in transition.

44. UNCTAD continued to provide policy advice and technical assistance to Governments putting in place multidisciplinary policies and institutional mechanisms for enhancing the creative economy. It has been proactive in facilitating the sharing of knowledge and best practices, forging strategic alliances and networking among Governments, creators, the business community and civil society through its quarterly e-

newsletter “Creative Economy & Industries”. UNCTAD is also participating in a multi-agency pilot project to enhance the economic, social, and cultural potential of the creative industries in ACP States. Launched in 2008, the project at present covers five ACP countries: Fiji, Mozambique, Senegal, Trinidad and Tobago, and Zambia.

45. Paragraph 96 of the Accra Accord states that UNCTAD should also “(b) Address the trade and development impact of non-tariff barriers; [and] (c) Further improve and disseminate its analytical tools, such as the Trade and Development Index, and databases and software, such as TRAINS–WITS”.

46. UNCTAD led the Multi-Agency Support Team on Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) in a partnership to undertake ahead of the curve work on NTBs. The team is developing a new classification of NTBs, and proposed several data collection methods. These are now being tested through a pilot project in seven developing countries (Brazil, Chile, India, the Philippines, Thailand, Tunisia and Uganda). UNCTAD also produced a report on *Non-tariff Barriers in Computable General Equilibrium Modelling* (UNCTAD/ITCD/TAB/39) in October 2008.

47. UNCTAD continued to strengthen its trade data and analytical tools to assist the analytical work of policymakers, trade negotiators, academics, civil society and businesses. The Trade Analysis and Information System (TRAINS) database was updated and contains tariff data and matching import statistics for 122 countries (as of December 2008). The TRAINS– World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS) analytical tool has helped in identifying and addressing market access barriers and trade opportunities, as well as in promoting more informed participation of developing countries in trade negotiations. Over 6,000 new licenses were issued to users of WITS during 2008. A new tripartite agreement is being negotiated with the World Bank and ITC for the modernization of WITS software and integration of TRAINS database into a Common Analytical Market Access Database, which was developed jointly by UNCTAD, WTO and ITC. The Agricultural Trade Policy Simulation Model contains updated tariff data for 2008, as well as a refined simulation tool to analyze sensitive and special agricultural products.

48. UNCTAD organized training workshops and advisory missions on its databases and analytical tools, mainly TRAINS–WITS utilization techniques and capacities. The workshops were held in Geneva and New York (for delegates and academics) in May and December respectively; in Argentina (Buenos Aires, November); Cambodia (Phnom Penh, June); the Dominican Republic (Santo Domingo, December); Guinea (Conakry, April); Panama (Panama City, November); and the Syrian Arab Republic (Damascus, October).

49. UNCTAD, together with WTO and ITC produced the joint publication *World Tariff Profiles 2008*, which was released in October, drawing upon their joint trade database. This is the second edition of the annual publication containing information on applied and bound customs tariffs for more than 160 countries.

50. Paragraph 97 of the Accra Accord states that UNCTAD should “promote and support economic cooperation among developing countries, including through the exchange of experiences and institution-building. It should upgrade its data and analytical tools on South–South trade and strengthen related technical assistance programmes. It should also continue its support for the revitalization and greater utilization of the Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries and other initiatives that stimulate South–South trade.”

51. Following the adoption by the Trade and Development Board of the topic of “International Cooperation: South-South Cooperation and Regional Integration” for multi-year expert meeting, an interdivisional working group prepared the background note (TD/B/C.II/MEM.2/2) and serviced the meeting (Geneva, 4–5 February 2009).

52. UNCTAD continued to service the Agreement on Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries (GSTP) and supported its second round of negotiations, following upon the decision taken by member countries in Accra, Ghana, in April. It also provided and supported regional economic cooperation and integration among developing countries in negotiating services agreements (noted earlier). UNCTAD's South-South Trade Information System was updated.

53. UNCTAD hosted the Third Annual Meeting of the General Assembly of the Global Network of Exim Banks and Development Finance Institutions, in Geneva in April. It brought together 15 regional institutions serving more than 80 countries to discuss South-South cooperation and identify opportunities and concrete activities to implement in 2008-09. Its next meeting will be in Geneva in May 2009.

