

**REVIEW OF MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION IN THE
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND
DEVELOPMENT (UNCTAD)**

Prepared by

Even Fontaine Ortiz

Joint Inspection Unit



United Nations, Geneva 2012

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Review of management and administration in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

JIU/REP/2012/1

Objectives

The objective of the present review is to analyse governance structures and management processes in the UNCTAD secretariat with a view to identifying good practice and areas for improvement. This exercise focuses on classic management areas such as executive management, financial management, human resources management, coordination between divisions as well as monitoring and evaluation. In taking stock of the corresponding management processes, the review examines whether current practices help the UNCTAD secretariat to effectively implement its mandate as conferred by Member States in its three pillars: intergovernmental consensus-building, research and analysis, and technical cooperation.

Main findings and conclusions

Intergovernmental machinery and consensus-building

- Member States have been somewhat distant from the implementation of the UNCTAD programme of work, leaving too much room to the secretariat to take the lead in this process.
- It is an established practice that the secretariat drafts ex-ante proposed texts of agreed conclusions for consideration by the Member States. Such a practice gives too much leverage to the secretariat in the consensus-building process.

Research and analysis/publications

- The UNCTAD secretariat think-tank function in the United Nations system for research and analysis at the intersection of trade and development has been losing its autonomy over the years, becoming a sort of brokering function.
- Research outputs are a rich reservoir to effectively link technical cooperation activities to capacity-building.
- With respect to publications, the secretariat has undertaken streamlining efforts to consolidate its portfolio in order to concentrate more on its flagship reports.

Technical cooperation/partnerships

- The great majority of extra-budgetary contributions of all kinds of donors to UNCTAD are dedicated to technical cooperation. In this area, the secretariat has been successful in implementing its landmark multi-country model programmes such as ASYCUDA and DMFAS. Due to their high potential impact, they can serve to elaborate a “best practices guide” based on lessons learned. With respect to partnerships, there seems to be a piecemeal approach.

- UNCTAD is not sufficiently proactive in promoting partnership as a key tool for attracting skills and resources already available in the United Nations system.
- Together with the International Trade Centre (ITC) mandate, the Technical Cooperation Service is the centre of excellence for trade-related technical cooperation and has a lead-role in structuring and clarifying the partnerships of UNCTAD.
- A coherent fund-raising strategy is a key component for fostering sustainable management of technical cooperation.

Vision and leadership/results-based management (RBM)

- The UNCTAD secretariat lacks a clear corporate strategy to successfully carry out its mandate.
- While the divisions work quite independently from each other, a perceived lack of leadership from top management negatively impacts on the coordination of work in the secretariat. Although the Secretary-General of UNCTAD has formulated a strategy of Communication, Concentration and Coordination (“3C statement”) as a common vision for the secretariat, the organization has not been able to translate the 3C statement in a One-UNCTAD corporate identity. This has contributed to the creation of a silo structure and a weak communication culture between the top management and staff.
- The UNCTAD secretariat is far from applying a coherent result-oriented approach in its operations. The prompt design of an integrated result-management strategy appears to be a must for the organization.

Human resources management

- The JIU staff survey reveals that staff members are highly dissatisfied, frustrated and demotivated with the functioning of human resources management.
- Recruitment and selection processes are considered non-transparent and career development needs strong links to individual performance.

Budget and finances management

- Over the last few years, the UNCTAD secretariat has had to face cuts in extra-budgetary contributions to its trust funds (from US\$ 36.8 million in 2007 to 30.7 million in 2010). These cuts cannot be attributed to the current financial crisis alone, but also reflect a decreasing interest of some major donor countries in UNCTAD.
- The UNCTAD secretariat lacks a coherent fund-raising strategy that could serve to establish a systematic donor-recipient relationship.
- In view of the fact that most of the extra-budgetary contributions are strictly earmarked, a new un-earmarked trust fund emerges as a necessity to attract donor contributions, including from the private sector, which can be more flexibly used.

Key recommendations

Recommendation 1

The legislative bodies of UNCTAD should take their responsibilities in reaching their agreed conclusions without any interference from the supporting services of the secretariat, which should only be requested to process the resulting inter-

governmental parliamentary documentation.

Recommendation 3

The Secretary-General of UNCTAD should launch a structured long-term strategy of partnerships complemented by a pro-active fund-raising strategy and negotiate respective Memoranda of Understanding with all of UNCTAD's partners for development.

Recommendation 4

The Secretary-General of UNCTAD should define and elaborate, as a matter of priority, a clear RBM integrated framework and implementing strategy, containing the elements described in paragraph 109, to translate the general programmatic mandates as part of the United Nations Secretariat into long-term, mid-term and short-term programmes, in line with the priorities established by the member States of UNCTAD, with a clear delineation of responsibilities and a transparent, written definition of delegation of authority and accountability and to present it for consideration and approval by the TDB.

Recommendation 7

The Secretary-General of UNCTAD should elaborate, in close consultations with the member States, a well-defined corporate fund-raising strategy with clear objectives, goals, priorities and targets in a results-based management approach containing clear lines of responsibility and accountability of the parties involved, to be considered for adoption by the Trade and Development Board.

Recommendation 9

Beside the current earmarked and proposed cluster trust funds, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD in consultation with the Trade and Development Board should seek authorization from the General Assembly to establish a non-earmarked general trust fund to support UNCTAD substantive operations, in particular its research and analysis work and technical cooperation activities.

Recommendation 11

The Conference should direct the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to ensure the sufficient allocation of resources for strengthening an independent and efficient evaluation capacity within the UNCTAD secretariat.

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Abbreviations

CEB	United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination
CIO	Communications, Information and Outreach Section
DESA	Department for Economic and Social Affairs
DMFAS	Debt Management and Financial Analysis System
DoM	Division of Management
DSG	Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GS	General Service
HR	Human Resources
HRAP	Human Resources Action Plans
IMDIS	Integrated management and documentation information system
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITC	International Trade Centre
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
JPO	Junior Professional Officers
LDC	least developed countries
MDTF	Multi Donor Trust Fund
MoU	Memorandum of understanding
NGO	non-governmental organization
NRA	non-resident agency
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIC	officer-in-charge
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
OSG	Office of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD
PRC	Project Review Committee
RB	regular budget
RBM	results-based management
RC	Resident Coordinator
SSC	South-South Cooperation
TC	technical cooperation
TCS	Technical Cooperation Service
TDB	Trade and Development Board
ToR	Terms of reference
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOG	United Nations Office at Geneva
Vi	Virtual Institute
WIR	World Investment Report
WTO	World Trade Organization
XB	extra-budgetary

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Scope and objective

1. This report is part of a series of reviews of management and administration of participating organizations undertaken in recent years by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU). The review of management and administration in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was included in the JIU programme of work for 2010, as suggested by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), which had itself undertaken several audits of different services of the UNCTAD secretariat.

2. Indeed, the UNCTAD secretariat requested JIU to postpone the launching of the current review until other ongoing audits were finished. To satisfy this request, JIU undertook its research only in November 2010 with the understanding that the UNCTAD secretariat would fully collaborate with JIU during the process to ensure the finalization of the report in time for its consideration by Member States at the UNCTAD XIII Conference, both by facilitating prompt responses to the request for information and by providing timely comments to the draft version of the report.

3. Unfortunately, in the first half of the preparation of this review, the assigned team faced difficulties in getting the required information from the UNCTAD secretariat. For instance, the original draft was sent to the UNCTAD secretariat for comments on 22 December 2011, setting 16 January 2012 as the deadline to reply. However, the secretariat asked for an extension of the deadline until 31 January 2012. The new deadline was accepted provided that this would not delay the presentation of the report to Member States at their quadrennial Conference in Doha and also under the understanding that it would then make it easier for the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to provide his official comments to the final version as stipulated in article 11.4 (d) of the JIU Statute. Moreover, the Inspector requested the UNCTAD secretariat to identify a possible slot for presentation of the review during the Doha event, so that it would reach the Member States in time for their consideration of the report. Furthermore, the Inspector highly regrets that at least one top management official of the UNCTAD secretariat unduly interfered in the conduct of this review in clear infringement of article 7 of the JIU Statute on the expected independence of the Inspectors in discharging their duties. These events resulted in a significant delay in the finalization of the present review.

4. The objective of the management and administration review is to analyse key organizational and operational issues to identify potential for improvement in areas such as governance, strategic planning, management and administration in the Conference. It also reviews the role of UNCTAD within the United Nations system and the international community in implementing its mandate and contributing to overarching mandates on development issues throughout, promoting partnerships and building synergies. Finally, the review assesses the current organization culture by analysing the results of an online staff survey. The survey revealed some structural challenges to be addressed by management to revitalize the functioning of the organization and to improve its atmosphere and its daily working environment. The recommendations of this report aim at assisting the Conference, the Trade and Development Board (TDB) and the secretariat in fulfilling their respective mandates.

B. Methodology

5. In accordance with the internal standards and guidelines of JIU and its internal working procedures, the methodology followed in preparing this report included a preliminary desk review, a comprehensive online staff survey, including managers at all levels, ad hoc questionnaires, interview guides sent prior to personal and collective interviews, field missions in developing countries, and in-depth analysis of the collected information.

6. The online staff survey reached the high response rate of 51.6 per cent; it was aimed at collecting feedback from UNCTAD staff members concerning the daily functioning of the organization and the perception of their position within it. To this end, it included 28 closed questions (with multiple-choice option) and one open question for qualitative assessment or suggestions to be

made, in addition to eight filtering questions to organize the groups of responses. The three thematic clusters covered by the survey were: (a) evaluation of the working environment, (b) evaluation of the organizational culture and (c) career development and performance evaluation.

7. In the course of the present review, the Inspector conducted 71 interviews with key stakeholders such as the top management of the UNCTAD secretariat, including the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General, the Directors of the Divisions, the Chiefs of the programme support services, the coordinator of the UNCTAD Virtual Institute (Vi), the Interregional Advisor, the Chief of the South-South Unit, representatives of 10 Member States (five from developing and five from developed countries, namely, China, Germany, Ghana, Hungary, Mexico, Nepal, Paraguay, Switzerland, Thailand and Zimbabwe), three regional groups (GRULAC, G77 and China, JUSCANNZ), a delegation from the European Union, 16 staff members of the UNCTAD secretariat, among them middle managers and staff representatives, the Geneva-based Ombudsman, 10 staff members of partner organizations (World Trade Organization (WTO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Trade Centre (ITC), and the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG)) and 26 officials during the field missions to Cuba, Dominican Republic, Lesotho, Uganda, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania as well as local government and civil society representatives.

8. In accordance with article 11.2 of the JIU Statute, this report has been finalized after consultation among the Inspectors so as to test its conclusions and recommendations against the collective wisdom of the Unit.

9. To facilitate the handling of the report and the implementation of its recommendations and the monitoring thereof, annex III contains a table specifying those recommendations that require a decision by the UNCTAD governing bodies and those addressed to the Secretary-General of UNCTAD.

10. The Inspector wishes to express his appreciation to all who assisted him in the preparation of this report, and particularly to those who participated in the interviews and so willingly shared their knowledge and expertise.

II. MANDATE AND GOVERNANCE

A. Mandate

11. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, hereafter “the Conference”, was established as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly in resolution 1995 (XIX) of 30 December 1964.¹ It resulted from the coordinated effort of developing countries to set up an institutional framework within the United Nations system that would address in an integrated approach the issues of trade and development. At that time, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was dealing with trade rules while different Economic and Social Council committees were responsible for international commodity agreements together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The World Bank and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and later on regional banks, were leading the international aid for development, while the International Monetary Fund (IMF) covered issues of international monetary cooperation.

12. Not satisfied by decision-making processes dominated by the Bretton Woods institutions from which many developing countries felt marginalized, 36 delegations from developing countries organized the Cairo Conference in 1962, a non-United Nations meeting, which final Declaration called for an international conference within the framework of the United Nations on “all vital questions related to international trade, primary commodity trade and economic relations between developing and developed countries”.² Later in the same year, the General Assembly decided to convene a conference on trade and development, and established a preparatory committee for it. Indeed, this decision was a triumph of the developing countries resulting from their persistent pressure, over the general opposition of Western developed countries. Somehow, UNCTAD rescued part of the spirit of the Havana Charter, never ratified, that was proposing to create the International Trade Organization. GATT did not address the issue of commodities, a crucial area for potential economic growth for developing countries. Indeed, all commodities-related issues were of crucial concern for UNCTAD for many years until the beginning of the new century.

