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Report of the Trade and Development Board on its sixty-ninth executive session*

Geneva, 5–7 February and 6 April 2020

* The present document is an advance version of the report of the Trade and Development Board on its sixty-ninth executive session, held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 5 to 7 February and 6 April 2020.



Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	3
I. Action by the Trade and Development Board on substantive items on its agenda	3
A. <i>The Least Developed Countries Report 2019: The Present and Future of External Development Finance – Old Dependence, New Challenges</i>	3
B. Closing of the sixty-ninth executive session of the Board	4
C. Other action taken by the Board	4
II. President's summary	6
A. Opening statements	6
B. <i>The Least Developed Countries Report 2019: The Present and Future of External Development Finance – Old Dependence, New Challenges</i>	11
III. Procedural and related matters	12
A. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work	12
B. Provisional agenda of the sixty-seventh session of the Trade and Development Board ..	13
C. Provisional agenda of the seventieth executive session of the Trade and Development Board	14
D. Other business	14
E. Report of the Trade and Development Board on its sixty-ninth executive session	14
Annexes	
I. Provisional agenda for the sixty-seventh session of the Trade and Development Board	15
II. Attendance	16

Introduction

The sixty-ninth executive session of the Trade and Development Board was held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 5 to 7 February 2020, and, through a virtual procedure concluded on 6 April 2020. In the course of the session, the Board held four plenary meetings and undertook one virtual process in lieu of the closing plenary meeting.

I. Action by the Trade and Development Board on substantive items on its agenda

A. *The Least Developed Countries Report 2019: The Present and Future of External Development Finance – Old Dependence, New Challenges*

Agreed conclusions 552 (EX-LXIX)

The Trade and Development Board

1. *Welcomes with appreciation* the UNCTAD report, *The Least Developed Countries Report 2019: The Present and Future of External Development Finance – Old Dependence, New Challenges*, for the new insights it provides on the challenges of the least developed countries and their continuing dependence on official development assistance;

2. *Notes with concern* the very slow increase in the volume of official development assistance disbursed to the least developed countries under the period of implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action), which renders their pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals even more challenging, and encourages donor countries to strengthen their financial support to the least developed countries, supporting their productive capacity and structural transformation;

3. *Calls upon* all relevant stakeholders to support and assist the least developed countries in gaining maximum benefits from the multilateral trading system, including by harnessing trade preferences granted to them;

4. *Welcomes* the increased number of development partners, which has however increased complexity, and encourages the least developed countries to develop integrated national financing frameworks to best take advantage of opportunities, while ensuring effective aid management and delivery in line with national development strategies;

5. *Recognizes* the importance of UNCTAD work across the three pillars on services for the structural transformation of the least developed countries;

6. *Takes note of* the proposal for an “Aid Effectiveness Agenda 2.0”, contained in *The Least Developed Countries Report 2019*;

7. *Encourages* all relevant stakeholders of the new aid architecture to align and coordinate their projects and financial flows with national development plans of the least developed countries;

8. *Welcomes* the efforts at mobilizing domestic resources which the least developed countries have undertaken since the beginning of the century, especially considering the limitations inherent to their level of development;

9. *Encourages* donor countries and other countries in a position to do so to replenish the Trust Fund for the Least Developed Countries of UNCTAD.

*Fourth plenary meeting
7 February 2020*

B. Closing of the sixty-ninth executive session of the Board

Decision 553 (EX-LXIX)

The Trade and Development Board, mindful that it could not meet physically due to extraordinary circumstances, approved the provisional agenda of the sixty-seventh session, as contained in the non-paper dated 31 March 2020, through a silence procedure which ended on 6 April 2020. Through that same procedure, the Trade and Development Board approved the report of the session; authorized the Rapporteur, under the authority of the President, to finalize the report to the General Assembly, as appropriate; and officially closed the sixty-ninth executive session.

*Closing plenary procedure (virtual)
6 April 2020*

C. Other action taken by the Board

The Least Developed Countries Report 2019: The Present and Future of External Development Finance – Old Dependence, New Challenges

1. At its fourth plenary meeting, on 7 February 2020, under the agenda item, the Trade and Development Board endorsed the agreed conclusions made available in the room as a non-paper (see chapter I, section A).

Report of the Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget on its seventy-ninth session

2. At its third plenary meeting, on 6 February 2020, the Board took note of the report of the Working Party on its seventy-ninth session, as contained in document TD/B/WP/302, and endorsed the agreed conclusions therein.

