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**Trade and Development Board
Trade and Development Commission
Multi-year Expert Meeting on Enhancing
the Enabling Economic Environment at All Levels
in Support of Inclusive and Sustainable Development,
and the Promotion of Economic Integration and Cooperation**

Fifth session

Geneva, 26–28 October 2022

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

Provisional agenda and annotations

I. Provisional agenda

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Regional solutions for inclusive and sustainable development.
4. Adoption of the report of the meeting.



II. Annotations

Item 1

Election of officers

1. It is recommended that the Multi-year Expert Meeting on Enhancing the Enabling Economic Environment at All Levels in Support of Inclusive and Sustainable Development, and the Promotion of Economic Integration and Cooperation elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur.

Item 2

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

2. The provisional agenda of the fifth session of the Multi-year Expert Meeting on Enhancing the Enabling Economic Environment at All Levels in Support of Inclusive and Sustainable Development, and the Promotion of Economic Integration and Cooperation is reproduced in chapter I above. The topic for the meeting was approved by the Trade and Development Board through a silence procedure that concluded on 28 February 2022 (see TD/B/69/4, annex VI). The meeting will have three days, from 26 to 28 October 2022, to complete its work. A detailed programme will be available at the latest one week before the start of the meeting.

Documentation

TD/B/C.I/MEM.8/13

Provisional agenda and annotations

Item 3

Regional solutions for inclusive and sustainable development

3. The growing economic, health and environmental crises facing developing countries, along with a more inward turn of leading economies and their increasing attention to the geopolitical dimensions of trade, technology and financial flows, raises the threat of a more fragmented global economy and challenges the integrity of the multilateral system. As a result, regional arrangements, and their historically embedded identities, norms and values, may come to play a more prominent role and shape distinct regional responses to crisis management and development pathways.

4. Managing economic interdependence in such a polycentric world would require a more synergetic relationship between global institutions and regional arrangements. Contrary to the deep free trade agreements of the 1990s and early 2000s, or the recent megaregional agreements inspired by the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, open developmental regionalism could be an important element of making the voice of developing countries heard while reinforcing South–South cooperation towards achieving a more development-oriented international trade governance. Open developmental regionalism would limit binding commitments to border measures, while relying on cooperation and flexible policies that aim at regional harmonization of behind-the-border trade measures.

5. At the fifth session of the Multi-year Expert Meeting on Enhancing the Enabling Economic Environment at All Levels in Support of Inclusive and Sustainable Development, and the Promotion of Economic Integration and Cooperation, discussion will focus on the existing scenario and the difficulties it poses for the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The problems encountered by developing countries as they climb the ladder along global value chains will be examined, and the risks related to financialization and corporate arbitrage will be analysed. Participants will also explore how new international agreements and institutional structures can sustain open developmental regionalism and facilitate the management of the diverging interests and sensitivities of developing and developed countries for a more inclusive and developmental international economic

governance. In this context, the opportunities offered by regional trade agreements and regional value chains, and the role that regional development finance and infrastructural investments can play, will be examined in detail.

6. To facilitate discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat has prepared a background note. In addition, experts are encouraged to prepare articles on the subject under discussion. These papers will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received.

Documentation

TD/B/C.I/MEM.8/14

Regional solutions for inclusive and sustainable development

Item 4 Adoption of the report of the meeting

7. The report of the Multi-year Expert Meeting on Enhancing the Enabling Economic Environment at All Levels in Support of Inclusive and Sustainable Development, and the Promotion of Economic Integration and Cooperation on its fifth session will be submitted to the Trade and Development Commission at its next session. The multi-year expert meeting may wish to authorize the Rapporteur, under the authority of the Chair, to prepare the final report after the conclusion of the meeting.

Experts nominated by member States are encouraged to submit brief papers (of approximately five pages) as contributions to the work of the Multi-year Expert Meeting. The papers should be submitted to the UNCTAD secretariat in advance of the meeting and will be made available at the meeting in the form and language in which they are received. Papers, which should draw on the experts' experiences, may address one or more of the following issues:

- How can Governments show more support for their national and regional public banks, including through finance and capitalization, guarantees or political willingness to support a more public and developmental mandate?
- What are the implications for the rising dominance of bilateral capital flows as compared to financial support for regional institutions?
- How can regional banks contribute better to the international financial architecture? Can they be a useful stepping-stone to a more equitable and effective multilateralism?
- The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) crisis has exposed profound fault lines in the functioning of global value chains. How can this window of opportunity be exploited to relaunch regional value chains? What infrastructural investment is needed?
- The scope and impact of many regional trade agreements between economies of the global South remain limited, despite their diffusion since the turn of the millennium. What additional provisions and/or clauses, or complementary measures, are needed to make these trade agreements more relevant?
- How can the phenomenon of trade regionalism be understood and to what extent is it a stepping-stone towards a more inclusive, constructive and cooperative approach to multilateralism?
- What institutional arrangements may be suited best to manage the diverging interests and sensitivities of developing and developed countries for a more inclusive and developmental international trade governance?

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