13. The main functions of the Conference are commonly referred to as its “three pillars”, as follows, with the organization serving as:

- (a) A forum for intergovernmental deliberations and consensus-building;
- (b) A think tank for research and analysis on key and emerging development issues;
- (c) A demand-driven provider of tailored technical assistance to respond to the needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in implementing development strategies.

The three pillars complement each other and are inherently interlinked as it is stated in the Accra Accord.³

14. Every four years, UNCTAD holds its Conference, which updates the contents of its general mandate on the basis of the salient issues in the area of trade and development, through the outcome of the conference (the latest one being the Accra accord, in 2008). On this occasion, Member States re-emphasized the role of the UNCTAD secretariat as the focal point within the United Nations system for the integrated treatment of trade and development and encouraged the secretariat to further leverage its three pillars and to position itself strategically by focusing on three principal criteria: comparative advantage; differentiation and complementarity; and strategic and catalytic intervention.⁴ A specificity of UNCTAD is that the organization reaches agreed conclusions without a vote. In paragraph 171 of the Accra Accord, Member States reemphasized the strategic role of UNCTAD for

¹ See General Assembly resolution 1995 (XIX) .

² UNCTAD (1985), *The History of UNCTAD 1964-1984*, New York: United Nations.

³ UNCTAD/IAOS/2008/2, para. 178.

⁴ UNCTAD/IAOS/2008/2.

the developing countries accordingly: “For over 40 years UNCTAD has consistently addressed the concerns of all developing countries in the areas within its mandate and expertise, with the objective of assisting them in successfully integrating into the global economy.”

15. The effective implementation of the mandate of an organization depends strongly on having a robust management and vision to backing the definition of its mandate and activities, based on common shared vision of objectives and goals and reflected in short, middle and long-term strategic plans to achieve them, through a clearly oriented, results-based management (RBM) strategy. The Conference, if effectively organized and adequately supported, has the broad mandate needed to make a significant contribution in the international community by playing its assigned role as an essential forum for the definition and promotion of sustainable development policies. Although UNCTAD has always played an important role in the international discussions around trade, the present review reveals several risks. Over the years, the UNCTAD secretariat has struggled with an existential uncertainty about its organizational identity and the lack of a clear common vision from top management as well as decreasing commitment and leadership from Member States. This view was conveyed to the Inspector by both, Member States and staff of the secretariat in the interviews.

16. When created, the Members States of UNCTAD expected it to become a unique and instrumental source of expertise to advise them in the process of development and trade that was underpinning the strategies of the developing countries to better integrate economic growth. As such, under the leadership of Raúl Prebisch as its founding Secretary-General, the UNCTAD secretariat hired a staff of experts on economic and development issues that were creating ex-novo, from within the organization, new ideas issued from the think tank that they were effectively creating. Over the years, the UNCTAD secretariat became more and more bureaucratic, reducing its own endogenous research and analysis findings, becoming more a broker of expertise, contracting consultants and convening expert meetings collecting, compiling and synthesizing external knowledge. The secretariat view is that, given the broad range of UNCTAD mandate, and for budgetary reasons, it is practically impossible to have in-house expertise to deal with all the issues covered and, therefore, the use of targeted outside expertise plays an important role in the delivery of the UNCTAD mandate.

17. In the view of the Inspector, the UNCTAD secretariat should revisit its original *raison d’être* and reinforce its internal capacity for research and analysis, which has been undermined by the increase of its knowledge-brokering function.

18. Managerial weaknesses and lack of leadership (such as in the coordination and communication between the different divisions and services; see Chapter V.D below) have led to a fragmentation and lack of coordination in the planning and delivering of activities by the Conference. The Inspector expects that this review and its recommendations will become an effective tool to help the organization focus on the areas in which it has a unique role to play and where it can bring value-added in the area of trade and development to developing countries, in particular to least developed countries (LDCs) and countries with economies in transition.

19. In addition to its own mandate, emanating from the General Assembly, and further renewed and updated by the successive quadrennial conferences and the open-ended work of TDB, UNCTAD is at the crossroads of many of the overarching mandates on development emanating from the United Nations system. As such, it has a role to play in the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals as well as in the implementation of the Monterrey Agreement on Financing for Development and has made significant contributions in these areas, including key substantive contributions toward tools to assist developing countries in maintaining debt sustainability. As reported in the programme budget for 2012 and 2013, as part of its mandate the UNCTAD secretariat also should contribute to the following:

UNCTAD will also contribute to the implementation of specific actions requested in the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development; the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development and its follow-up; the outcomes of the Fourth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries, to be held in 2011; the outcomes and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation agreed at the World Summit on

Sustainable Development; the outcomes and the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action of the World Summit on the Information Society; the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries; and the outcomes of the midterm review of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2008 and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. In addition, it will assist in furthering the implementation of the internationally agreed goals set out in the Doha Ministerial Declaration of the Fourth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and other relevant decisions.⁵

20. Doubtless, the UNCTAD secretariat has before itself a range of possibilities in interpreting and implementing its broad mandate. Indeed, as an organization aiming at consensus-building it should establish as a priority reaching consensus in this regard. During the review, the Inspector observed that there were diverging views among the different groups of Member States in the interpretation of where to set the boundaries concerning the areas falling under UNCTAD mandate. While developed countries advocated for a quite strict interpretation to avoid enlarging the scope and coverage of development-related issues (e.g. environment), the developing countries were in favor of an evolving mandate to adapt to new and emerging issues in the context of sustainable development. In the view of the secretariat, in fact the developed countries do not necessarily want to limit UNCTAD mandate, but rather expand it to other areas, such as good governance, gender and human rights.

21. In fact, the UNCTAD mandate and functions, like those of other organizations, have not been unchangeable over the years. For instance, investment and enterprise-related issues were not covered by the original UNCTAD mandate. UNDP and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) could also be cited as examples of the evolution of organizations' mandates.

B. Governance

22. The supreme governing body of UNCTAD is its quadrennial Conference, a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly. The members of UNCTAD are those States which are Members of the United Nations or of the specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

23. TDB was established as a permanent subsidiary organ of the Conference and is, as such, part of the United Nations intergovernmental machinery in the field of trade and development. All members of the Conference can also become board members. Currently, the Conference is composed of 194 Member States, while TDB has 155 members.⁶ TDB is mandated to carry out the tasks of the Conference between the quadrennial sessions and reports to the Conference and the United Nations General Assembly.

24. The board meets in Geneva in a regular session in autumn and up to three times in executive sessions to deal with urgent policy issues, as well as management and institutional matters. During its regular annual session, Member States define a programme of work and monitor how the secretariat has advanced in implementing its mandate from the previous conference. In this respect, TDB acts as a strategic steering committee. The TDB role and functions were confirmed and strengthened in the Midrand Declaration of the 1996 UNCTAD conference (UNCTAD IX)⁷ which led to organizational reforms and to a significant streamlining of both the activities and the structure of the UNCTAD secretariat. Among other key functions, TDB was requested to set and adjust priorities during the periods between the quadrennial conferences, and was put in charge of defining benchmarks and evaluating performance on this basis (see para. 107(a) of the Declaration).

⁵ A/66/6 (sect 12), para 12.8.

⁶ TD/B/Inf.222. On 14 July 2011, the General Assembly admitted the Republic of South Sudan as a member of the United Nations. The list of members of UNCTAD has been updated accordingly and the membership now stands at 194.

⁷ See TD/377, paras. 100-119.

25. TDB is assisted by two commissions: the Trade and Development Commission and the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission, both established at UNCTAD XII in 2008. UNCTAD is also the secretariat of the Commission on Science and Technology for development, a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council.

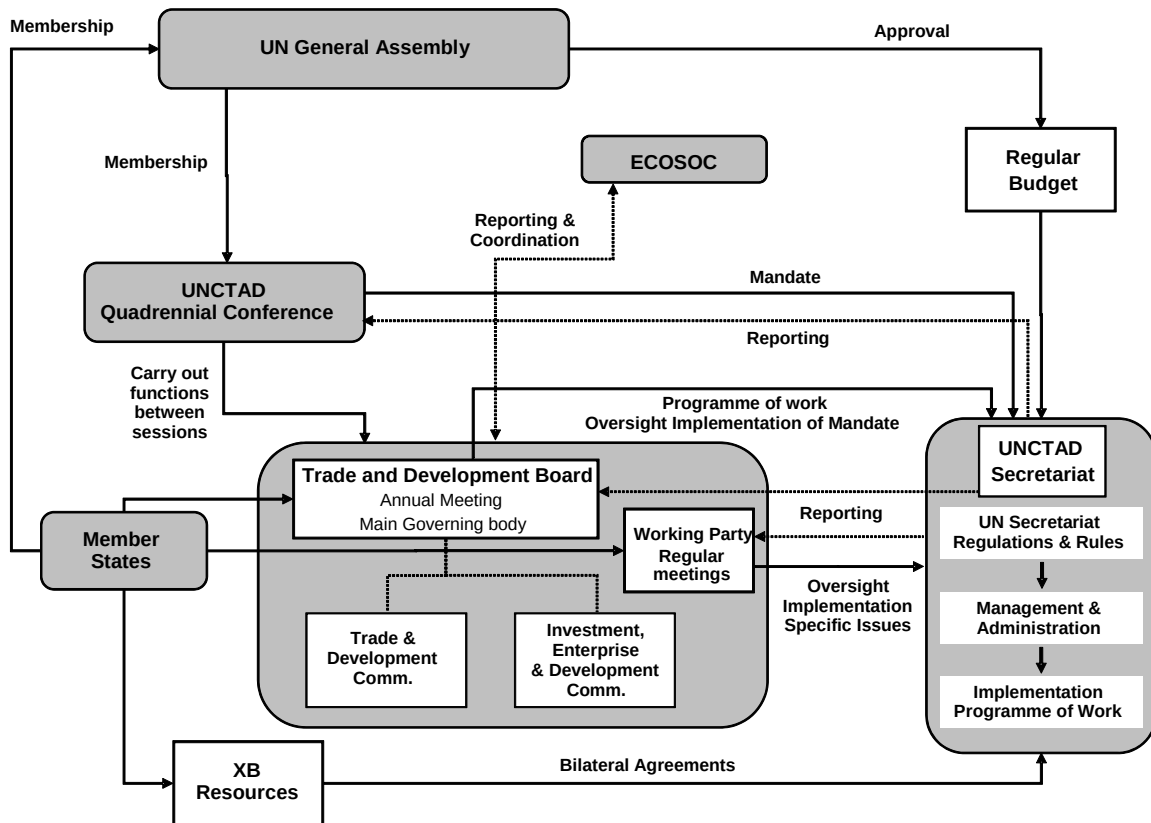
26. The Working Party, a subsidiary organ of TDB, meets two to three times every year. It provides intergovernmental oversight for UNCTAD programmes on an operational level. It has been convened to review the biennial programme plan and the proposed programme budget of the UNCTAD secretariat. Furthermore, it oversees issues regarding technical cooperation and their financing and evaluates the activities of the secretariat.⁸

27. While UNCTAD is a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, it has a level of delegated authority similar to that of other Geneva-based departments of the United Nations Secretariat. The overall organigramme of the United Nations places UNCTAD as part of its funds and programmes, but it has a unique status which is reflected by the fact that its Executive Head is a Secretary-General instead of a Director-General, as it is usually the case for funds, programmes and specialized agencies.

28. The Secretary-General of UNCTAD is accountable to the Secretary-General of the United Nations but is autonomous from Headquarters in the delivery of substantive and technical cooperation programmes approved by the intergovernmental bodies of UNCTAD. He is directly responsible to the Conference, to the Board and to Member States and, through the Conference and the Board to the General Assembly, for the execution of these programmes. He represents UNCTAD in its relation with governments, international organizations and civil society. Based on the nature and the functions entrusted to the Conference and the Board of UNCTAD, it is clear that the General Assembly intended to separate the inter-governmental governance of UNCTAD, as it relates to its substantive programme, from the administrative and financial management of the UNCTAD secretariat, which is entrusted to the Secretary-General. The governance structure of UNCTAD is shown in Figure 1 below:

⁸ TD/B/56/CRP.2.

Figure 1: UNCTAD Governance Structure



Source: JIU

29. One main operational obstacle for smooth delivery is that the substantive experts in the area of work of UNCTAD belong to different ministries in the member countries (trade, finances, agriculture, etc.) while the representatives are usually diplomats from the foreign services, not always with the necessary level of expertise to follow the technical debates at UNCTAD. In part this is due to the role of the UNCTAD secretariat to serve as a focal point within the United Nations system for the integrated treatment of trade and development and the interrelated issues of finance, investment, technology, and sustainable development. Therefore, the UNCTAD secretariat works with stakeholders from a number of areas but the organization lacks a dedicated constituency in the area of trade. Last but not the least, the UNCTAD secretariat reports on its substantive work to the Working Party and TDB and, in the area of technical cooperation, directly to donors and Member States. There is a need for clarification in this management area.

