

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Beyond Conventional Wisdom in Development Policy

An Intellectual History of UNCTAD 1964–2004



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Abbreviations

ACIS	Advance Cargo Information System
ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific countries
ACSTD	Advisory Committee on Science and Technology for Development
AGOA	United States African Growth and Opportunity Act
ANZCERTA	Australia New Zealand Closer Economic Relations Trade Agreement
APQLI	Augmented Physical Quality of Life Index
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
ASYCUDA	Automatic System for Customs Data
BITs	bilateral investment treaties
BSFF	Buffer Stock Financing Facility
BWIs	Bretton Woods Institutions
CARICOM	Caribbean Common Market
CBTF	Capacity Building Task Force
CCFF	Compensatory and Contingency Financing Facility
CDP	Committee for Development Planning (later Committee for Development Policy)
CIFT	Committee on Invisibles and Financing-related to Trade
CFF	Compensatory Financing Facility
CFC	Common Fund for Commodities
CI	Consumer International
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSTD	Commission on Science and Technology for Development
CTT	Committee on Transfer of Technology
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DRF	Debt Resolution Facility
DTTs	double taxation treaties
DTIS	Diagnostic Trade Integration Studies
EBA	European Union Everything But Arms
EEC	European Economic Community
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDI	Economic Diversification Index
EFF	Extended Fund Facility
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EMPRETEC	Empresas Tecnológicas
EU	European Union
EVI	Economic Vulnerability Index
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FDI	foreign direct investment
G-10	Group of Ten
G-77	Group of 77
GATS	General Agreement on Trade and Services
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	gross domestic product
GSP	Generalized System of Preferences
GSTP	Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries
GNP	Gross National Product
HIPC initiative	heavily indebted poor countries initiative
IF	Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance, including for Human and Institutional Capacity-Building, to Support Least Developed Countries in their Trade and Trade-Related Activities
ICAs	international commodity agreements
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organisation
ICCICA	Interim Coordination Committee for International Commodity Agreements
ICOs	International Commodity Organizations
ICTSD	International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development
IDA	International Development Association
IDCs	island developing countries
IAs	international investment agreements
IISD	Institute for Sustainable Development
IGE	Intergovernmental Expert Group
IGGTT	Intergovernmental Group on Transfer of Technology
IGCSTD	Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development
IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development
IMCO	Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization

Abbreviations

IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IPC	Integrated Programme for Commodities
IPR	intellectual property rights
IRTM	investment-related trade measures
ISAR	International Standards of Accounting and Reporting
ITC	International Trade Centre
ITCB	International Textiles and Clothing Bureau
ITT	International Telephone and Telegram
ITO	International Trade Organization
ITU	International Telecommunications Union
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LDCRs	Least Developed Countries Reports
LLDCs	Landlocked Developing Countries
M&As	mergers and acquisitions
MAI	Multilateral Agreement on Investment
MERCSUR	Southern Common Market
MFA	Multi-Fibre Arrangement
MFN	most-favoured-nation
MTA	Multilateral Trade Agreement
MTNs	multilateral trade negotiations
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NIEO	New International Economic Order
NIEs	Newly Industrialising Economies
NGOs	non-governmental organizations
NPV	net present value
ODA	official development assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEM	original equipment manufacturing
OHRLLS	Office of High Representative on the Least Developed, Land-locked and Small Island Developing Countries
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
POA	programme of action
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
R&D	research and development
RBP	restrictive business practices
RTA	regional trade arrangement
S&D	special and differential treatment of developing countries
SAPs	structural adjustment programmes
SCI	Sustainable Commodity Initiative
SDR	special drawing right
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SME	small and medium-sized enterprise
SOE	state-owned enterprise
SPS	sanitary and phytosanitary measures
SNPA	Substantial New Programme of Action
STIP	science and technology policy reviews
STABEX	The European Community compensatory finance scheme to stabilize export earnings of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries
TBT	Technical barriers to Trade
TDB	Trade and Development Board
<i>TDR</i>	<i>Trade and Development Report</i>
TNC	transnational corporation
TRIMs	trade-related investment measures
TRIPs	trade-related (aspects of) intellectual property rights
UEMOA	Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCSTD	United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNCTC	United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly

Abbreviations

UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Organization
UN-NADAF	United Nations Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s
UPU	Universal Postal Union
VER	voluntary exports restraint
WAIPA	World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies
WID	World Investment Directories
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
<i>WIR</i>	<i>World Investment Report</i>
WGISL	Working Group on International Shipping Legislation
WTO	World Trade Organization

Preface

Nine Years at UNCTAD: A Personal Testimony

Rubens Ricupero
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

I took over as UNCTAD's fifth Secretary-General in mid-September 1995, at the invitation of then United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and after the approval of the UN General Assembly. I came on the scene at a time when UNCTAD, after thirty years of existence, found itself in the throes of a severe crisis that many saw as terminal. For over a year and a half it had been left without a Secretary-General, a clear indication that some influential people were plotting its extinction.

The year 1995 and the immediate following years also coincided with the broader crisis of the UN, of which the acute financial difficulties mainly created by the arrears on payment of the United States' contributions were one of the most damaging aspects. Thus UNCTAD's problems were a crisis inside a much bigger crisis involving the mother-organization. From the start it was made clear to me by the UN Secretary-General and the Under Secretary-General for Management that UNCTAD should undergo a drastic process of reform and downsizing. Together with my colleagues, I decided to face the challenge head-on. Without waiting for UNCTAD IX (May–June 1996), which took place only several months later in Midrand, South Africa, we went ahead with a radical restructuring of the organization. We adopted a new structure by regrouping the previously existing nine Divisions into four, based on their subject matters, namely: Globalization and Development Strategies (GDS); Investment, Technology and Enterprise Development (DITE); International Trade in Goods, Services and Commodities (DITC); and Services Infrastructure for Development and Trade Efficiency (SITE). Besides these 4 Divisions, a Special Coordinator would ensure the cross-sectoral cooperation of all the Divisions in favour of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

The reform was generally well-regarded and even received complimentary remarks in the report emanating from the Group of Seven (G-7) Summit in Lyon (June 1996). Having dealt in that way with immediate administrative problems, we then turned our attention to the ideological allegation that UNCTAD had become redundant after the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995. It was argued that over the years UNCTAD had been the primary forum shared between the North and the South, i.e. between rich and poor countries, in the context of hostility typical of the bipolar world of the Cold War. Just as the East-West confrontation had collapsed with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the disappearance of the Soviet Union, the North-South confrontation should give way to a unified economy of planetary dimension through the globalization of trade, investment and financial flows. If the North–South antagonism was to be thrown into History's "dustbin", this should also be the fate of the institutions that had promoted or encouraged it.

* * *

It thus became necessary to rethink the very basis of UNCTAD's work. In the first phase of its life, UNCTAD had embodied the unique spirit of the turbulent 1960s, which had given birth to it. During one of the most intense moments of the Cold War, the decade opened with the construction of the Berlin Wall and the Cuban missile crisis while closing with the Thet offensive and the escalation of the Viet Nam War. Just as important as these events in international relations was the inner

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