

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

UNCTAD



UNCTAD
ANNUAL REPORT

2011



UNITED NATIONS

UNCTAD is the United Nations focal point for trade and development, and for interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development. Our objective is to assist developing countries, especially the least developed countries, and countries with economies in transition, to integrate beneficially into the global economy. We also seek to help the international community promote a global partnership for development, increase coherence in global economic policymaking, and assure development gains for all from trade.

We conduct ahead-of-the-curve research and analysis on both long-standing and emerging development issues. We build consensus around efforts to promote national and international policies and strategies conducive to development. And we support countries in implementing their development strategies, helping them to overcome the challenges of globalization and seize the opportunities from it.



UNITED NATIONS

UNCTAD IN NUMBERS

194

Member States

47

Years of promoting the development-friendly integration of developing countries into the world economy

3

Pillars of work:

- Consensus-building
- Research and analysis
- Technical cooperation

5

Main programmes of work:

- Globalization and development strategies
- Africa, the least developed countries and special programmes
- International trade in goods and services, and commodities
- Investment and enterprise development
- Technology and logistics

510

Staff members from 97 countries

\$68m

Total regular budget for 2011, from the regular budget of the United Nations

\$44m

Amount of voluntary contributions for operational activities, of which 33 per cent was contributed by developing countries and countries with economies in transition (see also annex B for further information)

36%

Of total project expenditures allocated to the least developed countries

7,069

Citations of UNCTAD's work in the international media in 2011

To find out more about UNCTAD, please visit <http://www.unctad.org>.

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Foreword by
Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi,
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

The global economic recovery is faltering. World GDP in 2011 was predicted to grow by 3 per cent, at best, compared with 3.9 per cent in 2010. Fears of a double dip recession in the advanced countries loom large and, while developing countries have fared better in recent years, with growth rates in 2011 averaging over 6 per cent, many countries have relied heavily on external demand and high commodity prices rather than an expansion in productive capacity. A sharp slowdown in the global economy will reverberate across all regions.

UNCTAD continues to be concerned by a number of factors in the global economy that are causing persistent instability and inequality. These include the lopsided influence of financial markets, high levels of indebtedness, trade imbalances, rising unemployment, uneven economic growth, upward trends in food prices, and the volatility of exchange rates and commodity prices that are particularly damaging for developing countries. Poverty remains extensive

despite rapid growth rates, particularly in the least developed countries (LDCs), where structural transformation has been elusive. Too many people are missing out on development.

UNCTAD has for some years been critical of finance-driven globalization. Our work in 2011 continued to highlight the limitations of the prevailing economic paradigm and to promote alternatives, particularly in our flagship reports. In the past year, we focused much of our research on the weakening global recovery and the policy challenges posed, especially for trade and development. We continued to advance policy debates in international globalization in areas such as employment creation, South–South cooperation, renewable energy, international production and industrial development. Our message has been getting across. Our warning that a return to business as usual will be damaging to countries at all levels of development is now being echoed by other international bodies.

This year also saw an expansion in our outreach efforts with participation in high-level dialogues across several policy themes. Expert group meetings as well as other stakeholder conferences organized in Geneva and elsewhere – such as the Global Commodities Forum, the Debt Management Conference, the World Investment Forum and the Public Symposium – were very well attended and much appreciated. We made key contributions to many international gatherings, in particular the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC-IV) in Istanbul and the fifty-eighth session of the Trade and Development Board in September. In 2011, UNCTAD strengthened its work in other areas, particularly in gender and development as well as climate change. We have been active in preparations for the Rio+20 Conference, which will take place in June 2012.

In 2012, these elements will be consolidated as we gear up for UNCTAD XIII in Doha in April. The Confer-

ence theme, adopted by the member States, will be *Development-centred globalization: Towards inclusive and sustainable growth and development*. This theme anticipates an emerging consensus on a new set of development priorities, principles and policies aimed at turning the fragile recovery into a balanced and secure future for all. UNCTAD XIII will be a forum for fleshing out the details of this consensus and formulating a coherent strategy.

UNCTAD XIII will be the first major United Nations ministerial conference on trade and development since the economic recovery began to falter, and will be a timely opportunity for reflection and discussion. The global economic context is very different from that of the last UNCTAD Conference in Accra. We are now at a watershed. With more interest than ever in an alternative economic framework, I am hopeful that UNCTAD XIII will help the international community to make progress towards a fairer and more stable global system.

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ABOUT UNCTAD





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