UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

UNCTAD



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UNCTAD plays an important role in forging consensus on development-related issues and in supporting the development of policy options that harness emerging opportunities, while assisting developing countries and countries with economies in transition in addressing the challenges of globalization.

Member States of UNCTAD at the Mid-term Review of the implementation of the São Paulo Consensus (2006)



UNCTAD in 2006 at a glance

43	Years of promoting the development-friendly integration of developing countries into the world economy		
3	Pillars of work: consensus-building, research and analysis, and technical cooperation		
5	Main programmes of work: Globalization and development strategies; Investment, technology and enterprise development; International trade in goods and services, and commodities; Services infrastructure and trade efficiency; Africa, least developed countries and special programmes		
12th	Session of the Conference will be held in Accra, Ghana, in April 2008. The 11th session of the Conference in 2004 provided the basis for UNCTAD's current programme of work		
192	Member States		
402	Dedicated staff members, with Professional staff drawn from 68 countries		
\$56m	Total regular budget for 2006 from the UN's regular budget		
\$29m	In voluntary contributions for operational activities, of which \$9.1 million was contributed by developing countries and economies in transition		
280	Technical cooperation projects currently being implemented in more than 100 countries		
6,000	News clippings about UNCTAD in the international media		
363,565	Downloads of UNCTAD's main publications from its website		
3,551,998	Visitors to UNCTAD's website in 2006. To find out more about UNCTAD, visit www.unctad.org		

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Message from the Secretary-General of UNCTAD

UNCTAD's founding mission — promoting development through trade — was as relevant as ever in 2006, as developing countries continued to cope with the mixed impact of global economic interdependence.

Our work last year went a long way towards addressing these and other concerns at the heart of development. UNCTAD's research and analysis remains at the cutting edge of economic development discourse, shedding new light on the issues and problems. We explored which policies do, and which do not, contribute to development; why some policies work for some countries, but not others; and what course of action should be considered. For example, UNCTAD highlighted the need to focus national and international policies on building productive capacities in the world's least developed countries in order to reduce poverty. We looked at how developing countries can take advantage of emerging patterns in international investment flows. And we proposed a new approach to using aid flows to Africa more effectively.

In our intergovernmental meetings last year, our 192 member States explored related policy options, and peer-reviewed and shared experiences on national competition and investment legislation, among other issues within our mandate of ongoing concern to them. UNCTAD's membership reviewed the work we have done in following up on our eleventh ministerial conference, held in São Paulo in 2004. They emphasized the role of research and analysis as the backbone of our work, and its importance in advancing consensus on key development-related issues.

Finally, the 150 workshops and seminars we held worldwide last year as part of our technical cooperation activities helped translate some of UNCTAD's key messages into national policies. We trained government officials and policymakers in a broad range of areas, including investment promotion, trade negotiations, supporting the production of biofuels, customs facilitation, and using e-commerce and ICTs for development. All of those activities are meant to boost the capacity of developing countries to integrate into world markets — and then turn that integration into an advantage.

As we move towards UNCTAD's twelfth ministerial conference — to be held in Accra, Ghana, in April 2008 — I intend to ensure that this organization pursues its founding mission while also remaining in step with the changing needs of developing countries. We have already begun to improve the coordination of our technical assistance, modernize our communications strategy, and strengthen our work on science, technology and innovation, as well as on South–South cooperation.

UNCTAD will strive to remain at the forefront of international efforts to meet the challenges and reap the benefits of globalization, ensuring that trade, investment and technology are used for the greater good. For that task, we welcome the assistance and feedback of all our stakeholders.

Supachai Panitchpakdi Secretary-General of UNCTAD





Helping countries gain from global trade...

In 2003, Cambodia was admitted as a member of the WTO, the first least developed country to be admitted, and was understandably jubilant. But accession to the WTO is only a first step.

Cambodia found that complying with the agreements it had signed required more technical expertise and experience than it possessed. Its legislation was not adequate for its WTO commitments and so the Government, which had been assisted by UNCTAD in navigating the complex rules and procedures for WTO accession, turned once again to UNCTAD for guidance in translating its commitments into practical measures.

To tackle the complex process of notifying the WTO about its efforts to comply with its commitments and to understand their development impacts, Cambodia drew upon UNCTAD's analysis of WTO treaties and regulations. Not only did this help Cambodia shape its communications with the WTO, it also helped it develop guidelines to follow in its continuing efforts at compliance. The country gained a clearer idea of what it had to do to live up to what it had promised, while understanding better the impact of those promises on its trade and investment policies and on its overall development. In addition, government officials learned how to make use of UNCTAD's ongoing research and analysis on WTO-related issues and adapt that knowledge to its own particular case.

Equally important was to have Cambodian government officials understand the ongoing nature of post-



accession work, and further develop processes and procedures to maintain their efforts. The benefits of WTO membership do not come automatically and require continual adaptation of a country's policies, reflecting its evolving economic and social conditions. The major WTO areas of work — trade in services, trade in goods, intellectual property rights and trade in agriculture — pose complex challenges that are difficult to address without help, especially for countries whose financial resources and experience are limited.

UNCTAD's assistance to Cambodia has been designed to enable the Cambodian Government to navigate its relationship with the WTO independently after a reasonably short period of time.

Cambodia is only one of 27 countries that have benefited from UNCTAD's assistance in their accession to the WTO so far. An even greater number of countries continue to benefit from UNCTAD's policy analysis and capacity-building programmes with regard to their participation in trade negotiations at the multilateral, regional and bilateral levels. UNCTAD makes available databases and tools for trade analysis, carries out sector-specific assessments, for example on services and biofuels, and assists in coping with environmental and health-related requirements.

At the analytical level, UNCTAD examines the global economic environment that would enable developing countries to gain from trade by pursuing their own development strategies. The 2006 edition of its flagship report, the Trade and Development Report (TDR), provided a detailed analysis of the concept of policy space and global economic imbalances. Its policy recommendations led to a consensus on the need to strengthen the Global Partnership for Development, and to translate improvements in the external environment into a dynamic process of economic growth and structural change in developing countries.

Other trade-related research in 2006 looked at how to guarantee universal access to key services, and there was a review of recent changes in the energy sector and their implications for developing countries. These issues formed the basis of an intergovernmental exchange with experts in the field.

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