3. The representative of one regional group commended the work of the Chair and the secretariat in facilitating the process and organizing session, while noting some challenges had been encountered that it was hoped could be eased during the next iteration of the programme budget process, based on the feedback provided. He requested that the secretariat take into consideration the views of all groups in a balanced manner.

Report of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission

4. At its third plenary meeting, on 6 February 2020, the Trade and Development Board took note of the report of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission on its eleventh session (TD/B/C.II/44), and endorsed the agreed conclusions contained therein.

5. The representative of one regional group reiterated the essential role of investment in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and stressed the relevance of UNCTAD work in that regard. While acknowledging that the second annual Geneva ambassadors round table for investing in the Sustainable Development

Goals was a useful mechanism, he expressed concerns about the current weakness of global foreign direct investment flows and the effect on global value chains. Ongoing reform of the international investment agreement regime and UNCTAD support for it were important. He called on UNCTAD to support the full implementation of the first General Assembly resolution on investment promotion for sustainable development and highlighted the potential of digitalization for development and UNCTAD work in the area.

6. The representative of another regional group, while acknowledging the successful conclusion of the Commission, noted that the adoption of extensive agreed conclusions in both the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission and the Trade and Development Commission, by referring to the continuation of existing programmes and projects, was not in line with the spirit of the Accra Accord dispositions on consensus-building. Side events, even if relevant, could feature more advantageously outside the framework of the Commissions.

Report of the Trade and Development Commission

7. Also at its third plenary meeting, on 6 February 2020, the Board took note of the report of the Trade and Development Commission on its eleventh session (TD/B/C.I/49), and endorsed the agreed conclusions contained therein.

8. The representative of one regional group said that the report contributed to better understanding debates on social and environmental challenges to reducing inequality and creating opportunities for all. He reiterated the importance of analytical content, as previous work served as reference material.

Report of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Financing for Development

9. At its fourth plenary meeting, on 7 February 2020, the Board took note of the report of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Financing for Development on its third session, as contained in document TD/B/EFD/3/3.

10. Many delegates and one regional group recognized the importance of the item on financing for development and expressed strong support for the work of the UNCTAD Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Financing for Development in fostering an informed debate and building consensus, thus facilitating countries' efforts to take concrete actions and give direction to the mobilization of internal and external resources.

11. Some regional groups expressed reservations about the current modalities for the organization of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Financing for Development and the negotiation process and called for rethinking them to further constructive ways for consensus-building.

Report of the Joint Advisory Group on the International Trade Centre

12. At its third plenary meeting, on 6 February 2020, the Board took note of the report on the fifty-third session of the Joint Advisory Group on the International Trade Centre.

Other business

Theme of the fifteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

13. At its opening plenary meeting, on 5 February 2020, the President of the Board noted that, following consultations with regional groups, a theme for the fifteenth

session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development had been proposed, as follows: From inequality and vulnerability to prosperity for all.

14. The Board adopted the theme of the fifteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Establishment of the Preparatory Committee for the fifteenth session of the Conference

15. At its fourth plenary meeting, on 7 February 2020, in accordance with past practice, the Board established the Preparatory Committee for the fifteenth session of the Conference and elected the President of the Trade and Development Board as the Chair of the Preparatory Committee. The Preparatory Committee would be tasked with the substantive preparatory process leading towards the fifteenth session of the Conference.

16. The President of the Board noted that the expectation and intention was to have an inclusive and transparent preparatory process. He would aim at organizing meetings of the Preparatory Committee in a way that would maximize participation, while minimizing the possibility of simultaneous meetings, and counting on the regional group coordinators to help to foster transparency and openness.

17. Furthermore, the President reported that regional groups were working on their respective position papers for the fifteenth session of the Conference and that the first session of the Preparatory Committee would be scheduled in the following weeks on completion of those papers.

18. The Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD stated that the secretariat would provide all the necessary tools for the preparation of the draft outcome document and the subsequent in-depth negotiations that would lead up to the fifteenth session of the Conference. She said that, with all stakeholders working in their respective roles and within their competences, the aim would be to achieve an agreement that would be useful for the international community, for development and particularly for the countries that were most vulnerable or facing the greatest challenges to development.