III. UNCTAD AT WORK: THE THREE PILLARS

30. The current review aims, ultimately, at identifying areas for improvement in delivering the core mandate of UNCTAD, the focal-point organization of the United Nations system for addressing trade and development issues, with a view to better assisting developing countries, in particular the LDCs, as well as small-island and landlocked countries and the countries with economies in transition.

31. As mentioned in the chapter concerning the mandate(s) of UNCTAD, its work is divided in the so-called “three pillars”, namely: (a) intergovernmental machinery and consensus-building; (b) research and analysis; and (c) technical cooperation. The Accra Accord refers to them (para. 179) as follows:

These three pillars should contribute, from a trade and development perspective, to the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, as well as to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

32. Clearly, the holistic approach to the work of UNCTAD can be seen as a flow between the three pillars. The UNCTAD secretariat should strengthen its own unbiased and independent research and analysis capacities in order to feed into the other two pillars: advise member States to build consensus on substantive issues on all areas related to trade and development, and to develop a strategic technical cooperation plan based on the results of the research and analysis coupled with the results of country or regional needs assessments.

A. Intergovernmental machinery and consensus building

Servicing intergovernmental meetings

33. In the course of the review, the Inspector conducted a series of interviews with member States’ representatives from most of the regional groups in TDB to get their views on the UNCTAD intergovernmental machinery. UNCTAD represents first and foremost its member States and its secretariat services the corresponding intergovernmental machinery to implement the mandate set by member States and to carry out the related tasks as defined by the Conference and the TDB.

34. The Inspector observed that member States’ representatives often refer to the secretariat as if it were an independent body with its own independent decision-making authority in substantive issues. In this context, the Inspector recalls that UNCTAD member States are the organization and, therefore, solely responsible for taking decisions and providing guidance as far as the substantive policies, whereas the secretariat of UNCTAD is responsible for advising them on these issues and for the day-to-day management and administration of the corresponding tasks. Servicing the intergovernmental machinery is part of the organization’s mandate itself, as one of the pillars, as far as consensus building is concerned. The secretariat, through the effective functioning of the machinery, assists the members of UNCTAD in reaching agreed positions on the issues addressed by the mandate on trade and development for which UNCTAD is the lead organization within the United Nations system.

35. The Inspector perceived that the lack of mutual trust among some member States has become one of the key obstacles faced during their consensus-building process on both institutional and substantive issues. In this regard, the Inspector wishes to highlight the crucial responsibility of the secretariat in assisting them to overcome these difficulties. Therefore, the secretariat should ensure objective and neutral support to member States representatives.

36. According to member States’ representatives interviewed, two key problems that affect the functioning of the intergovernmental machinery are the lack of transparency regarding the substantive work of UNCTAD, and communication between member States and the secretariat. Several representatives have pointed to the need for better communication between the UNCTAD secretariat and the permanent missions, including better outreach mechanisms and a more proactive approach towards promoting its main products, in particular the publications.

37. Member States also revealed their concern about a major trend in the process of reaching agreed conclusions through the intergovernmental machinery. What started as an informed expert advice from the secretariat to its Members has evolved to become a general practice of the secretariat pre-drafting ex-ante a proposed text of agreed conclusions, practically ready for endorsement, during the meetings of the governing bodies. The Inspector believes that such a practice gives too much leverage to the secretariat in the decision-making process. Member States themselves are fully responsible for governance and decision-making on substantive issues and should direct the process of debating and reaching agreed conclusions.

38. Whereas some member States complained about the lengthy process of agreeing on these conclusions, others did not really know why the secretariat was preparing such substantive documents for its governing body. According to the interviews, this practice had helped to reinforce the impression that UNCTAD is secretariat-driven instead of driven by member States and as a consequence some countries had become “inactive members”. The Inspector expresses his concern about this issue and strongly recommends discontinuing the practice of “pre-drafting” of any intergovernmental document by the secretariat. Instead, member States should agree on conclusions themselves, if they so wish, and hand over a compendium of conclusions to the secretariat for their final processing and issuance on their behalf.

39. The problems faced by UNCTAD cannot be attributed to the secretariat’s performance alone. The member States and their legislative organs hold the ultimate responsibility for the smooth functioning of the organization. They set the objectives, priorities, goals and targets, and are the supreme overseers of the organization. If they fail in discharging their responsibility; if they nominate low-level representatives, including interns, or simply do not attend the meetings; if they do not demand accountability, etc; they are sending a message of disinterest on UNCTAD operations to the top management, the secretariat and all stakeholders.

The implementation of the following recommendation is expected to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the UNCTAD intergovernmental machinery.

Recommendation 1

The legislative bodies of UNCTAD should take their responsibilities in reaching their agreed conclusions without any interference from the supporting services of the secretariat, which should only be requested to process the resulting inter-governmental parliamentary documentation.

Outreach and communication

40. In 2008 the UNCTAD secretariat established the Communications, Information and Outreach (CIO) Section to coordinate the outreach activities of the organization. In 2010 the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)⁹ audited this section and made 17 recommendations. As of December 2011, the UNCTAD secretariat had reported to the JIU that 5 recommendations had been implemented and 12 were in progress, with target dates in the first quarter of 2012. The UNCTAD secretariat has not provided further details on which recommendations had been implemented and which ones were still in progress. The work on the implementation of the new website is carried out jointly by the CIO section and the IT Support Section. In this respect the OIOS report states that inadequate website governance resulted in the lack of web strategy and policy guidelines and a lack of common branding, layout and design among various websites.

41. The CIO section reports directly to the Deputy Secretary-General. It used to belong administratively to the Division of Management (DoM), although it does not appear as such in the official organigramme of the 2010-2011 programme budget of the UNCTAD secretariat. While

⁹ AE/2010/341/01.

considering that the establishment of the CIO section in 2008 had contributed to improved effectiveness in carrying out the UNCTAD outreach programme, key issues concerning the structure of the section, its planning, monitoring and funding needed to be addressed to improve its efficiency. The areas identified for improvement covered among others the following issues: need for clarification of reporting lines, better definition of role and responsibilities in the implementation of the outreach and communication strategy, inadequate accountability and unclear reporting lines, inadequate identification of documentation needs and related fund-raising strategy, as well as inadequate arrangements for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the communication strategy.

42. During the review, the Inspector could observe that efforts are going into redesigning the website, although some delays have disappointed the expectations of member States. It appears that, as with many of the inter-divisional initiatives (when any exist) within the organization, the coordination process among the different divisions and CIO is complex and difficult. There is a lack of common vision and of strategy commonly agreed among the different services. Some divisions do not feel adequately involved in a consultative process about the redesign of the website and the priorities given to its different components.

43. The present report confirms these deficiencies. A major overhaul initiative of the UNCTAD website was initiated in June 2010 and was originally expected to be available in an operational version in June 2011. However, as of November 2011 the launch of this website was still pending. Currently, the technical architecture is in place and is being filled with content. According to information from the UNCTAD secretariat, the delay is mainly due to difficulties in the process of negotiating the financing for its implementation. The website is expected to become operational in 2012. Member States expect the new UNCTAD website to become a key element towards improving the transparency of the secretariat in informing about substantive activities in a more timely and user-friendly fashion.

44. The UNCTAD secretariat has given attention to improving communications and outreach with the aim of making UNCTAD better heard and more influential in international debates on development, trade and global governance.¹⁰ These intentions show that the secretariat has realized the crucial importance of improved communication with relevant stakeholders. However, in the Inspector's view there is a need to define better outreach mechanisms for the intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD and to clearly assign the responsibility for operating those mechanisms across divisions. These should ensure that the voice of substantive divisions is adequately heard and their proposals are being considered without imposing a top-down policy issued from CIO in isolation from the other divisions of the secretariat. The latter are indeed the key contributors to the substantive information and as such should be adequately consulted to ensure that the new processes are feasible and agreeable to them. This strategy should also take more into account the needs of the member States and other UNCTAD partners, such as other international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia and civil society. However, the Inspector acknowledges that the present resource constraints will affect such efforts. **The Inspector urges the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to accelerate the ongoing reform of outreach and strategy and to ensure that the new website, fully functional, is launched during the course of 2012. The implementation of this strategy should be carried out in close collaboration with all substantive divisions.**

B. Research and analysis

45. The research and analysis pillar of the UNCTAD secretariat is the one that attracts most attention from Governments, the United Nations system and other international organizations, academia and civil society. As stated in the chapeau of this chapter, research and analysis is an essential component in the work of the UNCTAD secretariat; it is the hinge to link consensus-building for member States and technical cooperation for beneficiary countries requiring the assistance of the UNCTAD secretariat to strengthen their endogenous capacities for development.

¹⁰ TD/B/WP/229.

46. UNCTAD was created as a permanent Conference, a subsidiary body of the General Assembly. This is a unique case in the United Nations; it was considered so relevant as a platform for a permanent debate and as a substantive consensus-building tool on trade and development issues that it became a permanent Conference. This was to provide the platform for cross-fertilization between research and analysis, technical cooperation and parliamentary machinery.

47. South-South cooperation is not to be understood as a substitute to North-South cooperation but as a complement to it. During the review, the Inspector was informed that in the 1980s the UNCTAD secretariat had already developed research and analysis on South-South Cooperation (SSC), but it was discontinued after the Midrand conference (UNCTAD IX). In the current context of a structural economic change in which new models for development need to be identified for the South, the UNCTAD secretariat has a pioneering role to contribute to the debate on new models for development. Previous trends in the international community were centred on the axis of North-South Aid (e.g. Aid for Trade within the context of WTO issues).

48. By developing this area of research, the UNCTAD secretariat could be providing to the developing countries, in particular LDCs, their own think tank, taking into account their interests and perspectives. While developed countries already have their own think tanks (e.g. OECD), the UNCTAD secretariat could become a major think tank in its area of competence for the developing countries. Therefore, the developing countries with financial capacity to do so should make additional efforts to contribute to UNCTAD to enable it enhance its own research capacity.

49. With the current financial crisis and the development impact both in Europe and in the United States, previous models of development and technical cooperation are at stake, as the traditional donors from the North are experiencing a change of priorities, refocusing on their national needs and with less resources to be devoted to development. Meanwhile, emerging countries are experiencing economic growth and aiming at models not based on the trends followed by the developed industrialized countries. The growth of the latter occurred in a different economic context, both in terms of resources available and the caring about natural resources. Models based on depletion of natural resources are not sustainable enough to be adopted by all countries in the world. Therefore developing countries are looking for a new model of sustainable development. The UNCTAD secretariat has a key role to play as a think tank in this area of knowledge and expertise. The Unit on Economic Cooperation and Integration among Developing Countries (ECIDC) nowadays focuses on SSC work and is an example of this role, with the UNCTAD secretariat adapting to the needs of the developing countries. Its creation is an example of what has been recommended by the JIU in its recent report on South-South cooperation (JIU/REP/2011/3), in its recommendation 3:

The legislative bodies of United Nations system organizations should request the Executive Heads to establish identifiable and dedicated structures, mechanisms and focal points tasked with developing agency-specific corporate policy and support strategy, and ensure coordination on South-South and triangular cooperation within their respective organizations and inter-agencies, through the reallocation of the necessary staff and resources for this purpose, as appropriate.

50. The Inspector believes that these initiatives are essential in highlighting to its members the unique value added that is embedded in the organization, if driven with vision and leadership, anticipating new trends and focusing on research and analysis on salient topics of interest for developing countries. To this end, it is also necessary that the UNCTAD secretariat strengthen and consolidate a stable core research capacity, with the best staff, and that it make the necessary managerial improvements to retain them so as to offer the best advice to Member States in the consensus-building process and technical cooperation activities. The virtuous circle would be closed by linking effectively, through internal coordination within the secretariat, the findings from research and analysis with those from Technical Cooperation Service (TCS) and other technical cooperation programmes of the Conference. Indeed, this would result in targeting TC that is effectively based on demands from the beneficiary countries and that would benefit from the expertise developed by the independent research-and-analysis workforce of the secretariat.

51. The research-and-analysis capacity of the UNCTAD secretariat also provides substantive analysis on potential impact of the different scenarios of outcomes of the WTO negotiations in the current Doha round. The last ministerial conference of the WTO approved three new members, in particular the Russian Federation, which will certainly bring new trends into the area of international trade flows and commercial agreements. Clearly, the UNCTAD secretariat has the expertise to provide substantive advice on these matters. Strengthened research-and-analysis capacities within the secretariat would further the advisory capacity and advocacy role of the Conference, as foreseen in its mandate.

