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Report by the President of the Advisory Body set up in accordance with paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action on the implementation of courses by the secretariat in 2009–2010 and their relevant impact; and the appointment of members of the Advisory Body for 2011

**Draft report of the Trade and Development Board on its
fifty-seventh session**

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 15 to 28 September 2010

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II. President's summary

Report by the President of the Advisory Body set up in accordance with paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action on the implementation of courses by the secretariat in 2009–2010 and their relevant impact; and the appointment of members of the Advisory Body for 2011

1. The President of the Advisory Body established in the context of paragraph 166 of the UNCTAD X Plan of Action briefed the delegates about the matters addressed by the Advisory Body at its meeting in May 2010. First, three regional courses were delivered for Latin America and the Caribbean (Colombia, August 2009), Asia and the Pacific (Indonesia, November 2009) and countries with economies in transition (Azerbaijan, July 2010), with support, including contributions to meeting local course costs, from host countries. The courses continued to enjoy a growing demand and contributed to bridging the “trade capacity gap” in developing countries. The Advisory Body endorsed the venues for upcoming courses for Western Asia (October–November 2009, Lebanon) and Africa (January–February 2010, Egypt).

2. Second, the Advisory Body discussed funding for regional courses. As the current funding from Section 22 of the Regular Budget of the United Nations for Technical Cooperation was felt to be unpredictable, the establishment of permanent venues for the course was thought to have the potential to increase predictability of the conditions of delivery, diversify the resource base of the course and demonstrate the value attached to it by member States. One other element to be taken into consideration as regards permanent venues would be the possibility of covering other costs, such as accommodation for participants, interpretation costs, etc. The Governments of Colombia and Singapore offered to host the courses in their respective regions for at least two editions and to meet some of the costs of their delivery, and the Advisory Body accepted their offers. Other countries, such as Chile, Mexico and Oman, also expressed their interest in hosting the courses in the future. It was proposed that the venues could rotate within the regions and thus be “semi-permanent”. The Advisory Body requested the secretariat to develop terms of reference for the establishment of permanent venues that would be examined at its next meeting.

3. Third, the President of the Advisory Body informed the delegates about the six short courses organized for Geneva-based diplomats in the second semester of 2009 and first semester of 2010, as well as the three courses on contemporary development issues that were scheduled for the second semester of 2010. The courses were well attended and had become a regular feature in the professional calendar of delegates who appreciated their contribution to the awareness of trade topics which they considered useful for their work.

4. In the ensuing discussion, two delegates expressed their support for the regional courses, as well as the commitment to work together with the secretariat to ensure their future success. One of them specifically mentioned the interest of her country to host the course in the future. The other referred to additional countries interested in hosting the courses. Both suggested that permanent venues in regions rotate and thus be semi-permanent. They also requested that the terms of reference prepared by the secretariat for the establishment of permanent venues spell out in advance and in a clear manner the conditions for hosting the courses and the form in which host countries should contribute.