II. President's summary

A. Opening statements

19. In his opening statement, recalling that 2020 would be a quadrennial conference year, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD underscored the challenges and opportunities in the year ahead for which the fifteenth session of the Conference was a platform for sharing ideas on global trends, taking stock and assessing future directions, to set out an agenda that would be relevant for member States and the international community. Noting the spirit in which members had sought an early consensus in preparing to move towards the preparatory committee process for the fifteenth session of the Conference, he underscored the UNCTAD secretariat's readiness to service the process, providing support for negotiations and facilitating a broad view of the current global context. The Conference represented an opportunity, both to renew the mandate of UNCTAD and as the only United Nations ministerial forum on trade and development. The decision on the theme of the Conference had laid the groundwork for discussions to be enriched.

20. Ever-changing global geopolitics and phenomena would ultimately influence the agenda of the fifteenth session of the Conference. As member States presented their regional and country positions and views on the eventual outcome document,

the theme of the Conference would need to be revisited regularly, particularly in defining the sub-themes.

21. Reflecting, he noted that, in the lead up to the tenth session of the Conference held in Bangkok in 2000, which had been one of the most successful quadrennial conferences over the previous 20 years, bringing together 144 ministers, a dual crisis had arisen: the collapse of financial economic systems, particularly in Asia, that impacted many developing and emerging countries in the second half of the 1990s; and the debacle in 1999 in Seattle (United States of America) of the Third Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization. The tenth session of the Conference in Bangkok offered an opportunity for people who had been suspicious of an emerging globalization and of multilateralism, not to stake out national positions, but to talk to those defending multilateralism. Ironically, those who had defended multilateralism in Seattle were currently the ones with doubts and those who were suspicious but had taken a leap of faith were currently the ones who firmly believed that multilateralism offered a hope that countries and communities could come out of poverty through a rules-based, predictable system for trade, with a fair dispute-resolution mechanism.

22. Those changed circumstances were impacting the global mood, on the road to the Twelfth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization. The impacts were visible in the rising push for unilateral and bilateral deals at the expense of a rules-based multilateral system, attempts to decouple trade and development in the discourse at the World Trade Organization and the proliferation of plurilateral agreements as an alternative to stalling multilateral processes. A phenomenon in one country could have multiplying effects in many other countries, and in unforeseen ways, including in relation to finance and investment, because of a more integrated global community. The context for Barbados was likewise unforeseeable, but it would again be important not to “waste a crisis”. In uncertain times, Barbados offered the chance to create opportunities for success. Even the World Trade Organization’s most forward-looking and inclusive conference, in Doha, came against the backdrop of the events of 11 September 2001. He thus urged member States to encourage a large turnout of ministers for the fifteenth session of the Conference, look at the opportunities and at what could be done better and seize the moment to speak to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

23. Finally, the Secretary-General of stated that inputs from a team of eminent persons would feed into his report to the Conference, currently under preparation. The final report would subsequently be shared with member States. Preparations for the Conference in Bridgetown were progressing well, in consultation with the host country. Work towards the World Investment Forum and the Asia E-commerce Week were also ongoing.

24. The following speakers made opening statements: the representative of Zambia, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China; the representative of Iraq, on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group; the representative of Ecuador, on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States; the representative of Kazakhstan, on behalf of the landlocked developing countries; the representative of the European Union, on behalf of the European Union and its member States; the representative of Zambia, on behalf of the African Group; the representative of Nepal; the representative of Pakistan; the representative of Kenya; the representative of Barbados; and the representative of Libya.

25. The representatives of several regional groups and many delegates expressed support for multilateralism and the fundamental role of institutions such as UNCTAD in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, recalling Sustainable Development Goal target 10.6 (“ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and

financial institutions to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions”). They noted the work of UNCTAD on investment for development and renewed the call for reform of the international investment regime and continued UNCTAD support to member States in the area. The regional groups and delegates underscored the first United Nations General Assembly resolution on promoting investment for sustainable development, which decided on the creation of a sub-item entitled “promoting investments for sustainable development” and requested UNCTAD, based on ongoing research, to inform the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly on the matter, with a special focus on the gaps and challenges faced and the progress made on promoting investments for sustainable development, as well as concrete recommendations for the advancement of investment for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

26. They noted that successful annual sessions of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission and the Trade and Development Commission, as well as the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Financing for Development, had been held. They underscored that, at the Intergovernmental Group of Experts, the discussions and outcomes on illicit financial flows and the activities underlying their occurrence, new financing mechanisms and the possibilities to improve them were fundamental to informing the pursuit of development objectives.