Publications

52. The best-known output of the research-and-analysis work of the UNCTAD secretariat is disseminated through major reports, such the *Trade and Development Report*, the *World Investment Report*, the *Least Developed Countries Report*, the *Information Economy Report*, the *Maritime Transport Review*, and the *Technology and Innovation Report*. In a number of trade and development-related areas, the UNCTAD secretariat doubtlessly proves its competence in the substance matter. In the present review member States confirmed the results of the readership survey conducted by the secretariat in 2010.¹¹ This survey revealed an essentially positive assessment of UNCTAD reports in terms of substantive policy contributions, analytical quality and presentation format by key stakeholders.¹²

53. The UNCTAD publications policy was updated as an outcome of the Accra Conference where member States mandated UNCTAD to streamline its publications portfolio. To date, the secretariat had issued between 225 and 245 publications per biennium.¹³ Accordingly, the secretariat has taken a step in the right direction and has begun to streamline its portfolio with a view to responding to stakeholders' needs in a more focused way and to enhancing quality by cutting about 20 publications per biennium.¹⁴

54. The Inspector shares the views of member States' representatives interviewed that this exercise should be continued to further streamline the portfolio and to use available resources to concentrate on the flagship products. As rightly put by one interviewee, too many flagships don't sail anywhere in particular. Thus, the secretariat could leverage its comparative advantages and develop a better outreach strategy of its publication, including increased use of modern electronic media to accompany its flagship publications. Such products could comprise - among other things - booklets, fact sheets, DVDs with easy-access navigation and interactive Web-based communication products. The Inspector believes that despite the excellent quality of UNCTAD flagship publications, many developing countries do not have the resources to benefit from the full potential of these and that there is room for improvement in making them available upon request by the countries.

55. The visibility of UNCTAD publications in major media is covered in the UNCTAD press monitor. This weekly document presents summary results of the internal media and press tracking on a number of issues of relevance at the particular point in time. UNCTAD substantive work has a significant visibility in the world press, with an average of more than 300 clippings per month.

56. However, during the interviews with the Inspector, member States' representatives considered that better communication should be established with the permanent missions in Geneva. A concern brought to the Inspector's attention relates to translations of UNCTAD publications, including flagship reports and documentation for meetings. Member States interviewed and the UNCTAD secretariat itself criticize the fact that translations for meetings and reports are subject to a lengthy process and are often released at short notice. This makes it difficult for the Member States representatives to follow the meetings or to discuss the related issues in advance with their capitals to receive adequate

¹¹ TD/B/WP(58)/CRP.1.

¹² Respondents from Governments, academic and research institutions, NGOs, the private sector, international organizations or media.

¹³ TD/B/56/10/Rev.1.

¹⁴ TD/B/WP/229; publications were streamlined according to similarity in terms of substantive content.

instructions from their experts from the relevant ministries (investment, trade, agriculture, environment, etc.).

57. The Inspector believes that part of the problem originates in the working arrangements between the UNCTAD secretariat and conference services at the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG). Whereas the latter recognize that the UNCTAD secretariat is one of their regular budget (RB) clients, no terms of reference (ToR) or memorandum of understanding (MoU) regulate the official work relationship between the two entities. Instead, there are regular meetings with high-level officials and with the Deputy Secretary-General and the minutes of those meetings are considered official agreements. **The Inspector believes that - in particular as there is a shortage of resources for translation and member States complain about the service levels - the work relations between the UNCTAD secretariat and UNOG conference services should be institutionalized on a general level as it is common practice with other entities of the United Nations secretariat.** Such a clear agreement would facilitate the planning of work for UNOG, which provides services to many other Geneva-based entities (and also to other duty stations such as Bonn) within resource constraints.

58. The UNCTAD secretariat often experiences significant delays related to the translation of its reports. In the case of the *Trade and Development Report* (TDR) there have been on many occasions several months between the issuance of the original version in English and the release of versions translated into other languages. The Inspector believes that it is crucial to ensure that major UNCTAD publications and all documentation for intergovernmental meetings be available on time in all six official United Nations languages, while he acknowledges the resource constraints of UNOG conference services.

The implementation of the following recommendation is expected to further enhance effectiveness in the coordination of administrative and conference services between the UNCTAD secretariat and UNOG.

Recommendation 2

The Secretary-General of UNCTAD should coordinate with the Director-General of UNOG the preparation and signature of an MoU covering all working arrangements in the area of administration and conferences services.

C. Technical cooperation and sustainable capacity-building

59. Technical cooperation (TC) is the third main pillar based on the UNCTAD mandate. TC is among the most important activities of the UNCTAD secretariat in translating all its knowledge and analytical capacity resulting from the other two pillars into concrete support for the countries to benefit from its expertise. As stated in the Accra Accord, the three pillars have to be considered as a whole (para. 178), as follows:

UNCTAD's three pillars of research and analysis, consensus-building and technical cooperation are inherently interlinked; they must be strengthened in order to ensure that the organization fulfils its mandate. To ensure synergy among its three pillars, UNCTAD should strengthen its internal coordination as well as align more closely the thematic focus of its research and analysis, technical assistance and intergovernmental discussions. It should also designate regional focal points, within the current structure and within existing resources, in order to deepen its regional perspectives.¹⁵

60. The two landmark TC programmes of the UNCTAD secretariat are its Debt Management and Financial Analysis System (DMFAS) and its Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA), a computerized customs-management system addressing customs procedures. Both TC programmes build upon long-lasting success stories of about 30 years. These programmes are so successful that

¹⁵ See Accra Accord (2008).

developing countries often agree to finance the implementation with their own resources or on a cost-sharing basis. ASYCUDA, for example, is used in 90 countries and it was in the process of implementation in about 40 countries at the time of the review. During his visits to the field, the Inspector was informed that in some cases the implementation of ASYCUDA had generated a significant increase in income.

61. DMFAS is currently in use in 58 countries by 90 institutions related to debt management. In 2006 the DMFAS programme undertook a pro-active strategy for fund-raising to broaden its donor base and to enlarge it to refill its Multi-donor Trust Fund (MDTF). It currently receives a budget of approximately US\$ 6 million per year, of which 15 per cent corresponds to cost-sharing from beneficiary countries. In addition to this fund, which is non-earmarked to cover the core functioning of the programme with contributions from six donors, there are many country-projects based on bilateral MoUs with clearly defined ToR and timeframes for implementation for an amount of approximately US\$ 1.8 million for 2011.

62. Every two years, DMFAS organizes a biennial conference on debt management. The most recent one took place from 14 to 16 November 2011 and was well-attended, with 375 participants from 107 countries. It provided a timely opportunity to address salient debt issues of interest for all member States and partner organizations. In the plenary session of the DMFAS Advisory Group, held back-to-back with the Debt Conference, the donors recommended the DMFAS programme as one in which they see clear results and are ensured of a good return on their development funding. On their side, beneficiary countries considered that the DMFAS strategic plan for 2011-2014 was responsive to their needs and that its implementation would contribute to strengthening the capacities of developing countries and economies in transition to manage their operational, statistical and analytical debt management functions.

63. The success of DMFAS has been recognized on many occasions by TDB as an example to be followed in the functioning and good management practices in reporting on impact and performance of the activities undertaken mainly with extra-budgetary (XB) resources.¹⁶ The programme has only five posts from RB; the rest is financed by XB resources. A draft resolution of 1 December 2011 expressed the support to continue strengthening TC activities in this area, as follows:

Also invites the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, in cooperation with the regional commissions, regional development banks and other relevant multilateral financial institutions and stakeholders, to continue and intensify cooperation in respect of capacity-building activities in developing countries in the area of debt management and debt sustainability;¹⁷

64. **The Inspector believes that the UNCTAD secretariat should favour and focus on this type of multi-country model programmes due to its flexibility and multi-country potential impact and draw on lessons learned from these two TC programmes to elaborate a “Best practices guide” that could be of use for all other TC activities within the UNCTAD secretariat.**

Partnerships for sustainable capacity-building

65. While the mandate of UNCTAD is to strengthen capacities in countries through an effective and enabling technical-cooperation strategy, the fact is that UNCTAD is a non-resident agency, with no field representation. While some of the smaller-scale projects can be conceived on a purely bilateral

¹⁶ Transparency in the activities and reporting of DMFAS is confirmed by the availability, on line from their website, of their strategic plan for 2011-2014, defining key priorities and action plan.

http://r0.unctad.org/dmfas/docs/Strategic_Plan_2011-2014.pdf.

¹⁷ A/C.2/66/L.73, para. 32.

basis and stand-alone projects can be fully managed by the UNCTAD secretariat, the organization has been traditionally involved in joint-delivery of capacity-building activities.

66. Some of the traditional partners of UNCTAD in the area of capacity-building are the United Nations regional commissions, UNDP, WTO, ITC, UNEP, the World Bank and IMF, among many others. UNCTAD also establishes partnerships with the local authorities, as well as with members of academia and civil society in the countries where activities are being implemented. During the review, JIU requested the UNCTAD secretariat to provide updated information on current MoUs with their partners. The information obtained indicates that there is a piecemeal approach to partnerships, MoUs are defined with a starting date but not with clear ToRs and expiry/renewal dates. Although the legal advisor of the UNCTAD secretariat has the responsibility to serve as a general repository for MoUs, the overall management of the many MoUs in place appears to be decentralized within the UNCTAD secretariat

67. The findings of the review show that - over time - many different Memoranda of Understanding have been established with the different partners mentioned above, but it is difficult to determine which ones are still in force and, if not, whether there is any plan for renewing these MoUs. The mandate for the UNCTAD secretariat to focus on strategic partnerships has been repeatedly reminded since the Midrand Conference onwards. The UNCTAD secretariat collaborates with many other organizations without a clear centralized strategy for partnerships emanating from the management of the organization. Indeed, the focal point informed that in addition of the list of MoUs provided, many activities were implemented with other partners without any MoU in place. **The Inspector believes that the TCS of UNCTAD (described in chap. V.C above) should have a lead role in structuring and clarifying the partnerships of UNCTAD and in providing the necessary support to coordinate MoU preparation, update and reporting on joint achievements.**

68. The lack of a coordinated approach to TC projects is directly interrelated with the lack of a coherent fund-raising strategy within the organization. It leads to a lack of transparency, to the perceived fragmentation and ultimately to the decreasing interest of donors in UNCTAD technical cooperation. The Inspector believes that a dedicated focal-point structure within the TCS should be responsible for receiving requests for TC projects from Member States.

69. A success story in the context of partnerships is the role of TCS in promoting the leadership of UNCTAD through its role as the lead agency under the Chief Executives Board (CEB) inter-agency cluster for trade and productive capacities. TCS has been instrumental in developing this successful participation, broadly recognized. The UNCTAD secretariat should extrapolate a new strategy on partnerships taking into account of lessons learned in this context, and use the expertise and competences of TCS to consolidate this strategy.

70. In the context of the Delivering as One initiative and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), the CEB Inter-agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity, which was launched during the UNCTAD XII conference in 2008, plays an important role.¹⁸ The cluster is active in 28 countries, including the Delivering as One pilot projects and coordinates the capacity-building activities of its members in the areas of trade, export, trade-related policy-making, dispute settlement, negotiation and research/analysis within the wider context of the Delivering as One programmes and the UNDAF plans.¹⁹

71. While partnership in the field is a must for UNCTAD operations, no less important is partnership at the headquarters level. As a non-operational organization with limited resources, UNCTAD cannot be expected to carry out complex projects on its own, but this gap can be filled by UNCTAD more actively fostering its cooperation with other organizations, in particular with ITC, UNDP, the Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the United Nations regional commissions, UNEP and the WB, among others. In this context, it is noteworthy to mention that UNCTAD has been actively involved as an institutional member of the High-level Task Force on the

¹⁸ See www.unctad.org/sections/un_ceb/docs/ceb2009_05aid4trade_en.pdf.

¹⁹ As an inter-agency mechanism, the Cluster streamlines the trade-related efforts of UNCTAD, UNIDO, FAO, ILO, ITC, WTO, UNDP, the five United Nations regional commissions, UNEP and UNOPS.