54. Together with the secretariats of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), UNCTAD organized regional seminars for participants from ECOWAS/WAEMU member States in Mali (Bamako, May) on the implementation of common competition rules. UNCTAD also assisted the newly established Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Competition Commission and its commissioners on the implementation of the regional competition regulations and rules, through a seminar held in Lilongwe, Malawi, in April.

55. A Regional Basic Competition Seminar for Countries of Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) was organized by UNCTAD together with the Zambia Competition Commission and Competition and Tariff Commission of Zimbabwe in Siavonga, Zambia (May). The seminar provided enhanced training skills in the administration and enforcement of competition law and policy to officials responsible for investigation of anti-competitive practices and merger control enforcement in many ESA countries. Within the framework of the ESA-EU EPA negotiations, UNCTAD advised on the preparation of the ESA-EU competition and consumer policy text during the meetings held in Lilongwe, Malawi (April) and in Lusaka, Zambia (May). UNCTAD also provided advisory assistance on the implementation of the SADC Cooperation Agreement on Competition Law and Policy (August, Gaborone, Botswana).

56. Paragraph 98 of the Accra Accord states: "UNCTAD's work on energy-related issues should be addressed from the trade and development perspective, where relevant in the context of UNCTAD's work on commodities, trade and environment, new and dynamic sectors, and services."

57. The Secretary-General of UNCTAD created an interdivisional Task Force on Energy that has prepared a comprehensive report (forthcoming). It also prepared the background note on the subject for the first session of the Trade and Development Commission. The deliberations of the commission may generate new ideas facing the emerging energy economy and enhancing its contribution to development.

58. The Amandla project (noted earlier) is an initiative that will also address the electricity needs of people in the Southern Africa region, especially the poor.

59. UNCTAD's BioFuels Initiative continued to assist developing countries in assessing their potential in embarking on the use and production of biofuels as an emerging trade, investment and energy-alternative opportunity, while paying due consideration to food security and other concerns.

60. In August, UNCTAD provided assistance to the newly established Swaziland Competition Commission on skills in merger assessment. In September, the commission was assisted in assessing a merger case in the energy sector. The Government of Swaziland

was made aware of anti-competitive practices in the energy sector and commissioned a consultancy to formulate a national energy policy.

61. As and when requested in the process of WTO negotiations, UNCTAD assisted acceding countries in assessing issues on reform of the energy sector, such as for Kyrgyzstan.

62. Paragraph 99 of the Accra Accord states: “UNCTAD should continue its work under the Biofuels Initiative, striving to maximize trade and development gains for developing countries and countries with economies in transition while minimizing the potentially adverse environmental and social aspects of the biofuel option.”

63. UNCTAD’s BioFuels Initiative continued to assist developing countries in their policy analysis and decision-making process on whether biofuels are an option for them in achieving energy security and sustainable development goals. As a result of an UNCTAD XII side event in April on Biofuels, a partnership has been developed between UNCTAD’s BioFuels Initiative and Cordaid (a Dutch action-oriented think tank with vast experience in Africa) in assisting small producers of biofuels to be incorporated within agricultural value chains, thereby increasing their income. The biofuels option has to be well assessed, planned and sequenced to offer win-win-win opportunities to developing countries.

64. Analytical studies were conducted by UNCTAD on some sensitive issues affecting biofuels. These included the study *Making Certification Work for Sustainable Development: the Case of Biofuels* (UNCTAD/DITC/TED/2008/1), and another study on *The Biofuels Market: Current Situation and Alternative Scenarios*. The latter report was discussed at a side event organized by the Global Bioenergy Partnership (GBEP) during the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (December 2008, Poznan, Poland).

65. UNCTAD’s Biofuels Initiative continued to offer a facilitating hub for initiatives already underway in a number of institutions. It has maintained its partnerships with intergovernmental organizations, Governments, applied research centres, non-governmental organization, and relevant initiatives.

66. Paragraph 100 of the Accra Accord states: “UNCTAD, within its mandate and without duplicating the ongoing work of other organizations, should consider climate change in its ongoing work of assisting developing countries with trade- and investment-related issues in development strategies.”

67. UNCTAD implements a Climate Change Programme which brings Governments, industry and civil society together to address climate change through trade and investment, focusing on the economic and development implications of climate change. Through this programme, UNCTAD actively participated in various conferences, meetings, seminars and round tables on the effects of and policy responses to global climate change. On the occasion of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (December, Poznan, Poland), it organized a joint UNCTAD/WTO side event on trade and climate change and addressed issues relating to the economic implications of climate change.