27. Furthermore, the regional groups and delegates stated that the UNCTAD secretariat should continue to collate and analyse data on the areas of trade of interest to developing countries and to address and deepen work on the trade and environment nexus, as a cross-cutting issue of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Technology transfer was a basic tool to attain the Sustainable Development Goals and address global challenges such as climate change, for which UNCTAD had a role in providing advice and tools, as well as serving as a forum for inclusive multilateral discussions. The “digital revolution” demanded appropriate supporting policies, and developing countries needed analytical support to better address their needs and development aspirations. Adequate public policies were needed for trade to contribute to economic growth that had a long-lasting impact. Trade policies should be integrated into the framework of industrialization and structural transformation strategies. While the spread of South–South cooperation illustrated solidarity among peoples and countries of the South, it was not a substitute for North–South cooperation, which remained the main channel for international development cooperation.

28. Finally, they noted that it was paramount that International Trade Centre technical cooperation projects should be delivered in accordance with national development priorities and in line with the overarching objectives of structural transformation of economies to improve sustainability, while the representative of another regional group highlighted the creation of sustainable development centres.

29. One delegate conveyed the satisfaction of Barbados at the level of engagement and spirit of cooperation in selecting the theme of the fifteenth session of the Conference; the theme allowed for a wide array of issues and interests to be advanced, while also being succinct, in keeping with previous themes.

30. The representative of one regional group commended the initiative of Barbados in proposing a broad theme, while ensuring the participation of all member States. The agenda for the fifteenth session of the Conference should be built on the consensus of all members and focus on strengthening the role of UNCTAD in the face of the challenges of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the new international context. She reiterated that the regional group’s members were willing and committed to working constructively and collaborating objectively in the efforts ahead of the next quadrennial conference.

31. The representative of another regional group noted that the momentum of preparations in 2020 for the fifteenth session of the Conference should be maintained, with the confidence of achieving success and in the spirit of multilateralism.

32. The representative of another regional group said that the report of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD was an important part of the preparations for the fifteenth session of the Conference. The growing threats to multilateralism, rise of protectionism and trade tensions between major global economic powers put global long-term stability and prosperity in jeopardy and undermined the efforts of developing countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The situation would require the utmost attention at the forthcoming Conference and collective efforts to reach consensus. At the fifteenth session of the Conference, priority should be given to major challenges, such as growing inequalities within and among countries, climate change and development, harnessing of digitalization and new technologies to serve development and provide developing countries with an equitable chance to benefit from the fourth industrial revolution, financing for development and addressing debt. One delegate noted that the negative impacts of inequalities were also apparent in human rights and the environment, as well as climate change. Thus, the outcome document of the fifteenth session of the Conference should help mitigate the effects of inequalities and vulnerabilities.

33. One regional group noted the special importance of the consensus-building role of UNCTAD and that the intergovernmental machinery provided a forum where member States could debate issues of trade and development, narrow the gaps between opinions and positions, give direction to research and analysis and technical assistance and provide an opportunity for member States to interact with the secretariat and give feedback on the execution of its mandate. Further strengthening the intergovernmental machinery was essential to be able to perform that key role. It was thus vital to move forward with a consensus-based approach and build on decision 540 (LXV) of the Board on revitalizing the intergovernmental machinery.

34. While welcoming the discussion of new and emerging issues at UNCTAD, allowing for fresh perspectives and learning, the representatives of several regional groups and many delegates also underscored the expectation that discussions in informal forums should be the exception rather than the norm; new issues, as much as possible, should be incorporated into the formal intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD, to enable the possibility of multilateral consensus in the form of agreed outcomes that could contribute more effectively to policymaking and intergovernmental processes elsewhere.

35. One delegate urged UNCTAD to continue programmes of assisting developing countries in investment and trade issues, including the remodelling of bilateral investment treaties. Other areas for further study and analysis included the economic value of data and protection of intellectual property in the digital economy; work on the digital economy should be enhanced to respond to emerging challenges. He urged member States to reaffirm their political support to strengthen the mandate of UNCTAD, as the focal point of the multilateral system for the integrated treatment of trade and development, and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development.

