

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities

ACTIVITY REPORT

2007



UNITED NATIONS

New York and Geneva, 2008

Major outputs and lessons learned

Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

Executive summary

UNCTAD is the focal point of the United Nations for the integrated treatment of trade and development and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development. The Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities (DITC) is responsible for UNCTAD's international trade programme. This activity report is the fourth annual report by the Division. It provides an overview of the Division's work in international trade, detailed information on a range of outputs and activities delivered and an assessment of the results achieved and lessons learned that can be applied to improve the quality, effectiveness and impact of programme implementation.

The delivery of outputs and activities by the Division advances UNCTAD's programme on international trade, which was established by the United Nations General Assembly under subprogramme 3 (International Trade) of Section 12 (Trade and Development) of the United Nations programme budget for 2006–2007, and the Spirit of São Paulo and the São Paulo Consensus of UNCTAD XI. Progress towards reaching the overall objective of subprogramme 3, assuring development gains from international trade, trade negotiations and commodities, is described in chapter I. Progress achieved by the relevant branch of the Division in meeting the five expected accomplishments (intermediate goals) of subprogramme 3 is outlined in chapters II (trade negotiations), III (trade analyses), IV (commodities), V (competition and consumer policies) and VI (trade and environment).

UNCTAD/DITC/2008/1

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Note: All figures are in US dollars unless otherwise specified.

I. OBJECTIVE OF THE SUBPROGRAMME ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE

To assure developmental gains from international trade, the trading system and trade negotiations in goods and services and to enhance the commodity sector's contribution to the development process for the effective and beneficial integration of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the global economy (objective of the subprogramme 3, table 12.15 (A/60/6 sect. 12)).

1. The subprogramme on international trade falls under the responsibility of the Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities. The Division is composed of the Office of the Director and five Branches, namely: Commodities; Competition and Consumer Policies; Trade Analysis; Trade, Environment, Climate Change and Sustainable Development; and Trade Negotiations and Commercial Diplomacy. The 2006–2007 programme budget allocated \$23,084,600¹ to the subprogramme (Division). Of that total, \$22,443,700 was earmarked for 84 regular budget posts and \$650,900 for non-post requirements covering consultants and experts, staff travel and contractual services for editing and printing of publications and technical material.

2. UNCTAD XI in 2004 led to the adoption of the Spirit of São Paulo and the São Paulo Consensus, which emphasized qualitative integration into the international trading system of developing countries and countries with economies in transition. In this spirit and in line with the subtheme of the São Paulo Consensus, “assuring development gains from the international trading system and trade negotiations”,² which was reiterated at the Mid-Term Review of the São Paulo Consensus by the Trade and Development Board, the Division delivered a series of outputs. These outputs helped developing countries and countries with economies in transition to (a) analyse, formulate and implement appropriate trade policies and

strategies at the national, regional and international levels in international trade and trade negotiations; (b) deal effectively with restrictive business practices and promote environmentally friendly development; and (c) integrate commodity production and trade into the development process.

3. An array of analytical, technical and intergovernmental consensus-building activities was implemented by the Division in 2007, contributing to the achievement of the expected accomplishments for the 2006–2007 biennium. The Division implemented 92 per cent of the activities mandated for the biennium, which accounted for 37 per cent of total UNCTAD output during that period. This was achieved through greater in-house collaboration that added value to UNCTAD-wide outputs, and through cooperation with United Nations organizations, international and national organizations, academia, the private sector and civil society.

4. At its forty-first Executive Session (18–20 April), the Trade and Development Board agreed on the theme and four subthemes of UNCTAD XII (see box 1)³ Subsequently, the Division contributed to UNCTAD-wide efforts to support the preparatory process for UNCTAD XII. The Division participated in the work of the Conference Coordinating Committee set up by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD. It provided substantive inputs to the preparation of the Report of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to

¹ This accounts for 20.5 per cent of the total UNCTAD budget for the biennium of \$112,530,900 (A/60/6 sect. 12).

