#### UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

# NATIONAL TREATMENT

UNCTAD Series on issues in international investment agreements



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#### NOTE

UNCTAD serves as the focal point within the United Nations Secretariat for all matters related to foreign direct investment and transnational corporations. In the past, the Programme on Transnational Corporations was carried out by the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations (1975-1992) and the Transnational Corporations and Management Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Development (1992-1993). In 1993, the Programme was transferred to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. UNCTAD seeks to further the understanding of the nature of transnational corporations and their contribution to development and to create an enabling environment for international investment and enterprise development. UNCTAD's work is carried out through intergovernmental deliberations, research and analysis, technical assistance activities, seminars, workshops and conferences.

The term "country" as used in this study also refers, as appropriate, to territories or areas; the designations employed and the presentation of the material do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. In addition, the designations of country groups are intended solely for statistical or analytical convenience and do not necessarily express a judgement about the stage of development reached by a particular country or area in the development process.

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#### **IIA Issues Paper Series**

The main purpose of the UNCTAD Series on issues in international investment agreements is to address key concepts and issues relevant to international investment agreements and to present them in a manner that is easily accessible to end-users. The series covers the following topics:

Admission and establishment Competition Dispute settlement (investor-State) Dispute settlement (State-State) Employment Environment Fair and equitable treatment Foreign direct investment and development Funds transfer Home country measures Host country operational measures Illicit payments Incentives Investment-related trade measures Lessons from the Uruguay Round Modalities and implementation issues Most-favoured-nation treatment National treatment Present international arrangements for foreign direct investment: an overview Scope and definition Social responsibility State contracts Taking of property Taxation Transfer of technology Transfer pricing Transparency

### Preface

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is implementing a work programme on a possible multilateral framework on investment, with a view towards assisting developing countries to participate as effectively as possible in international investment rule-making at the bilateral, regional, plurilateral and multilateral levels. The programme embraces capacitybuilding seminars, regional symposia, training courses, dialogues between negotiators and groups of civil society and the preparation of a series of issues papers.

This paper is part of this series. It is addressed to government officials, corporate executives, representatives of non-governmental organizations, officials of international agencies and researchers. The series seeks to provide balanced analyses of issues that may arise in discussions about international investment agreements. Each study may be read by itself, independently of the others. Since, however, the issues treated closely interact with one another, the studies pay particular attention to such interactions.

The series is produced by a team led by Karl P. Sauvant and Pedro Roffe. The principal officer responsible for its production is John Gara who oversees the development of the papers at various stages. The other members of the team include Obiajulu Ihonor and Jörg Weber. The work is carried out under the overall direction of Lynn K. Mytelka. The series' principal advisors are Arghyrios A. Fatouros, Sanjaya Lall and Peter T. Muchlinski. Drawing on a first draft by Patrick Robinson, the present paper is based on a manuscript prepared by Peter T. Muchlinski. Victoria Aranda was responsible for the substantive supervision of this paper. The final version reflects comments received from Joachim Karl, Mark Koulen, Hamid Mamdouh and Marinus Sikkel. The paper was desktop published by Teresita Sabico.

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Rubens Ricupero Secretary-General of UNCTAD

Geneva, May 1999

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UNCTAD has carried out a number of activities related to the work programme in cooperation with other intergovernmental organizations, including the Secretariat of the Andean Community, the Inter-Arab Investment Guarantee Corporation, the League of Arab States, the Organization of American States, I'Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, and the World Trade Organization. UNCTAD has also cooperated with non-governmental organizations, including the Centro de Estudios Interdisciplinarios de Derecho Industrial y Económico - Universidad de Buenos Aires, the Consumer Unity and Trust Society - India, the Economic Research Forum - Cairo, the European Roundtable of Industrialists, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Oxfam, SOMO - Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations, the Third World Network, Universidad del Pacifico, University of the West Indies, and World Wildlife Fund International.

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# **Table of contents**

# Page

Preface v								
Acknowledgements								
Exe	Executive summary							
INTRODUCTION								
I.	EXPLANATION OF THE ISSUE							
	A. The nature and origins of the national treatment standard							
	B. Principal issues							
		<ol> <li>Scope and application</li> <li>The substantive content of the national</li> </ol>	10					
		<ol> <li>The substantive content of the national treatment standard</li></ol>	11					
		standards of treatment	11					
		<ol> <li>"De jure" and "de facto" treatment</li> <li>Exceptions to national treatment</li> </ol>	12 12					
II.	II. STOCKTAKING AND ANALYSIS							
	A.	An agreement does not mention national treatment	15					
	B.	An agreement goes beyond a general national treatment clause and involves a more specific non-discrimination regime						
	C.	An agreement contains a general national treatment clause	18					

# Page

1.	-	application ent of coverage of the investment	18				
		cess	18				
	-	The post-entry model	19				
		The pre- and post-entry model	21				
		The GATS hybrid model	23				
	b. The	meaning of national treatment in					
		tion to subnational authorities	25				
2.	The subs	tantive content of the national					
2.	treatment standard						
a. Factual situations in which national							
		tment applies	28				
	(i)	The "same" or "identical"	20				
	(1)	circumstances	28				
	(ii)		20				
	(11)	industries to which national					
		treatment applies	29				
	(iii)	"Like situations", "similar situations"	27				
	(111)	or "like circumstances"	33				
	(iv)	No factual comparisons	34				
	(17)	10 fuetuar comparisons	51				
	b. Def	inition of the standard	34				
	(i)	"Same" or "as favourable as"	υ.				
	(-)	treatment	35				
	(ii)	"No less favourable" treatment	37				
3.	"De iure"	and "de facto" national treatment	40				
4.	"Stand alone" national treatment provision						
	or national treatment combined with other						
	standards of treatment	41					
	e e e e e e e e e e e e e e e e e e e						

## Page

			a.	"Stand alone" national treatment provision	41			
			b.	Separate national treatment provision				
				followed by other general standards				
				of treatment clauses	42			
			c.	Combined national and MFN treatment				
				provision	42			
		5.	Exce	eptions	43			
			a.	Classification of exceptions	43			
			b.	Exceptions based on development				
				considerations	47			
			c.	Monitoring	50			
III.				FION WITH OTHER ISSUES CEPTS	55			
	AI	D		CEP 15	33			
CON	NCL	USI	ION:	ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT				
				S AND POLICY OPTIONS	61			
	Α.	Op	tion 1	: no national treatment provision	62			
	B.	Option 2: national treatment provision						
		1. Post-establishment national treatment						
			Onti	on 2a: limited post-establishment				
			-	onal treatment with strong host				
				ntry authority	64			
			<u> </u>					

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