36. The representative of one regional group welcomed *The Least Developed Countries Report 2019: The Present and Future of External Development Finance – Old Dependence, New Challenges*, as the report raised many important issues and provided sound analysis on external development finance. One delegate noted that the report presented a global picture of aid dependence and external resources with a view to the structural economic transformation of the least developed countries.

37. The representative of another regional group also noted the quality of *The Least Developed Countries Report 2019* and the effort to put forward economic policy options, of which structural economic transformation and diversification of production stood out. She expressed concern regarding overindebtedness and the risk of excessive debt, as was the case for Haiti and other least developed countries. Addressing the need for financing to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development were a priority. The report's conclusions on the least developed countries and the results of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Financing for Development, as well as work on the contribution of private investment towards the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, should be taken into account in the efforts to achieve those commitments.

38. The representative of another regional group noted that the year 2020 marked the start of the decade of action to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals. The new programme of action for the least developed countries to be adopted in 2021 coincided with the decade, with both aimed at striving for fair globalization, boosting economic growth and preventing conflict. Thus, *The Least Developed Countries Report 2019* was highly relevant. It was important and pragmatic to concentrate international efforts in helping the least developed countries to overcome the specific challenges ahead.

39. The representative of another regional group stated that the expectation was that recommendations would underscore a clear road map for African countries to foster socioeconomic growth and access an array of external finance sources, under the new aid architecture, and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union's Agenda 2063. The reports to be addressed at the executive session were vital to steering UNCTAD work and addressing the needs of African countries. It was thus important to prioritize UNCTAD resources towards achieving the mandate to build the knowledge and technical support required by African countries, including in the area of finance and development.

40. One delegate noted that, while the decade of action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals kicked off in 2020, there were indications of falling behind schedule. A coordinated investment push was needed globally to achieve the Goals in a timely manner. The *Trade and Development Report 2019: Financing a Global Green New Deal* highlighted those financing challenges as the multilateral system struggled to underpin stable markets and a healthy investment climate, which was also reflected in *The Least Developed Countries Report 2019*. The linkages between external development finance and national development priorities were weakening and negatively impacting the ability to meet the demands of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Other countries also faced financial challenges. Kenya, for example, had mainstreamed the Sustainable Development Goals into the national development blueprint, with the aim of transforming the country into a newly industrialized middle-income country.

41. The representative of one regional group noted the importance of awareness on the part of senior management of all member State comments, for diligent consideration prior to taking managerial decisions. In the lead up to the fifteenth session of the Conference, the lessons learned since Nairobi should be put into practice for the next mandate period. There were significant challenges ahead to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, given the overall limitation in available resources. The role of UNCTAD was critical; the focus of actions needed to be where value added was greatest, while ensuring no overlap with the efforts of other entities. Consensus-building should bring together different considerations credibly and honestly. He also noted that the regional group was essentially ready to submit its contribution to the zero draft negotiating text.

42. The Secretary-General of UNCTAD assured delegations that he would continue to aim at balancing direct engagement with the intergovernmental process with other commitments.

43. Several regional groups and many delegates called on the UNCTAD secretariat to continue monitoring and reporting on trade trends, policy and tensions that affected the multilateral trading system, particularly those stemming from unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, which impeded the full achievement of economic and social development.

44. One delegate stated that security and stability for societies were implicit in discussions on the global economy and social growth, which required taking into account the creation of conditions that allowed achievement of that growth. Achieving security and stability in Libya could tangibly contribute to the economic recovery and growth of the African continent.

B. *The Least Developed Countries Report 2019: The Present and Future of External Development Finance – Old Dependence, New Challenges*

(Agenda item 2)

45. The representatives of several regional groups, several delegates and one intergovernmental organization noted the report's quality, sound analysis and findings. They underscored external finance as a critical element for the least developed countries to attain the Sustainable Development Goals and structural transformation. One regional group said that UNCTAD should play an active and central role in the preparation and holding of the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. Several participants highlighted the relevance of the report's analysis and recommendations for all developing countries, and for the decade of action. One regional group stated its intention to further engage UNCTAD on issues addressed in the report in respect of preparations for the Fifth United Nations Conference and the African Union's Agenda 2063.