Implementation of the Right to Development that completed its work in 2010. **The Inspector is of the strong view that the UNCTAD secretariat should actively become the main advocate and catalyst within the United Nations system in the area of capacity-building for trade and development, as per its mandate. For example, in the context of the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development (General Assembly resolution 41/128, annex), the UNCTAD secretariat should engage actively with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in mainstreaming the right to development and in strengthening the global partnership for development as called for in the annual General Assembly resolutions on the subject.**

72. During the review, the Inspector came across a number of instances of overlapping and duplication of UNCTAD work vis-à-vis other partner organizations, in particular with ITC, and concluded that the UNCTAD partnership approach is not coherent in this respect. While the Inspector recognizes the lead role as coordinating agency which the UNCTAD secretariat plays in the CEB cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity, he hopes that the UNCTAD secretariat can take decisive action to redress the long-lasting, unresolved problem of duplication. A new partnership strategy coupled with a pro-active fund-raising strategy for development-related operations, research and analysis should be established within the UNCTAD secretariat.

The implementation of the following recommendation is expected to further enhance coordination in the provision of technical cooperation and partnerships.

Recommendation 3

The Secretary-General of UNCTAD should launch a structured, long-term strategy of partnerships complemented by a pro-active fund-raising strategy and negotiate respective Memoranda of Understanding with all of UNCTAD's partners for development.

Findings from the field missions

73. In the course of the present review the Inspector undertook field missions to some countries that receive assistance on trade and development from the UNCTAD secretariat. Among these countries are two Delivering as One pilot countries, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania, in which the UNDAF plans are fully operational.

74. In this context, the Inspector found that member States perceive UNCTAD TC projects as fragmented and "secretariat-driven" instead of "client-driven". The UNCTAD secretariat, in contrast, faces substantial pressure from donors who often approach them with strictly earmarked funds. Thus, the secretariat describes those bilateral projects as "donor-driven" rather than based on demand from developing countries. Whereas donors often address the TC Service of UNCTAD with pre-defined areas of activity, the TC Service presents the collected requests from developing countries and tries to match them to donor expectations. However, fund-raising takes place without consultation of the main stakeholders, which are the clients or beneficiaries of TC.

75. Overall, the assessment of UNCTAD activities in the field was positive. Beneficiaries were satisfied with the quality of the projects and the expertise shared by the UNCTAD secretariat in implementing field projects. Their concerns do not relate as much to the effective implementation of projects but to the approach to set up a project with the UNCTAD secretariat. Representatives of countries commented on the lack of a centralized and well-established procedure to submit their request to the secretariat. The Member States would highly appreciate having a clear procedure to submit their requests to ensure that TC is really demand-driven from the countries and not "secretariat-driven".

76. UNCTAD being a non-resident agency (NRA), the organization is represented via the office of the Resident Coordinator (RC) in the corresponding countries. At the country level the representation

is generally delegated to the local coordinator for non-resident agencies (NRA) as part of his/her job description.

77. In Rwanda, the local coordinator for NRAs deals only with UNCTAD, allowing her to devote quality work and time to this endeavour. In cases where NRA coordinators in the field office are assigned to too many organizations, the UNCTAD secretariat could explore with the member States that they allocate a national expert financed by the concerned Government to this task. The Inspector found that a number of developing countries support this idea and would be also willing to provide a major part of financing for such experts.

78. In most countries visited, there were complaints about the tardiness in receiving information and documentation on UNCTAD work. The representatives of the UNCTAD secretariat argue that the information flow between them and the permanent missions is up to date. The Inspector urges the UNCTAD secretariat to improve the distribution of publications and dissemination of its work, and to make most, if not all, publications available online as soon as they are ready for public distribution. A weekly bulletin could inform delegates about the new issuances so that they can inform their capitals. A distribution list could also be established with all partners in the field to receive directly the information.

79. Furthermore, in order to strengthen coordination at local level, in particular in countries with under-staffed offices of the Resident Coordinator, the Inspector invites the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to consider establishing agreements between Governments and the UNCTAD secretariat, in close collaboration with United Nations RC system, in order for the beneficiary country to facilitate the allocation of national experts to provide support to the UNCTAD secretariat through the local RC office, in particular for technical cooperation projects in which the UNCTAD secretariat is involved.

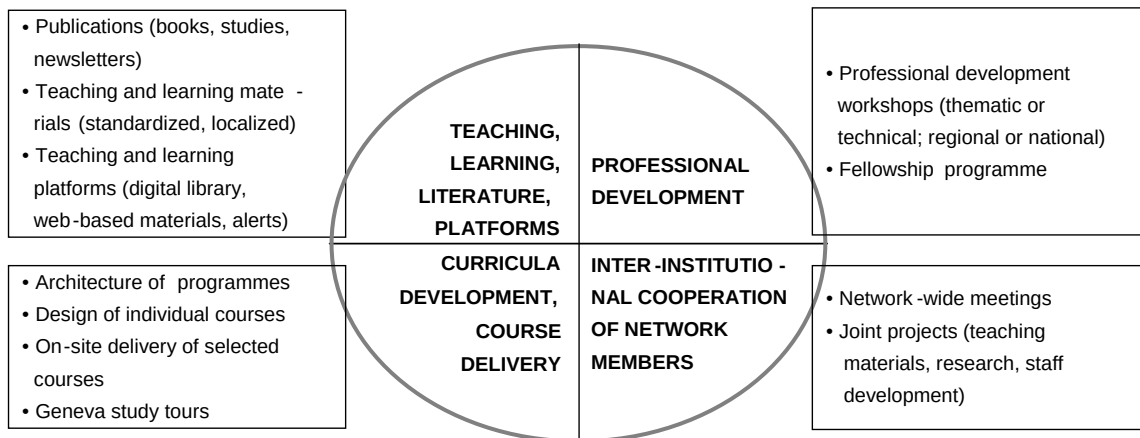
The Virtual Institute

80. In Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, the Inspector had the opportunity to meet with various local beneficiaries partners of the Virtual Institute (Vi) programme of UNCTAD. This is one of the training programmes in which the UNCTAD secretariat has developed in-depth expertise on trade-related issues for developing countries. TrainForTrade was a pioneer in this area; training local experts in their countries to enable them become trainers on trade-related issues after participating in these programmes.

81. Vi was launched in 2004 to address the capacity needs of developing countries and in particular those of African LDCs.²⁰ It aims at strengthening the local teaching and research capacities of both individuals and academic institutions from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. This facilitates the formation of local trade experts for the public and private sector, which can support the design of strategies, policies, laws, and regulations and the corresponding decision-making.²¹ The Vi activities help to facilitate South-South and North-South university collaboration and foster communication between developing country academics and experts at international organizations. The specific services include the provision of teaching/learning literature and platforms, professional development, curriculum development, course delivery, and inter-institutional cooperation of network members. In the view of the Inspector, a better name should be found to encourage donors to contribute to this successful programme, which is not virtual at all in terms of actual impact.

²⁰ UNCTAD/DTL/KTCD/2010/5; www.unctad.org/en/docs/dtlktcd20105_en.pdf.

²¹ See vi.unctad.org.

Figure 2: Services provided by the UNCTAD Virtual Institute

Source: UNCTAD/DTL/KTCD/2010/5

82. Five of the 11 African universities that participate in the Vi come from LDCs. In the course of the present review, the Inspector met with staff from the University of Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, and from Makerere University Business School, Uganda, during his field mission. In Tanzania, which was a founding member of Vi, trade-related Master's programmes have been established over the past years and trade issues have been comprehensively incorporated into the research agenda.

83. Until November 2011, Vi was located in the Division on Technology and Logistics and was equipped with five Professional and two General Service (GS) posts.²² The substantive activities are funded by earmarked XB resources which are mainly donor-driven. As a consequence of intra-divisional management problems the Vi recently lost four of its Professional posts and one GS post, so that its current staffing is one P-5 and one GS post from the RB plus one post financed by XB resources. The other posts were relocated in the Division of Technology and Logistics, while the Vi itself was moved to the Division on Globalization and Development Strategies. There are ongoing discussions of relocating Vi to the Division on Globalization and Development Strategies which has traditionally been the most research-intensive division within the UNCTAD secretariat.

84. Overall the Inspector was impressed by the state-of-the-art standard and the relevance of Vi services, as well as their impact on capacity-building in the developing countries concerned. Therefore, he is concerned with these developments and highly regrets the perceived lack of support to the Institute by the UNCTAD secretariat. Vi has proven to be very useful and instrumental in connecting UNCTAD research and analysis with sustainable capacity-building activities. In addition, Vi needs to attract more donors. The Inspector believes that some hands-on measures might help to revamp the image of the institute. First, a simple change in name from "Virtual Institute" to "UNCTAD Trade and Development Institute" and a new website might help to attract the attention of donors and new members and shift the focus more to the fact that the institute is producing tangible and above all long-term results for developing countries. This should go together with a new website and above all with a change in strategy towards having more in-person activities on the ground.

85. **The Inspector is of the view that projects such as the one undertaken and implemented by the Virtual Institute of UNCTAD should be further encouraged, supported and strengthened. However, this should happen in the context of the centralized coordination of TC projects and as part of an overall UNCTAD strategy on technical cooperation, sustainable capacity-building and partnerships.**

²² Vi staff included one P-5, one P-4, two P-3, one P-2 and two G-6 staff members.

IV. UNCTAD SECRETARIAT: COMPOSITION AND ROLE

A. Composition of the UNCTAD Secretariat

86. The UNCTAD secretariat's composition has evolved as the result of member States looking for a more effective and simplified structure to provide in a coordinated and transparent way the necessary services to the Conference. The Delivering as One initiative was a milestone in this process of restructuring the secretariat in order to refocus and reinvigorate international cooperation for peace and development. Changes were introduced to support more focused work of the UNCTAD secretariat through streamlining of the intergovernmental machinery and integrating the secretariat's working methods. Further transparency, monitoring of implementation and accountability were requested, and TDB was designated as responsible for oversight of the measures to achieve these results.

87. The current structure of the UNCTAD secretariat is composed of five "substantive divisions"; the cluster Executive Direction and Management, which includes the Office of the Secretary-General (OSG); and the cluster Programme Support Services including the TCS, the Intergovernmental Support Service (ISS) and the Resource Management Service (RMS) (see annex I). All substantive divisions report directly to the Office of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD. It is worth noting that at UNCTAD XII a historical decision was taken to separate the Branch on Commodities from its traditional division, the Division of International Trade in Goods, Services, and Commodities. As mentioned in the introduction, the analysis of commodities' trade flows and their contribution to economic development in the 1960s was the *raison d'être* for creating UNCTAD as a strategic forum for identifying development paths and policies for developing countries. At Accra, Member States decided to detach the unit of Commodities to become "The Special Unit on Commodities" (SUC) reporting directly to the Office of the Secretary-General (OSG).²³ The role of SUC is defined as follows:

Substantive responsibility of component 2 of the subprogramme is vested in the Special Unit on Commodities. Within this subprogramme, the Unit implements its work as an autonomous unit on commodities, in accordance with paragraph 183 of the Accra Accord. This unit, through the guidance and leadership of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, will contribute more effectively to the efforts of developing countries, especially least-developed countries, to formulate strategies and policies to respond to the challenges and opportunities of commodity markets.²⁴

88. The UNCTAD secretariat is headed by its Secretary-General, assisted by a Deputy Secretary-General. All divisions are headed by a Director at the D-2 level. The top management structure of the UNCTAD secretariat includes a significant number of high-level posts, with 6 D-2 and 20 D-1 posts.²⁵ The secretariat is composed of approximately 500 staff members, with an annual regular budget of around US\$ 70 million, complemented by approximately US\$ 35 million contributed through extra-budgetary funding (almost entirely related to technical-cooperation programmes and projects).

B. Role of the UNCTAD secretariat

89. During the review, the Inspector met with member States' representatives to seek their views on all aspects of the organization functioning and assess, in particular, the status of satisfaction regarding the services provided by the secretariat. A significant number of them, both from developed or developing countries were disappointed with the performance of the secretariat. In particular, there was a sense of disconnection and alienation of the secretariat towards UNCTAD members. A common perception was that there was no sufficient consultations with Member States to identify and

²³ DITC still deals with the administrative dimension of the SUC but not the substantive work. See also TD/B/WP/213 "In-depth external evaluation of UNCTAD's commodities programme".

²⁴ A/66/6/Sect.12 (para.12.53).

²⁵ A/66/6 (Sect. 12).

set their priorities and that the secretariat was increasingly undertaking activities without being clearly requested for it, while lacking from general guidance and clear course of action. **The Inspector is of the opinion that member States should take the lead to clearly guide the secretariat, which, in turn, should fairly reflect their priorities in the plan and implement them accordingly.**

90. The UNCTAD secretariat provides substantive and technical services to the intergovernmental bodies of UNCTAD in their discussions and deliberations. The secretariat undertakes research, policy analysis and data collection to provide substantive inputs for the discussions of the experts and Government representatives in these intergovernmental bodies. It also provides a series of technical assistance programmes and projects in support of developing countries, paying particular attention to the special needs of the least-developed countries, the small islands and landlocked countries as well as to countries with economies in transition.