² Paras. 95–108 (TD/410).

³ See Report of the Trade and Development Board on its forty-first executive session (TD/B/EX(41)/3 (vol. I)).

UNCTAD XII entitled "Globalization for Development: Opportunities and Challenges",⁴ and the issue note, "Globalization and Inclusive Development"⁵ prepared for the High-level Segment of the Conference on Trade and Development for Africa's Prosperity: Action and Direction. At the request of member States, including the Group of 77 and China, and the European Union, the Division worked with them on the theme and sub-themes of UNCTAD XII to promote awareness of key trade and development issues emerging from globalization and the role of UNCTAD in helping countries maximize development gains and minimize attendant costs. The Division provides support to the Chair of the UNCTAD XII Preparatory Committee and the member States in their preparation and negotiation of the outcome document (pre-conference negotiation text) for UNCTAD XII.⁶

Box 1. UNCTAD XII theme and subthemes
Theme: <i>Addressing the opportunities and challenges of globalization for development</i> Subthemes 1. Enhancing coherence at all levels for sustainable economic development and poverty reduction in global policymaking, including the contribution of regional approaches; 2. Key trade and development issues and the new realities in the geography of the world economy; 3. Enhancing the enabling environment at all levels to strengthen productive capacity, trade and investment: mobilizing resources and harnessing knowledge for development; 4. Strengthening UNCTAD: Enhancing its development role, impact and institutional effectiveness.

5. The Division is responsible for the preparation, including that of background documents, and servicing of two UNCTAD XII interactive thematic round tables to be held on 23 April 2008. The round-table discussions will focus on the changing face of commodities in the

twenty-first century and the emergence of a new South and South-South trade as a vehicle for regional and interregional integration for development, respectively. On the evening of the same day, the Division will service a ministerial meeting of the Global System of Trade Preferences Committee of Participants. Additionally, as an input to substantive preparations by member States of the conference, the Division held several pre-events in 2007, with plans for others in 2008. In addition, it intends to organize several side events during the conference (see box 2). Further, the Division will organize the UNCTAD Secretary-General's High-Level Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Commodities in the context of UNCTAD XII, to be held in Geneva on 28 and 29 January 2008. It contributed to efforts to promote UNCTAD XII in New York at the sixty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly. The Division also promotes the Conference during technical cooperation and advisory missions. For example, at the request of the Government of the Philippines, the Division supported and serviced a multi-stakeholder consultation on UNCTAD XII and its contributions to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals on 3 and 4 December.

Box 2. UNCTAD XII pre-events and side events serviced by the Division		
<i>Pre-events</i>		
<i>Event</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Venue</i>
1. Global Initiative on Commodities	7–11 May 2007	Brazil (Brasilia)
2. India-Africa Hydrocarbon Conference and Exhibition	6–7 November 2007	India (New Delhi)
3. Meeting on trade and development implications of tourism services for developing countries	19–20 November 2007	Switzerland (Geneva)
4. Biofuels: An option for a less carbon-intensive economy	4–5 December 2007	Brazil (Rio de Janeiro)

⁴ TD/413.

⁵ TD/B/54/7.

⁶ TD(XII)/PC/1.

I. Objective of the subprogramme on international trade

5. Aid for Trade: Global and regional perspectives workshop	24–25 January 2008	Thailand (Bangkok)
6. Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Creative Economy and Industries for Development	14–15 January 2008	Switzerland (Geneva)
7. Spread of sustainable standards: Successful strategies for smallholder	(to be confirmed in early 2008)	East Africa (to be confirmed)
8. South–South trade in Asia and role of regional trade agreements	25 March 2008	Japan (Tokyo)
9. Lessons learned from South–South trade in Asian regions	2–3 April 2008	Switzerland (Geneva)
10. Quantitative effects of anti-competitive business practices on developing countries and their development prospects	(to be confirmed in early 2008)	(to be confirmed)
<i>Side events at Accra, Ghana</i>		
1. Exhibition of African crafts and contemporary art	20 April 2008	
2. Creative Africa concert and fashion show	22 April 2008 (evening event)	
3. Amandla Project for countries in southern Africa (energy-saving light bulbs) in partnership with Royal Philips Electronics in Lesotho	Lunchtime event	
4. Exhibition by Royal Philips Electronics of corporate social responsibility products and/or projects in developing countries, such as SMILE (Sustainable Model in	Lunchtime event	