68. In combating climate change, the United Nations system has been called upon to lead by example by monitoring and reducing its greenhouse gas emissions. The launch of the UNCTAD’s Climate Neutral Initiative made UNCTAD one of the first United Nations agencies to take action on its internal climate change policy. UNCTAD’s commitment in addressing climate change was officially announced at UNCTAD XII, where UNCTAD introduced elements of its Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Strategy and committed to reduce its own emissions by 20 per cent by 2020.

69. Following the adoption by the Trade and Development Board of the topic of “Trade and climate change: trade and investment opportunities and challenges under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)” for an expert meeting, UNCTAD is preparing the meeting (Geneva, 27–29 April 2009).

70. Paragraph 101 of the Accra Accord states: “UNCTAD should continue to provide support to developing countries and countries with economies in transition on issues at the interface between trade and environment, such as market access, agriculture, the transfer of environmentally sound technology, environmental goods and services, environmentally preferable products, and standards, including issues concerning eco-labelling and certification costs, and follow up on trade-related issues contained in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. It should strengthen work on the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)–UNCTAD Capacity-Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development.”

71. UNCTAD undertook a number of activities related to promoting production and trade of African sustainable agricultural products, including organic agricultural products. Organic agriculture contributes to poverty alleviation, environmental protection and food security in Africa. For example, under the UNCTAD Capacity-Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development, a new project was launched in April at UNCTAD XII on “Promoting Production and Trading Opportunities for Organic Agricultural Products: A Tool for Poverty Reduction and Environmental Protection in East Africa”, funded by Austria. (The project runs from 2008 to 2010.) The project aims to build capacities in East Africa to seize trade and sustainable development opportunities offered by organic agriculture.

72. The UNCTAD–FAO– International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) International Task Force on Harmonization and Equivalence in Organic Agriculture (ITF) has been involved in another initiative to facilitate market access of African organic products. It worked from 2003–08 to remove technical barriers to trade in organic agricultural products. It has also developed two concrete tools: (a) the Tool for Equivalence (EquiTool), an international guideline for determining equivalence of organic standards; and (b) International Requirements for Organic Certification Bodies, establishing an international baseline on what organic certification bodies must do to be effective, as a basis for equivalence, mutual recognition and future harmonization.

73. UNCTAD’s Sustainable Commodity Initiative has launched two new initiatives to promote sustainable agriculture development and trade. One is a Sustainability Assessment Programme (COSA), created to develop tools and an implementation methodology for measuring the costs and benefits of implementing sustainability initiatives. To date the survey tool has been tested in five countries (Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Peru and Kenya). A report on this testing, *Seeking Sustainability*, was published in 2008 (http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2008/seeking_sustainability.pdf). The programme is now being implemented full-scale (over a three-year period) in the United Republic of Tanzania, Côte d’Ivoire and Colombia.

74. Another set of activities under the Sustainable Commodity Initiative is on Capacity Building for Sustainable Agricultural Producers, called the Sustainable Commodity Assistance Network (SCAN). Sustainable agriculture has proven to have a significant impact on the environmental, economic and social development of producers in LDCs. SCAN will work to promote the development of sustainable enterprises of smallholder agricultural producers. The process began at the international level through the formation of a global partnership, emphasizing the need to support producers in good agricultural practices, financial literacy and risk management, organizational development, market information and internal control systems/traceability. Seed funding was obtained to begin needs assessments in four countries, through a partnership with the Dutch non-

governmental organization Solidaridad. These began in November in Honduras, Peru, United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam. They are scheduled to be completed by May 2009 and presented at a global workshop of the SCAN Partnership in June 2009. This will then form the foundation for rolling out the programme in those and other countries, and the necessary funding is actively being sought.

75. Paragraph 102 of the Accra Accord states: “UNCTAD should continue to build on its experience to enhance its BioTrade Initiative, which gives support to the growing market for biodiversity products and services produced in a sustainable manner. The BioTrade Initiative should continue to support the creation of an enabling policy and environment to foster private sector engagement in the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity, while acknowledging the social, cultural, legal and economic complexity of this issue.”

76. UNCTAD responds to the evolving needs of developing countries on issues related to the trade of biotrade products through implementing the BioTrade Initiative, including its BioTrade Facilitation Programme. In consultation with biotrade national programmes and other relevant partners, UNCTAD facilitated and supported the creation of the Union for Ethical BioTrade to support the recognition of producers’ effort in promoting the sustainable use of biodiversity and the sharing of benefits derived from this use.

