

Joint Statement of Priorities for OECD-UNCTAD Partnership

Complementarity of two sister institutions

1. The OECD and the UNCTAD are interlinked by shared commitment to the development of a rules and values based world economy and global poverty reduction. Shared objectives call for further deepening of co-operation, given the convergence of interests and complementarity of membership of both organisations, as well as similar methods of work. In fact, co-operation has been developing for many years and involves numerous projects.

2. What follows is a reaffirmation of our commitment to this process and a statement of future priorities which is intended to give focus to and enhance co-operation between our two organisations. We will seek to reduce, not increase, the transaction costs of our partnership and aim for greater effectiveness at all levels.

Building on comparative advantage

3. The two organisations have accumulated considerable expertise on trade, investment and development policies in widely differing country contexts. Both organisations can mutually benefit from, and bear on, each other's work. OECD Member countries have developed policy know-how, standards and guidelines based on their experiences which can be of great benefit to UNCTAD member countries, as well as to the UNCTAD Secretariat. The expertise of UNCTAD, on the other hand, helps strengthen the development dimension of OECD's work in general, and helps the OECD Secretariat to enhance the relevance of Member countries' policy dialogue with non-Members on topics related to trade, investment and development.

Priority areas for co-operation

4. The unifying theme for our co-operation during the period leading to UNCTAD XI is to promote institutional and policy reforms to build a competitive domestic productive capacity for enhancing development and integration into the global trading system.

We renew our commitment to continuing close co-operation in the following priority areas of great mutual interest:

- Poverty reduction, especially in least developed countries
- Trade
- Investment

Other areas for co-operation

5. In addition to the priority areas listed above, we will seek opportunities to develop further our co-operation in areas where it is not yet well established, or indeed it is functioning well on an ad hoc basis, but could be expanded in the coming years. Examples of the latter may include work on competition law and policy; trade in agriculture, technology and governance.

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Staff development and exchanges

6. We are committed to strengthen our knowledge networks, especially by including each other's staff in formal and informal staff development initiatives, staff exchanges, and participation in technical development programs.

Mutual access to information

7. We are committed to join forces to make fuller use of the enormous opportunities, which now exist thanks to high-speed Internet links and new secure network protocols, to make information available electronically to each Secretariat, as well as to different categories of clients. Examples of such access to information include the involvement and collaboration of both institutions in the Inter-Agency Task Force on Financial Statistics, or in the preparation of Agricultural Market Access Database (AMAD).

Reviews of progress

8. Without prejudice of the programme of work of each organisation, the two Organisations will review progress in the above areas jointly, periodically discuss prospect for future collaboration based on such agendas, in Geneva and Paris respectively, and report our findings to our respective members.

Contact points

9. Individual activity managers in both organisations in charge of specific work areas indicated in the Annex remain directly responsible for co-operation in these areas. Overall co-ordination of UNCTAD's responsibility for the relationship with the OECD is vested in Mr Carlos Fortin, Deputy Secretary-General. Mr Victor Busuttill, Head, Programme Planning and Assessment Unit will serve as the regular contact point for co-operation with the OECD. On the OECD side, Mr. Seiichi Kondo, Deputy Secretary-General, will ensure overall co-ordination. Mr. André Barsony, Deputy Director of the Centre for Co-operation with Non-Members, will assist him and serve as a regular contact point for UNCTAD staff.

Implementation of co-operation

10. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development will implement this joint statement in conformity with their respective regulations, rules and administrative practices.

For OECD

Donald J. Johnston
Secretary-General

Paris, on 13 March 2002

For UNCTAD

Rubens Ricupero
Secretary-General

Paris, on 13 March 2002