46. Several regional groups and delegates endorsed the report's proposal for the international community to implement an Aid Effectiveness Agenda 2.0, aimed at strengthening aid management and effectiveness and safeguarding least developed country interests, in line with the changed development cooperation landscape. In that regard, one regional group stated that the principles of ownership, alignment and mutual accountability were especially important, and another regional group highlighted the importance of domestic actions in broadening national ownership of development processes, including strengthened integrated national financing frameworks. Another regional group called for development cooperation that involved the private sector to be reviewed for alignment with recipient countries' development priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals.

47. Some delegates endorsed the report's recommendation on strengthening least developed country capacity to manage and steer external development financing in line with national development priorities and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

48. Some regional groups highlighted the importance of human rights for development and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, as argued in the report, underlining that the realization of the right to development was a gateway towards the realization of all human rights and the central place of comprehensive human rights protection, and called for active engagement on those issues.

49. Several regional groups and delegates called on providers of official development assistance to honour their commitments in line with agreed targets for aid to the least developed countries. Significant efforts had already been made by the least developed countries on mobilizing domestic resources, and they lamented the worsening official development assistance conditions and the low levels of official development assistance targeting development of productive capacities and domestic entrepreneurship. Several delegations and one participant provided information on their development assistance initiatives to benefit the least developed countries, including through provision of debt write-offs and zero-interest loans, increasing and diversifying their investment portfolios in those countries, boosting transport infrastructure investments and trade linkages, generating improved public data on development cooperation and taking due account of the risks associated with different aid modalities.

50. Some delegations and one intergovernmental organization noted the important role that South–South cooperation played as a complement to (not replacement of) official development assistance. One delegation called on UNCTAD to assist countries in alleviating the challenges of engaging in South–South cooperation, including by promoting more discussion and exchange of experiences.

51. Some regional groups and one delegate called for the strengthening of UNCTAD work on the least developed countries to be among elements considered at the fifteenth session of the Conference, in addition to the issues raised in the report. One delegate noted that one area requiring strengthening was the role of UNCTAD in boosting productive capacities and mobilizing investment in productive sectors and infrastructure projects. He requested that UNCTAD facilitate a new generation of policies for vulnerable and structurally weak least developed countries in the area of productive capacities and trade. One regional group stated an interest in having research be conducted on enhancing the role and management of remittances. Another regional group emphasized the need for UNCTAD to assist developing countries, and the least developed countries, in line with its mandate and in coordination with other entities of the United Nations development system.

52. Several regional groups and delegates and one intergovernmental organization emphasized the need to safeguard multilateralism in order to deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Revamped international development partnerships and coordinated international action were required on systemic issues, including external development finance and debt sustainability.

53. One regional group also called on UNCTAD to enhance technical support to the least developed countries to enable better use of international support measures, such as the World Trade Organization's services waiver.

III. Procedural and related matters

A. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work (Agenda item 1)

54. At its opening plenary meeting, on 5 February 2020, the Trade and Development Board adopted the provisional agenda for the sixty-ninth executive session, as contained in document TD/B/EX(69)/1. Accordingly, the agenda for the executive session was as follows:

1. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
2. *The Least Developed Countries Report 2019: The Present and Future of External Development Finance – Old Dependence, New Challenges.*

3. Report of the Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget on its seventy-ninth session.
4. Report of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission.
5. Report of the Trade and Development Commission.
6. Report of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Financing for Development.
7. Report of the Joint Advisory Group on the International Trade Centre.
8. Provisional agenda of the sixty-seventh session of the Trade and Development Board.
9. Provisional agenda of the seventieth executive session of the Trade and Development Board.
10. Other business.
11. Report of the Trade and Development Board on its sixty-ninth executive session.

55. Also at its opening plenary meeting, on 5 February 2020, the Board decided to elect Mr. Vaqif Sadiqov (Azerbaijan) as a member of the Advisory Body set up in accordance with paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action on the implementation of courses by the secretariat in 2019–2020 and their relevant impact, in addition to the members elected at the sixty-sixth session of the Board.¹

Organization of work

56. At its fourth plenary meeting, on 7 February 2020, the President of the Board proposed postponement of consideration of item 8, item 9, any issues under item 10 and item 11. Thus, the date of the closing plenary meeting would be communicated to member States. At that time, discussions on the pending items would continue and conclude. The aim would also be for the sixty-ninth executive session to conclude shortly prior to the start of the deliberations of the Preparatory Committee.

57. At its fourth plenary meeting, on 7 February 2020, the Board decided to adjourn its sixty-ninth executive session temporarily and conclude discussions in due course.