77. UNCTAD continued to assist developing countries in strengthening the institutional capacity of the national biotrade programmes in developing policy frameworks in support of biotrade, and to provide technical assistance to biotrade initiatives. In particular, support was given to national biotrade activities in Bolivia, Colombia, Uganda and Viet Nam. It has also assisted the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) in finalizing a proposal for a regional biotrade programme.

78. Within the framework of the Regional Biodiversity Strategy, UNCTAD supported biotrade activities under the Andean BioTrade Programme. Support in institutionalizing the Sala Andes and Amazonia as a regional BioTrade platform and management tool for the sustainable development of the Andes–Amazon Region was also provided. The organization of the first International BioTrade Fair in Bolivia (Santa Cruz, June) contributed in positioning biotrade sectors in the domestic and regional markets, creating opportunities to establish commercial and financial ties between participants, promoting biotrade products, sharing experiences and developing common strategies.

79. In addressing trade barriers relevant to biotrade, UNCTAD has been supporting the ongoing revision process of the Novel Foods Regulation – EC Regulation 258/97, which has been identified as a non-tariff barrier for biotrade products. UNCTAD’s efforts are focused on providing technical inputs to the revision process in order to assist stakeholders in reaching a development-friendly regulation through targeted research, case studies and conducting briefings and informal discussions with stakeholders.

80. Training courses and seminars organized by the BioTrade Initiative included the following: (a) African Technical Workshop on the Impact Assessment System for BioTrade in South Africa (Johannesburg, November); (b) Southern African Regional Dialogue on Novel Foods in South Africa (Cape Town, October); and (c) South American Regional Dialogue on Novel Foods in Peru (Lima, November).

81. One of the milestones in the work on biotrade is the development of a BioTrade Impact Assessment System. It addresses the constant need to define and measure biotrade’s contribution to sustainable development as well as the conservation/sustainable use of biodiversity in a harmonized and structured manner.

82. Paragraph 103 of the Accra Accord states: “UNCTAD should further promote and support cooperation, including by facilitating voluntary consultations among member States and regional groupings, in line with section F of the Set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable

Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices, adopted by the General Assembly in 1980 and reaffirmed in the São Paulo Consensus and at the Fifth Conference to Review All Aspects of the Set, held in 2005.”

83. Paragraph 104 of the Accra Accord states: “UNCTAD is the focal point on the work on competition policy and related consumer welfare within the United Nations system. It provides to its member States a forum for intergovernmental policy dialogue and consensus-building in the area of competition laws and policies. It should continue to carry out research and analysis in this area for, and/or in collaboration with, its member States and international networks on competition policy. UNCTAD should continue to be a forum to discuss competition issues on the multilateral level, with close linkages to existing networks of competition authorities, and to promote the use of competition law and policy as tools for achieving domestic and international competitiveness. UNCTAD’s work in this area should promote competition law regimes that take into account the prevailing conditions in the developing countries. Accordingly, future action by UNCTAD in this area needs to focus on: (a) The preparation and implementation of national and regional competition law and policies and measures appropriate to developing countries’ development needs and their consumers’ welfare; (b) Research and deliberations regarding anti-competitive practices in different sectors, their effects on consumer welfare and global markets and developing countries’ markets in particular, and mechanisms to address such effects; (c) Examining all issues relating to the interface between competition, privatization and innovation and their impacts on trade and development, including at the regional level; (d) Providing support to regional and South–South cooperation on competition policies; (e) Supporting developing countries in the formulation and implementation of competition laws; (f) Voluntary peer reviews of competition policy in UNCTAD should be extended to a wider group of developing countries and their regional economic organizations; and (g) Facilitating the exchange of experiences and best practices in capacity-building in different regions, including programmes like the technical assistance programme on competition and consumer protection policies for Latin America (COMPAL), which should be strengthened.”

84. The ninth session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Competition Law and Policy (IGE), attended by competition and consumer policy experts and authorities, met from 16 to 18 July (Geneva), preceded by an Ad Hoc Expert Group on meeting on the Role of Competition in Development (15 July). The two meetings, supported by UNCTAD documentation, provided an opportunity for an exchange of views among government officials involved in competition issues, international trade experts, representatives from regional and international institutions and civil society.