91. The UNCTAD secretariat is due to report regularly on the implementation of its programme of work resulting from the renewed mandates emanating from the quadrennial conferences. It organizes the regular and executive sessions of TDB as well as its working parties, and prepares expert meetings on the issues approved by TDB.

92. The secretariat has to implement the activities related to the three pillars of UNCTAD's mandate: support to intergovernmental machinery to promote consensus-building, research and analysis, and technical cooperation. It does so through a division of work across the five substantive divisions and with the support of the three programme support services (ISS, RMS, TCS) that report to the Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD.

93. In the current situation, the support services provide the necessary support to the intergovernmental machinery, coordinate technical cooperation activities and manage resources (financial, human resources, travel arrangements, procurement, etc.). UNCTAD administration benefits from a considerable level of delegated authority for managing extra-budgetary funds and human resources management. In line with the existing delegations of authority, UNOG Division of Administration performs approving functions for most of the related processes. UNOG also manages those issues that are beyond the level of delegation of authority granted to the UNCTAD secretariat. During the review, the Inspector requested information about the delineation of competences between UNOG and the UNCTAD secretariat. However, there was no clarity in this area. While UNOG provided relevant information, the UNCTAD administration did not feel in a position to respond to some of the questions raised or responded only at a very late stage. It was thus difficult to assess the potential for better synergies and reduced duplication, although the Inspector considers that further exploration, had consistent data been provided, could have led to some interesting results to identify potential savings in terms of efficiency and effectiveness, and to avoid duplication in approval work. Many processes need to be validated first by UNCTAD administration, and once again by UNOG services.

94. TCS is one of the three programme support services and was formerly organized together with RMS and ISS under the Division of Management. As a consequence of the recent restructuring, all three services now report directly to the Deputy Secretary-General (DSG) and form the cluster Programme Support. During the last two biennia significant efforts have been made to improve coordination in the provision of technical cooperation but there is a historical trend of bilateral ad-hoc initiatives undertaken by different divisions of the UNCTAD secretariat, who contact directly potential donors and beneficiaries, without prior internal consultation within the secretariat. While significant improvement has taken place during the past five years, there is still a need for further transparency, coordination and consolidated reporting from the secretariat to member States, donors and beneficiaries, in this area. In this respect, TCS should emphasize and communicate its UNCTAD-wide coordinating and monitoring role.

95. The research and analysis is a core activity of the substantive divisions, in particular for the Division on Globalization and Development strategies which has been producing the *Trade and Development Report* on an annual basis since 1981, with due recognition by the international community of its value added into the debate on trade and development. At UNCTAD XIII in Doha, a pre-event will celebrate the 30 years of the TDR. The Division on Investment and Enterprise produces

the successful flagship publication *World Investment Report* on an annual basis; it is recognized as a useful and prestigious publication in this area of expertise. Other well-known publications include the *Least Developed Countries Report* and the *Economic Development in Africa Report*.

96. The functioning of the other Divisions is quite independent one from another. Attempts at organizing high-level steering committees at the Directors level have been discontinued, and there is no joint strategy of regular interaction among the Divisions, which address their own workplans in silos. Common templates are used to collect inputs for the forecasting of expected outputs, but there is no joint consultation at a high level to provide information that is strategically agreed on by the organization as a whole, ex-ante. As for the Divisions' workplans, there is not an internal model that could be followed by each Division to plan and report on its activities. There is much room for improvement in the area of coordination and harmonization of procedures. The Inspector found that only the Investment Division had prepared a workplan based on a clear RBM approach understood as a planning tool, not as a mere retroactive reporting method, as done with IMDIS. The review will make some specific recommendations in this regard in the following chapter.

V. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

A. Executive direction and management

97. The UNCTAD secretariat is gifted with a structure of senior management relying on long-serving staff in the secretariat, with proven expertise on the substantive issues, and under the leadership of the Secretary-General, at the Under Secretary-General level, assisted by his Deputy Secretary-General at the Assistant Secretary-General level. According to the latest statistics on the demographics of the United Nations secretariat,²⁶ as of 30 June 2011 the UNCTAD secretariat presented the following distribution of staff with geographical status.

Table 1: Distribution by grade of UNCTAD secretariat staff with geographical status

	Grade								Total
	USG	ASG	D-2	D-1	P-5	P-4	P-3	P-2	
UNCTAD staff	1	1	3	16	34	40	42	22	159

98. It indicates that 34.5 per cent of the internationally recruited staff hold a P-5 or higher position in the secretariat. With such a high proportion of senior managers, the secretariat should in practice count on its managerial skills and experience to lead by example with effective and efficient management of the organization.

99. The table below based on the programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013²⁷ and it confirms the above analysis in terms of the proportion of highly experienced senior staff. Indeed, when considering only the category of Professional staff, there are more staff members at P-4 and P-5 levels than the rest of the group (P-1 to P-3).

²⁶ A/66/347.

²⁷ A/66/6 sect. 12.

Table 2: Posts and regular budget

Posts	Number	Level
<i>Regular budget</i>		
Approved for the biennium 2012-2013	400	1 USG, 1 ASG, 6 D-2, 20 D-1, 48 P-5, 61 P-4, 74 P-3, 32 P-2/1, 12 GS (PL), 145 GS (OL)
Approved for the biennium 2010-2011	400	1 USG, 1 ASG, 6 D-2, 20 D-1, 48 P-5, 61 P-4, 74 P-3, 32 P-2/1, 12 GS (PL), 145 GS (OL)

100. In view of the high level of expertise which is present in the UNCTAD secretariat, the Inspector is concerned that managerial functions seem to be subject to some deficiencies. In this respect, the results from the survey and from the interviews with member States' representatives indicate that, on the contrary, there is a perception of low performance within the organization. While it is widely recognized that the mandate is highly relevant to the current context of globalization and change of economic regimes, the organization has not positioned itself according to its potential role, lacking strong leadership and visibility.

Vision and leadership

101. The role of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD and of its Deputy are defined as follows:

The Secretary-General of UNCTAD provides overall direction on substantive and managerial matters and ensures the effective servicing of the intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD, in particular the quadrennial sessions of the Conference and the sessions of the Trade and Development Board. The Deputy Secretary-General deputizes for the Secretary-General and oversees the operations of the secretariat regarding the strategic, programmatic and managerial aspects, including public information and outreach activities and the implementation of the UNCTAD communication strategy to enhance the visibility, use and impact of the work of UNCTAD.²⁸

102. While the Secretary-General of UNCTAD has an essential role in promoting the image of the organization, through improved outreach and communication strategies disseminating the results of UNCTAD work, the DSG has traditionally been in charge of driving the internal functioning of the organization and overseeing the concrete implementation of the programme of work. However, in practice, the findings of this review indicate that there is no perceived strong driving strategy communicated to the staff, nor even to middle managers in order to collectively coordinate and contribute to clearly define programmatic goals.

103. The Office of the Secretary-General (OSG) has suffered from a high-level vacancy during the past six to seven years which doubtlessly hindered the Secretary-General's ability to better lead the UNCTAD secretariat and to promote more vigorously the UNCTAD agenda among its stakeholders. Moreover, the new ASG needed sufficient time to better familiarize himself with UNCTAD operations. Since all the posts are now duly filled and the ASG has overcome his induction process, it is expected that this situation will be redressed.

104. The Secretary-General and the DSG of UNCTAD are both located in the OSG and they share the staff of this office. Together with the CIO section and a small evaluation function the OSG office performs the function of executive direction and management. All three entities report directly to the DSG. Under the mandate of the current Secretary-General of UNCTAD, the staff composition of Executive Direction and Management has significantly grown (see below), almost doubling its size

²⁸ A/66/6 (Sect.12), para. 12.31.

from the 2010-2011 biennium to the following one (18 staff in 2010-2011, up to 32 for 2012-2013, now representing 8 per cent of the total budgeted posts), as per the Programme Budget for 2012 and 2013.²⁹ Many of the posts have actually been moved during the biennium 2010-2011, even though not formally included in the organigramme which is publicly available on the UNCTAD website.³⁰ According to an internally updated organigramme provided by the UNCTAD secretariat, most of these movements account for the relocation of the CIO function and the evaluation function to Executive Direction and Management. Further transparency and accountability in this respect would give a positive signal, encouraging communication and transparency within the secretariat and towards external stakeholders.

Articulating a vision through results-based management

105. The use of results-based management (RBM) within the United Nations has been endorsed by the General Assembly³¹ which adopted the recommendations contained in report titled “Results-based management in the United Nations in the context of the reform process” (JIU/REP/2006/5). However, the effective implementation is lagging behind in the UNCTAD secretariat. Not only high-level managers are not adequately trained for it but, even worse, the core essence of such a management strategy is neither intrinsically adopted nor developed by most of the high-level managers.

106. The benchmark framework for RBM prepared by JIU in 2006 clearly indicated the following benchmarks:

A) From planning to the evaluation and reporting cycle.

Benchmark 1: A clear conceptual framework for RBM exists as a broad management strategy.

Benchmark 3: Long-term objectives have been clearly formulated for the Organization

Benchmark 4: The Organization’s programmes are well-aligned with its long-term objectives.

Benchmark 8: RBM is effectively internalized throughout the Organization

B) On Delegation of Authority:

Benchmark 1: The vertical chain of command is clear and unambiguous

Benchmark 2: Managers are empowered through adequate access to information

107. The findings of the current review reveal that there is much room for improvement within the UNCTAD secretariat to fully, or even partially, implement the above strategies. With the exception of some particular units or subgroups within the secretariat that have created their own area in a sort of autarchic strategy for survival, the general perception is that there is no vision communicated to the secretariat, a lack of clear strategy and a weak leadership from top management. In such a context, different entities (e.g. divisions, branches, services, TC programmes) of the secretariat work without a coordinated approach and further persist in finding ad-hoc tailor-made strategies for implementing their own self-defined sub-goals based on the broad comprehensive mandate. They establish bilateral contacts and define projects on their own, without necessarily going through centralized and well-articulated strategies to which their actions could contribute to a more structured overall positioning of the organization, even competing among themselves for the decreasing donor resources.

108. There are some commendable exceptions. The Inspector observed that the Investment Division had adopted a strategic workplan with an RBM approach that should serve as an example for other Divisions of the UNCTAD secretariat, and for the organization as a whole. While the UNCTAD secretariat complies duly with IMDIS reporting, an RBM-based tool, it uses RBM more as an ex-post

²⁹ Under discussion at the time of finalization this draft for comments.

³⁰ See Annex II on Staff composition of the OSG.

³¹ General Assembly resolution 63/276.

reporting method than as a forward-planning tool for designing long-term strategies of the secretariat. However, the UNCTAD secretariat as a whole would need an additional layer at the corporate level, i.e. a strategic management model to align operations and outputs with the mandate and overall goals provided by member States across all divisions leading to radical management change culture.

109. An RBM-coherent, integrated conceptual management framework for the UNCTAD secretariat should at least comprise the following elements: (a) a clear division of responsibilities between the Secretary-General of UNCTAD and the legislative organs for the organization's management; (b) a corporate organization vision/mission statement from which cascade down the divisions; (c) an interdivisional senior-management steering committee headed by the DSG, in charge of directing, monitoring and following-up on the organization's substantive performance; (d) clear operational strategies of the divisions with links to cascading service and individual work plans; (e) clear reporting lines within divisions and exchange of information among them; (f) an unfaltering, written delegation of authority and accountability directive; (g) an organization-wide knowledge management strategy; (h) an organization-wide communication and outreach strategy for stakeholders, and (i) the internalization of the result-based approach within the organization to produce the required management change culture.

The implementation of the following recommendation is expected to further enhance effectiveness in defining and delivering the activities of the UNCTAD secretariat and its long-term strategy.

Recommendation 4

The Secretary-General of UNCTAD should define and elaborate, as a matter of priority, a clear RBM-integrated framework and implementing strategy, containing the elements described in paragraph 109, to translate the general programmatic mandates as part of the United Nations secretariat into long-term, mid-term and short-term programmes, in line with the priorities established by the Members States of UNCTAD, with a clear delineation of responsibilities and a transparent, written definition of delegation of authority and accountability and to present it for consideration and approval by the TDB.