58. On 6 April 2020, the Board decided to close the sixty-ninth executive session, in accordance with its decision 553 (EX-LXIX) (see chapter I, section B, above), following the conclusion of the virtual silence procedure on 6 April 2020, and with no objections from member States recorded, as the postponed closing plenary meeting could not be held physically.

B. Provisional agenda of the sixty-seventh session of the Trade and Development Board

(Agenda item 8)

59. Also on 6 April 2020, in accordance with decision 553 (EX-LXIX) of the Trade and Development Board, the Board approved the provisional agenda of the sixty-seventh session, as contained in the non-paper dated 31 March 2020 (see annex I).

¹ See TD/B/66/7, chapter III, paras. 86 and 87.

C. Provisional agenda of the seventieth executive session of the Trade and Development Board

(Agenda item 9)

60. Also on 6 April 2020, in accordance with decision 553 (EX-LXIX) of the Trade and Development Board, consideration of the agenda item was deferred to the sixty-seventh session of the Board (see annex I).

D. Other business

(Agenda item 10)

61. At its fourth plenary meeting, on 7 February 2020, the Board approved the calendar of meetings for the remainder of 2020, as contained in the non-paper dated 5 February 2020.

62. The President of the Board noted that the calendar was a flexible framework for intergovernmental meetings and preparations for the fifteenth session of the Conference.²

E. Report of the Trade and Development Board on its sixty-ninth executive session

(Agenda item 11)

63. Also on 6 April 2020, in accordance with decision 553 (EX-LXIX) of the Trade and Development Board, the Board approved the report of the session and authorized the Rapporteur, under the authority of the President, to finalize the report to the General Assembly, as appropriate.

² The official calendar will be issued as document TD/B/INF.246.

Annex I

Provisional agenda for the sixty-seventh session of the Trade and Development Board

1. Procedural matters:
 - (a) Election of officers;
 - (b) Adoption of the agenda and organization of the work of the session;
 - (c) Adoption of the report on credentials.
2. Annual report of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD.
3. Actions carried out and/or planned by UNCTAD to support member States in the recovery of trade and industries after overcoming the pandemic.
4. Investment for development.*
5. Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in support of Africa.
6. Preparatory process for the fifteenth session of the Conference:
 - Approval of the provisional agenda of the fifteenth session of the Conference.
7. UNCTAD contributions to the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields.
8. Provisional agenda of the seventieth executive session of the Trade and Development Board.
9. Institutional, organizational, administrative and related matters:
 - (a) Report by the Chair of the Advisory Body set up in accordance with paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action on the implementation of courses by the secretariat in 2019–2020 and their relevant impact; and the appointment of members of the Advisory Body;
 - (b) Designation of intergovernmental bodies for the purposes of rule 76 of the rules of procedure of the Board;
 - (c) Designation of non-governmental organizations for the purposes of rule 77 of the rules of procedure of the Board;
 - (d) Review of the calendar of meetings;
 - (e) Membership of the Working Party;
 - (f) Review of the lists of States contained in the annex to General Assembly resolution 1995 (XIX);
 - (g) Administrative and financial implications of the actions of the Board.
10. Other business.
11. Adoption of the report.

* Subtitle to be determined.

Annex II

Attendance*

1. Representatives of the following members of the Trade and Development Board attended the session:

Albania	Lesotho
Austria	Libya
Bahamas	Mali
Bahrain	Mauritania
Bangladesh	Mexico
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mongolia
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Nepal
Bulgaria	Nigeria
Burkina Faso	Oman
Cameroon	Pakistan
Canada	Panama
China	Republic of Moldova
Congo	Romania
Cuba	Russian Federation
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Saudi Arabia
Djibouti	Senegal
Egypt	Serbia
El Salvador	South Africa
Finland	Spain
Gambia	State of Palestine
Germany	Syrian Arab Republic
Guatemala	Togo
Honduras	Tunisia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Turkey
Ireland	Uganda
Jordan	United Republic of Tanzania
Kazakhstan	Viet Nam
Kenya	Zambia
Lebanon	Zimbabwe

2. The following members of the Conference not members of the Board attended the session:

Holy See

3. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented at the session:

European Union

Organization of Islamic Cooperation

Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States

4. The following specialized agencies and related organizations were represented at the session:

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

World Trade Organization

* This attendance list contains registered participants. For the list of participants, see TD/B/EX(69)/INF.1.