85. On the occasion of the ninth session of the IGE, UNCTAD held a Voluntary Peer Review (VPR) on competition law and policy of Costa Rica. The peer review report, prepared by consultants after a fact-finding mission to Costa Rica, was presented and reviewed. The VPR highlighted the challenges and opportunities faced by Costa Rica’s Competition Commission and addressed the issues of independence, investigative tools, and law reform. In July 2009, during the tenth session of the IGE, the VPR will be carried out on the competition policy of Indonesia, at that country’s request. The VPRs provide an ideal forum for international competition experts to assess how economic reforms in selected countries can ensure that competition in markets work for the poor and promote development.

86. UNCTAD’s various advisory and training activities were combined with or provided through different seminars, workshops, other meetings and activities directed at stakeholders, specific officials or a wide audience including government officials and academics, as well as business and consumer oriented circles. These activities contributed to raising awareness about the role of competition and promoting a competitive culture.

Thus, (a) a National Seminar on the Cameroonian Competition Policy and Internationalization was co-organized by UNCTAD and Cameroon (Doula, May); (b) two courses on competition legislation of the EU and Latin American countries law were given at the University of Monterrey (Mexico, July and August); (c) a national seminar on “Competition policy within the framework of economic reforms and poverty reduction” was organized in Madagascar (5 November); and (d) in the framework of the COMPAL programme, a dissemination event was organized in Nicaragua (Managua, September) on the outcome of four sectoral studies on sectors of key importance to the Nicaraguan economy.

87. Within the framework of UNCTAD’s efforts to help countries draft and/or review their competition legislation, assistance was provided to a number of countries. These included (a) Mozambique’s draft law; (b) the Zambian Competition Commission on the implementation of its competition legislation; (c) the draft competition bill of Rwanda and the establishment of the national competition authority; (d) Botswana on the enforcement of the competition legislation and the requirements for the establishment of a competition authority; and (e) Uzbekistan in preparing a multi-purpose project proposal in the area of competition.

88. Training activities for competition case handlers, often in collaboration with national, regional or international organizations, were undertaken by UNCTAD for (a) the staff of Indonesian Competition Authority and judges of the Indonesian Supreme Court (Jakarta, January); (b) the staff of the National Competition Commission of Cameroon (Yaoundé, May); (c) the newly established Swaziland Competition Commission on skills in merger assessment (August); (d) government officials and academics from the Kurdistan region of Iraq (Geneva, September); (e) a COMPAL training workshop in Nicaragua (Managua, November); and (f) investigators from the National Competition Committee of Cameroon (Kribi, December). UNCTAD also organized a regional workshop on the “Role of competition policy in the current food crisis” in Tunisia (Tunis, June).

89. UNCTAD’s support to countries that have adopted national legislation, as well as to newly established competition agencies, includes activities in institution building. UNCTAD provided consultancy to Mauritius on formulation of an “Institutional Framework for the implementation of the Competition Act”. The consultancy will facilitate the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer to commence the operations of the Competition Commission. An executive report was prepared by UNCTAD to assist the Ministry of Industry, Small and Medium Enterprises, Commerce and Cooperatives on steps to be taken to make the Competition Act operational. During an UNCTAD mission to Madagascar in November, the institutional framework report on competition law and policy was finalized in parallel with the appointment of commissioners for the future competition authority and building-up awareness of the importance of its independence.

90. In the area of consumer protection, a national seminar on the advocacy for the implementation of the Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Law and an awareness workshop for local judiciary and “ombudsman” responsible for consumer redress were organized in Bhutan (Monger and Gelephu, December). A Training Course on Consumer Protection and Consumer Welfare for government officials from both central and provincial agencies of Botswana was organized (Francistown, November).

91. Activities carried out under the Programme on Competition and Consumer Protection Policies for Latin America (COMPAL I), supported by SECO (Switzerland), contributed to strengthening competition and consumer protection law and policies in five Latin American beneficiary countries (Bolivia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Peru). At UNCTAD XII in April, UNCTAD launched a call for potential new donors and beneficiaries in other regions to set up a similar initiative, taking into account the experience acquired in implementing COMPAL in Latin American countries. This has been

successful with the launch of COMPAL II, with the support of Switzerland, to take place in 2009.

92. Paragraph 105 of the Accra Accord states: “Taking into account the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Development Agenda and without prejudice to the work undertaken in other forums, UNCTAD, within its mandate, should continue to undertake research and analysis on trade and development aspects of intellectual property, including on the protection of traditional knowledge, genetic resources and folklore and fair and equitable sharing.”