B. Administration of the UNCTAD secretariat

The Division of Management

110. The UNCTAD secretariat develops its substantive work through its five Divisions (see annex I). At the time of finalizing this review, the organigramme still included Division of Management, although in practice it was abolished.

111. In September 2008, the former Director of the Division retired. Between October and May 2009, inclusive, no less than five officers-in-charge (OICs) were designated, mostly for one-month only in this role. After this interim transition period, on 12 June 2009, an internal memo from the DSG to all UNCTAD staff members informed them about the reclassification approved by the Office of Human Resources Management, United Nations Headquarters of the D-2 post of Director of the Division of Management to a post with the following functional title: "Special coordinator on Research, Strategic policy planning and Capacity Building", in order for him or her to "provide substantive leadership to and manage the coordination of UNCTAD-wide activities related to research, operational and analytical work, and substantive servicing of intergovernmental bodies". This post would be located within the OSG of UNCTAD. The Inspector has made several requests to identify how this post has been used and for what function since its reclassification, but at the time of finalizing this report the information had not been provided to JIU, in spite of all efforts made in this regard. At first glance, it was noticeable that those functions duplicated those of the substantive divisions and no achievements have been reported in the mentioned areas since its creation.

112. In concomitance with this reclassification of post, a memo from the Secretary-General issued on 17 June 2009 stated that:

In order to ensure effective operational management, I have decided on the following arrangements for the Division of Management: (a) The Deputy-Secretary General, Mr. Draganov, in addition to his other duties, will oversee the Division of Management effective 17 June. The Chiefs of the three services in the division will report directly to him on all relevant matters until further notice.

113. Since then, the administration of the UNCTAD secretariat is working as set up by this memo of 2009. New Chiefs of the respective services have been appointed, but the general oversight of management and administration within the UNCTAD secretariat is directly under the responsibility of the DSG, to whom the different services report directly.

114. The lack of a strong leadership in the administrative function of the organization is a handicap to improving procedures and efficiency in delivering administrative support to the work of the organization, in particular at a time of ongoing reform with the United Nations, requiring adoption of innovative measures in a context of budgetary constraints and economic crisis. The lack of effective coordination necessarily affects the potential for streamlining and inducing savings by optimizing administrative procedures.

115. During the review, the Inspector was informed that the Division was abolished, and that the current structure of three services reporting directly to the DSG was applicable. There would not be a D-2 Director heading the administration of UNCTAD. The Inspector is not aware of such a major restructuring of the administration having been brought to the attention of the Member States and has no evidence of a proposed programme of work being submitted for their consideration to assess the pertinence of the proposed new functioning and reporting lines. In most United Nations bodies, the functions of the Director of Administration are performed at the D-2 level. The Inspector regrets that DoM has been abolished. On the contrary, it should have been strengthened to effectively perform its essential management role for the organization.

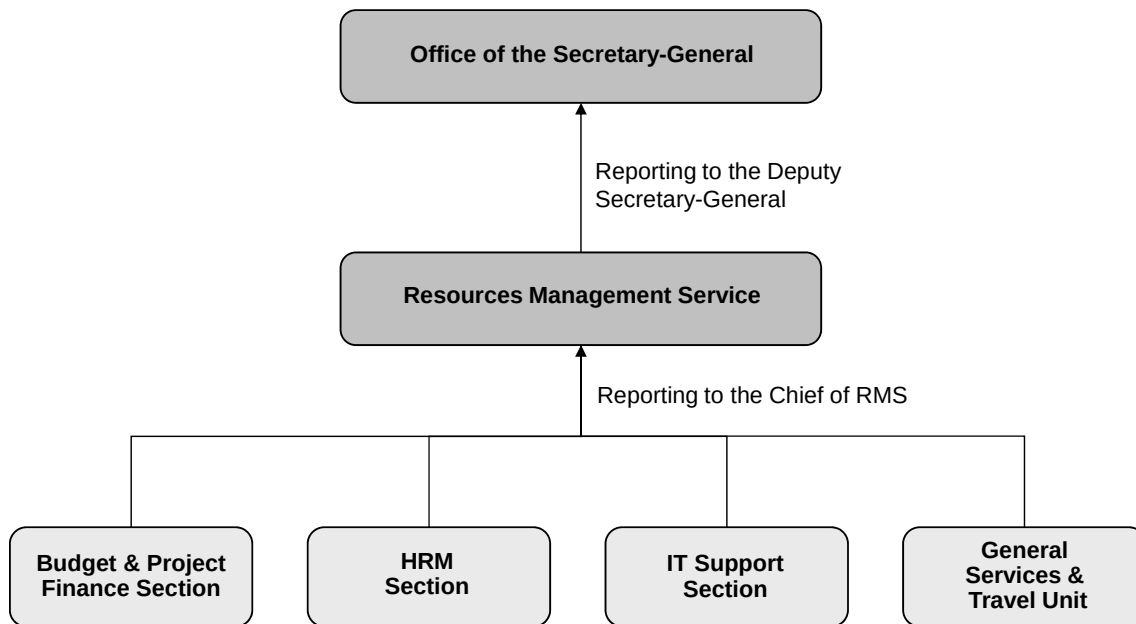
The implementation of the following recommendation is expected to further enhance effectiveness in the management and administration of the UNCTAD secretariat.

Recommendation 5

The Secretary-General of UNCTAD should reconsider, in consultations with the Member States, to reinstate the Division of Management to be headed by a Director at D-2 level to supervise and ensure the coordination of all support services previously under his/her direct reporting lines.

Resources Management Service

116. The Resources Management Service (RMS) covers the core administrative services provided to the organization in terms of financial management and human resources management, as well as travel, procurement, and all support services required to effectively deliver the work of the organization (see figure 3 below).

Figure 3: RMS organigramme (as of December 2011)

Source: JIU

Human Resources Management

117. The Human Resources Management Section has been often criticized owing to its lack of transparency and the long vacancy rates for filling the posts within the secretariat. UNCTAD administration often argues that as a part of the United Nations secretariat they are not fully responsible for the lengthy processes and that a number of delays derive from delays at Headquarters. However, UNCTAD benefits from a generous level of delegation of authority which should result in better performance in terms of compliance with the goals to be reached in recruitment processes within the secretariat. Indeed, the assessment of the Human Resources Action Plan (see para. 121), part of the senior compact between the Secretary-General of UNCTAD and the United Nations Secretary-General, indicates failed performance for the majority of the targets. For instance, the average selection time for a Galaxy post as of December 2010 was 236 days, compared to the target of 120. The following subsection analyses in some detail Human Resources Management in UNCTAD.

Administrative set-up

118. RMS administers human resources within the UNCTAD secretariat, in cooperation with the UNOG Office of Human Resources Management. The UNCTAD Human Resources (HR) section is staffed with 3 P and 10 GS staff, subdivided into three clusters (Talent Management, Benefits and Entitlements, and Consultancy).

119. While UNCTAD is subject to the United Nations Secretariat staff rules, the delegation of authority for HRM between UNOG and UNCTAD is governed on a more general level by an interoffice MoU.³² UNCTAD HR is responsible for staff selection for all phases of the process (interviews, evaluations and recommendations). Furthermore, vacancy and performance management, HR administration and management of consultants fall within the responsibility of UNCTAD HR. Thus, the HRM section of UNCTAD can influence HR management in the secretariat significantly.

³² UNOG/MOU05/008.

120. With respect to staff selection, the UNCTAD secretariat complies with the 2010 administrative instruction on the staff selection system for the United Nations secretariat.³³ This instruction clarifies that “selection decisions for positions up to and including the D-1 level are made by the head of department/office/mission, under delegated authority, when the central review body is satisfied that the evaluation criteria have been properly applied and that the applicable procedures were followed”. Different procedures apply only for the P-2 level candidates who are selected through a competitive examination and the D-2 level candidates who are appointed after a special review process by a senior review group in New York.³⁴

Assessment of performance of Human Resources services

121. Within the United Nations, and in line with the Senior Managers Compacts with the Secretary-General, a Human Resources Action Plan (HRAP) was agreed on between each Executive Head and the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources representing the Secretary-General. By acknowledging the objectives set in the HRAP for the UNCTAD secretariat, its Secretary-General committed to adequately plan, monitor and implement them within the secretariat. However, the assessment of HRAP for 2010 clearly indicates underperformance in meeting a significant number of targets, as shown below:

Table 3: Extract of HRAP 2010 assessment for UNCTAD

Goal	Set target	Effective achievement as of December 2010
Average selection time in Galaxy for all posts	120 days	236 days
Percentage of RB P-2 posts encumbered by candidates who passed a competitive examination	100 %	65.6 %
Female staff representation at P level	50 %	33.7 %
Female staff representation at Director level	50 %	36.8 %
Mobility index	20 %	14.9 %
Staff-management relations, number of meetings with all staff	2 per year	1

Source: JIU

Vacancy management

122. At the beginning of the present review the UNCTAD secretariat had 15 vacancies at the senior management level (P-5 and above positions) which included three posts at the D-2 level. This issue was also raised at governing-body meetings and was subject to substantial criticism by Member States. Significant delays in recruitment have also been criticized by OIOS in their 2009 audit on human resources management in UNCTAD.³⁵ Vacancy management has also been critical in the UNCTAD secretariat in the past so that the secretariat fails to meet the targets of HRAP.³⁶ Average selection times for all staff exceed the 120-day target by more than 100 per cent in 2010.

123. The Inspector wonders why “succession planning” is not mentioned in the detailed documentation of HR functions and tasks that have been received from the UNCTAD secretariat. In particular, the lack of a systematic succession planning is problematic with respect to high and

³³ ST/AI/2010/3.

³⁴ These procedures reflect the general procedures of the UN Secretariat.

³⁵ AE/2009/345/01.

³⁶ See HRAP Assessments 2009 and 2010; http://iseek.un.org/webpgdept1940_51.asp#.

politically sensitive vacancy rates at the top. In the Inspector's view it is the responsibility of systematic talent and succession management - and therefore of the UNCTAD HR section - to ensure that a pool of qualified internal staff exists for these positions. The assessed performance from HRAP of UNCTAD in 2010 on "percentage of vacancy announcements advertised 6 months prior to retirement" shows zero per cent. While this maybe the result of "non-reported data", it is certainly far from the target of 100 per cent. The long delays in filling high-level posts in the secretariat confirm the lack of succession planning policy within the UNCTAD secretariat.

124. The high rate of vacancy management has been a matter of concern in the UNCTAD secretariat for many years and still needs to be improved. It has particularly affected the management and administration of the secretariat; indeed, very high-level posts, Directors at D-2 level, have been vacant for several years. Between 2008 and 2010 there were periods in which 50 per cent of the D-2 level posts were occupied by the officer in charge. In the case of the Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities, an OIC was in charge for two years, from July 2009 to July 2011, until the recruitment of an external candidate as a new Director. Such a situation severely hinders the necessary leadership framework for middle managers and staff to implement a clear programme of work and it is a source of demotivation, as there is uncertainty on the continuity of strategies - if any - being undertaken by the interim managerial team/officers. In the case of the UNCTAD secretariat, "long-term" OIC situations are frequently occurrences, with many occupying their OIC post for over a year, and in many cases being finally acknowledged and sent back to their former positions after a long period of uncertainty in their career development and their professional positioning in the organization.

125. The Inspector observed that staff members were highly dissatisfied, frustrated and demotivated by the functioning of human resources management. They perceived that the recruitment and selection processes within the secretariat were surrounded by fears, non-transparency, and that career development was not based on merit and performance. The use of "de facto long-term" short-term contracts, resulting from the consecutive renewal of short-term contracts to the same staff member for years, including his or her return after mandatory break, was highly criticized in many interviews and also as part of the qualitative comments from the online survey. Long-term uncertain situations create unfair conditions of work and lead to an inability to plan for professional and life development for these temporary staff.

126. The staff survey revealed that the vast majority of staff and managers do not believe that the current system of promotion in the UNCTAD secretariat is based on performance. The figures are striking: in all categories, no less than 60 per cent of respondents consider that promotion of staff is not based on performance. Even more, broken down by groups, 60 per cent of directors and above level are of this opinion (while it is 72 per cent for international P staff and 65 per cent for all employees).

127. On the side of administration, the burden of inefficiencies was shifted on other constraints, such as the transition from Galaxy to the Inspira recruitment tool. Concerning promotion issues, the view of the Human Resources officers was that the concept of "promotion" did not apply anymore within the United Nations Secretariat, since each job opening is subject to open competition without differences between external and internal candidates. This is the result of the new staff rules entered into force in 2010. In such a context, UNCTAD staff is increasingly losing their motivation as they do not perceive any support for their career development based on their performance, besides some exceptions in which the staff members recognize that in their own service their managers do their best to support staff.