Lighting Everywhere), a project under way in India to benefit the poorest people, especially in rural areas, and ensure them access to electrical light	
5. Launching of books on competition policy, private standards and Aid for Trade	Lunchtime event

6. The Division continued to promote awareness and understanding in developing countries, especially least developed countries (LDCs), and in countries with economies in transition of the impact of trade on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals. Accordingly, work continued to strengthen the basis for informed pro-poor trade, development policy, decision-making and trade negotiations. Division activities continued to widen and deepen the knowledge base and skills in focusing trade more purposefully to alleviate poverty and promote development.

7. Under a Development Account project on trade and the Millennium Development Goals, the Division continued to promote the development of skills and knowledge relating to the interface between various aspects of international trade and trade negotiations that is critical to policymaking and actions aimed at the timely achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Such activities impacted on policymakers and trade negotiators in Asia, Africa and Latin America in terms of the promotion of the realization of Millennium Development Goals in tandem with international trade, commodities, WTO negotiations, South–South trade, competition policy and major United Nations conferences.

8. With regard to the UNCTAD/United Kingdom Department for International Development/India Project on Strategies and Preparedness for Trade and Globalization in India, significant progress was made in highlighting pro-poor concerns in trade

issues (see box 3). Other technical assistance activities of the Division, which are discussed in the following chapters, also helped promote the alleviation of poverty and enhance access to essential services.

Box 3. Promoting pro-poor interests in trade issues in India

The UNCTAD/United Kingdom Department for International Development/India Project on Strategies and Preparedness for Trade and Globalization in India furthered decision-making in 2007 in the Government's trade negotiations and policy formulation efforts and strengthened stakeholder participation, especially at the grassroots level, through the following:

- Making trade and poverty-sensitive assessments and holding stakeholder consultations in respect of India acceding to the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA) of WTO and future bilateral government procurement agreements with the United States and the European Union in the context of future India–European Union trade and investment agreements; sensitive products in future India–European Union trade and investment agreements; and empowerment of women through trade and globalization, with consultations to be held in 2008;
- Launching a University Link initiative with four research institutions: Allahabad University, Centre for Development Studies in Trivandrum, Jadavpur University and the University of Mizoram. The initiative responds to a concern from the Government of India to build up research capacities in trade and globalization in all of India. Activities will include doctoral and post-doctoral training and fellowships on trade and

among Developing Countries;

- Conducting analyses and devising strategies to deal with standards and non-tariff barriers, facilitate registration of geographical indications and promote export market linkages with a view to linking poor farmers, artisans and fishermen to global trade. These actions are carried out at the grassroots level and have the potential to enhance household incomes and provide other socio-economic benefits;
- Carrying out analytical studies relating to (a) the impact of the Indo-Sri Lanka free trade agreement on the agricultural sector of Kerala, the State affected by the agreement; (b) the impact of trade liberalization in certain service sectors on employment, wages and salaries, gender and the incomes of households in abject poverty and below the poverty line in rural and urban areas; and (c) the likely socio-economic impact of geographical indications registration on the producer community comprising mainly poor farmers and artisans.

9. By way of research and application of analytical tools, the Division systematically contributes to mainstreaming development into trade. A key aspect of such work relates to services development and trade. In this regard, the Division produced a major study entitled "Assuring Development Gains and Poverty Reduction from Trade – the Labour Mobility and Skills Trade Dimension" (UNCTAD/DITC/2007/8). The study explores how labour mobility and labour integration, primarily from developing to developed countries, can be better managed in a coherent manner so as to contribute to the achievement of

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