93. UNCTAD provided legal and policy advice to developing countries, upon request, on negotiations in Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)-related issues in WTO, and conducted research and analysis on issues related to intellectual property and development, as well as developing a training module. It provided assistance on intellectual property rights-related regulatory reform to countries negotiating their accession to the WTO.

94. Paragraph 106 of the Accra Accord states: “UNCTAD should continue to play an important role in developing and implementing projects under Aid for Trade. UNCTAD should continue to provide focused support to developing countries, in building their capacity to meaningfully participate in, and benefit from, the international trading system and to address the opportunities and challenges that this system offers.”

95. UNCTAD continued to contribute to policy discussions on the operationalization and implementation of Aid for Trade, including in the WTO’s Director-General Advisory Group on Aid for Trade. It contributed to international dialogue and assisted developing countries and country groupings in their participation in the initiative. UNCTAD, with United Nations University and several United Nations agencies, have produced the publication *Aid for Trade – Global and Regional Perspectives* (forthcoming). A report was also produced on *Aid for Trade and Development: Global and Regional Perspectives* (UNCTAD/DITC/2008/2).

96. Paragraph 107 of the Accra Accord states: “UNCTAD should provide technical assistance to landlocked developing countries and transit developing countries to help them ensure that adequate and efficient infrastructure and services, as well as effective transit transport arrangements, are in place to support trade.”

97. UNCTAD organized a Global Preparatory Meeting on the Mid-Term Review of the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action: “Trade Facilitation Opportunities for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries” (Geneva, July). The meeting reviewed recent progress made in matters related to trade facilitation for the benefit of landlocked and transit developing countries, and looked at new opportunities for the next five years, until 2013. The Chair’s summary of the meeting was transmitted to the High-Level Mid-Term Review Meeting (New York, October). The meeting concluded that there was a need to (a) disseminate the results of research programmes on the economics and political economy on the transit corridor; (b) implement capacity-building programmes for collaborative mechanisms on specific corridors; (c) promote targeted projects within transit and landlocked countries on transport and customs facilitation; and (d) develop transit corridor performance measurement systems. Some issues in respect of maritime transport were discussed during the first session of the Multi-year Expert Meeting on Transport and Trade Facilitation (Geneva, 16–18 February 2009). The Outcome document of the midterm review of the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries (issued as A/RES/63/2 of 3 October 2008) identifies concrete actions to be taken by the landlocked and transit developing

countries, with the support of their development partners incorporated in substance the conclusions of the UNCTAD July meeting.

Special focus on LDCs

98. The foregoing progress report indicates that LDCs (and African countries) have received focused and tailored assistance from UNCTAD in the implementation of the Accra Accord. Apart from activities under the three pillars of UNCTAD's work that benefit developing countries generally, including LDCs, some of the customized support to LDCs included:

- (a) Monitoring and reporting on proportion of developed country imports from developing countries and least developed countries, admitted free of duty;
- (b) Support to Rwanda in developing a pro-poor trade policy framework;
- (c) Assistance to LDCs individually and as a group in their preparations for participation in the WTO Doha agenda negotiations;
- (d) Assistance to Nepal and Uganda in undertaking national services policy Reviews;
- (e) Support to LDCs in the process of acceding to WTO, such as Afghanistan, Bhutan, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Yemen;
- (f) A seminar on GSP schemes and rules of origin held for Yemen;
- (g) Launching of the Amandla "light" project in Lesotho with Royal Philips Corporation;
- (h) The strengthening of creative industries in Mozambique and Zambia through implementation of an ACP project;
- (i) The participation of Uganda in a pilot project to identify and classify non-tariff barriers;
- (j) Training on UNCTAD's trade databases and analytical tools provided to Cambodia and Guinea;
- (k) Support on the implementation of competition rules and consumer policies, and strengthening of competition agencies, was provided to the eight member States of WAEMU – all of which are LDCs, except for Côte d'Ivoire – as well as to Bhutan, Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia;
- (l) Promoting production and trading opportunities for organic agricultural products in East Africa that will benefit LDCs such as the United Republic of Tanzania;
- (m) Implementation of the Sustainability Assessment Programme in the United Republic of Tanzania; and
- (n) Supporting national biotrade activities in Uganda.