128. In view of the findings, and in line with the application of benchmarking framework in the area of contractual arrangements, the Inspector is of the view that the UNCTAD secretariat should better align its human resources management with the benchmark of "Transparent, effective and fair recruitment/placement systems are in place to support results-oriented contractual policies".

The implementation of the following recommendation is expected to enhance efficiency in the recruitment processes in the UNCTAD secretariat.

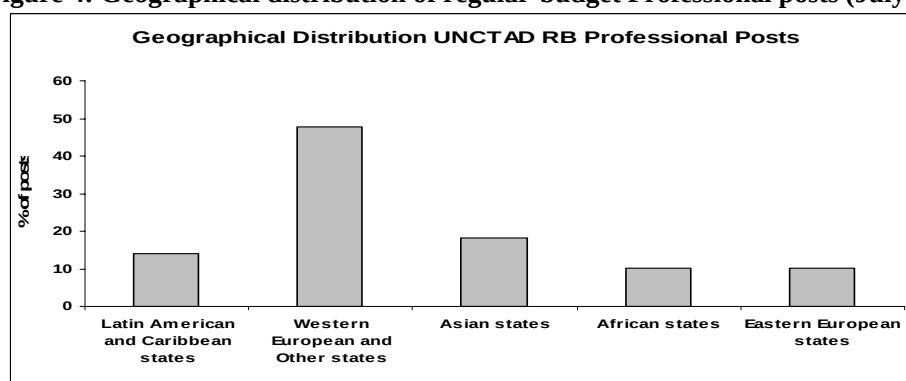
Recommendation 6

The Secretary-General of UNCTAD should ensure that recruitment processes are fair and transparent, with the prevailing selection criteria being based on the competencies of the candidates, and that the overall process is completed within time targets set up for the United Nations secretariat.

Insights on geographical distribution and gender-balance indicators

129. As part of the United Nations Secretariat and in the light of its mandate to assist developing countries in trade-related issues, a balanced geographical distribution of staff has to be a key priority for the UNCTAD secretariat. The following figures provide an overview of the geographical distribution per region for the professional regular-budget and extra-budgetary staff in the UNCTAD secretariat (see figure 4).

Figure 4: Geographical distribution of regular-budget Professional posts (July 2011)



Source: Data provided by UNCTAD Secretariat

130. About 50 per cent of Professional staff in the UNCTAD secretariat financed by either the regular budget or extra-budgetary resources are Europeans. The Western European and Other States Group (WEOG) is the largest regional group in terms of posts from regular budget in the UNCTAD secretariat.

131. Both member States and the UNCTAD secretariat pointed to the Office of Human Resources Management in New York as having a major influence on recruitment and being responsible for the current imbalance in the geographical distribution of posts. However, the Inspector would like to emphasize that, according to the applicable administrative procedures, the UNCTAD secretariat itself has the authority and the responsibility to advertise all Professional posts other than P-1 and P-2 entry-level posts and therefore enjoys the necessary delegation of authority in the area of recruitment to better comply with the targets associated to improved geographical balance.

132. In this context, member States mentioned that the UNCTAD secretariat does not circulate information about vacancies to the permanent missions, as it is common practice in other Geneva-based organizations, such as the World Trade Organization. Even though delegations would be willing to inform their capitals about vacancies and raise awareness at the country level, they are currently unable to do so as they get the necessary information through hallway rumours rather than from official advertisements. **The Inspector urges the UNCTAD secretariat to post on its website all vacancy announcements and to establish a mail-alert list to inform Member States about new postings in the secretariat.**

133. The UNCTAD total staff of 510 includes 400 regular-budget posts and 110 staff who are funded by extra-budgetary resources. Table 4 shows the gender distribution for regular budget posts at the Professional level.

Table 4: Gender distribution of UNCTAD regular-budget Professional and above staff per category (July 2011)

UNCTAD staff gender distribution (Professional and above level), RB posts										
	P-1	P-2	P-3	P-4	P-5	D-1	D-2	USG	ASG	Total
Male	-	25	47	32	31	12	3	1	1	152
Female	1	14	32	18	13	6	1	-	-	85
Total	1	39	79	50	44	18	4	1	1	237
Male	0%	64%	59%	64%	70%	67%	75%	100%	100%	64%
Female	100%	36%	41%	36%	30%	33%	25%	0%	0%	36%

Source: UNCTAD secretariat

134. Currently, female staff members account for 36.1 per cent of UNCTAD Professional and above staff. This percentage is slightly lower than in United Nations system (39.9 per cent) but higher than in the United Nations Secretariat on average (34.5 per cent).³⁷ The same is true for the P-5 and above levels where only 30 per cent of posts are held by women. While the UNCTAD secretariat is doing relatively better than the United Nations secretariat, gender parity in the professional category has still not been achieved. Before July 2009, extra-budgetary staff were separately administered and recruited by the relevant secretariat divisions following an internal selection process. Therefore, the provisions for achieving gender balance established under the staff selection system of the United Nations Secretariat such as longer roster eligibility for female candidates were not applicable.³⁸ In the UNCTAD secretariat only 24.5 per cent of 98 extra-budgetary positions are currently held by female staff (see table 3).

Table 5: Gender distribution of UNCTAD extra-budgetary Professional and above staff per category (July 2011)

UNCTAD staff gender distribution (Professional and above level), XB posts								
	P-1	P-2	P-3	P-4	P-5	D-1	D-2	Total
Male	1	12	31	19	9	2	-	74
Female	-	8	12	3	1	-	-	24
Total	1	20	43	22	10	2	-	98
Male	100%	60%	72%	86%	90%	100%	-	75%
Female	0%	40%	28%	14%	10%	0%	-	25%

Source: UNCTAD secretariat

135. In the Inspector's view, the UNCTAD secretariat should engage in a more proactive approach towards achieving gender and geographical balance. The secretariat should set up a clear outreach strategy to circulate vacancy announcements to the Geneva missions through a comprehensive and

³⁷ A/65/334.

³⁸ ST/AI/2010/3.

regularly updated mailing list. Furthermore, a vacancy newsletter should be designed and made available to the outside public on the new UNCTAD website. In particular, these initiatives would help to increase the number of qualified applicants from developing countries and the number of female applicants. **The Inspector reminds that, according to Article 101(3) of the Charter of the United Nations “The paramount consideration in the employment of the staff and in the determination of the conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity. Due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible”. He therefore warns about actual instances in which paramount consideration of these highest standards for recruitment has been neglected for the sake of alleged action to improve the geographical or gender balance.**

Implementation of mobility policies

136. As part of the United Nations Secretariat, UNCTAD staff is subject to the mobility policy applicable to all entities within the United Nations. Historically, UNCTAD staff has shown low rates of mobility among its staff. Staff members and the administration argue that they are technical experts that cannot be easily moved around as their expertise would be lost by the organization and not of good use if changed to other functional posts. Nevertheless, the Inspector is of the view that there are entities with similar expertise that could be hosting staff on mobility, such as the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat or the regional economic commissions in charge of development issues. In the opinion of the Inspector, improvement can be reached in increasing the mobility rate but this should be done in close consultation with staff concerned to align mobility with career development and to take account of the concerns and needs of both parties, the management side of the organization as well as the interest of the staff in developing their career and expertise.

137. The Inspector agrees that mobility is an asset in an organization like the United Nations and that its implementation should be defined cooperatively among the parties concerned, including staff representatives, and not become a top-down managed-reassignment programme by the administration. An incentive-based mobility policy to facilitate career development for staff while preserving their expert skills to contribute for the best to the United Nations would be a commendable strategy for the future. During the review, the Inspector requested detailed information on the status of implementation of mobility. Unfortunately, such information is not available in a “ready-to-use” form from the UNCTAD secretariat. The provision of this information would have entailed “manually downloading some information and cross-checking with other databases”. The Inspector regrets that there is not a regular, ongoing monitoring of mobility implementation with regular updates being done by the Human Resources services, and urges the UNCTAD secretariat to put in place such a monitoring system on mobility.

Use of consultants

138. At the beginning of this review, UNCTAD administration was not in a position to provide to the JIU the information requested on consultants for the past five years by nationality, gender, qualifications and duties. While subsequently and upon a follow-up request, information on nationality and gender was provided, the UNCTAD secretariat clarified that the description of the duties and qualifications of all the consultants was not captured in the system or in databases but was only available on paper files. During the course of the review, the situation appears to have improved and there are data available for the biennium 2010-11. The Inspector encourages the UNCTAD secretariat to continue strengthening their knowledge management capacity in this regard. The Board of Auditors requested the secretariat to establish such a database.³⁹

³⁹ A/66/6 Sect. 12.

The Board recommends that UNCTAD take measures to better manage expenditure on consultants by:

(a) Making sure that all project managers are informed of the best practices developed

(b) Creating a common consultants database (para. 425)

(a) The revised guidelines for the engagement of consultants (expected in 2011) will provide guidance on the recruitment of consultants and streamline relevant processes

(b) The UNCTAD Information Technology Section is currently creating a database of consultants. Through the UNCTAD website, interested candidates will be able to register as consultants in the database, which staff of the Human Resources Management Service will be able to search, as required. The roster will continue to function until Inspira is able to cover this area

139. While the use of consultants is necessary to provide ad hoc expertise on specific technical issues, there is a sense of frustration among staff members concerning the overuse of consultants to undertake the work of substantive analysis, while staff members with the expertise have to address many administrative issues, in particular related to the complex and demanding administrative process of hiring consultants. It appears that more substantive work could be performed internally, with a secretariat composed of highly qualified staff expert on the issues of trade and development and related areas, which is overwhelmed by the daily charge of administrative work for which they received no training and which was not included in their job description. This leads to a continuous process of hiring consultants in quite significant numbers to deliver expert services. The figures below provide information on the use of consultants for the biennium 2010-11, based on data provided by the UNCTAD administration, and further elaborated.

140. For a technical organization such as UNCTAD, it is surprising to see that 28 per cent of the consultancy contracts belong to the OSG and the former DoM (see table 6 below). The main providers of substantive research and technical cooperation being the other divisions, further transparency on what are these contracts used would certainly be welcomed by UNCTAD governing bodies. Furthermore, the geographical distribution concerning the nationality of consultants raises concern as one particular group of countries, group B, is the main source of consultants for the organization (see figure 5 below). **The Inspector is of the view that, while keeping professional expertise as the main criteria for selecting consultants, more active consideration should be given to geographical balance as well.**

Figure 5: Geographical distribution of consultants

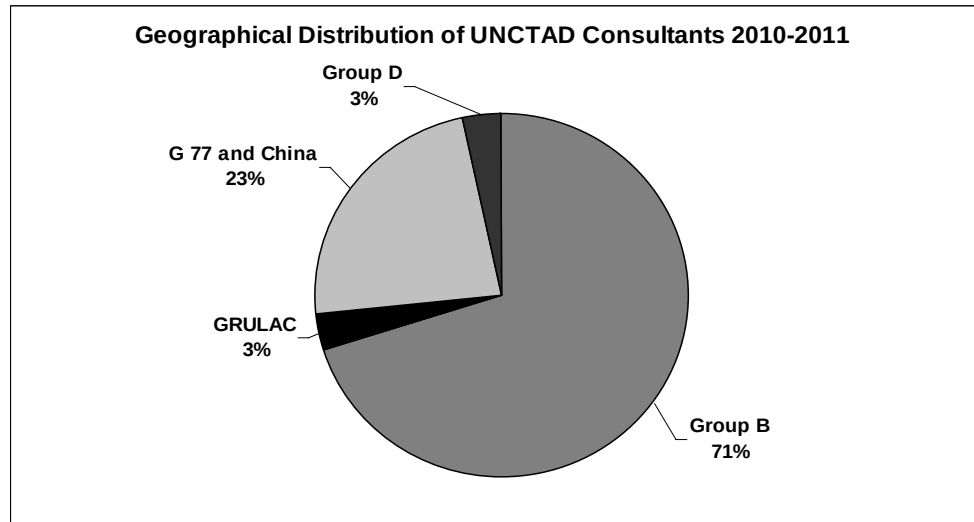


Table 6: Use of consultants for the biennium 2010-11 by Divisions/Offices in UNCTAD

<u>Office/Division</u>	<u>Number contracts</u>	<u>Percentage of women</u>	<u>Average length (days)</u>	<u>Sum of fees (U.S. dollars)</u>	<u>Percentage of fees</u>
Office of the Secretary-General (EDM)	10	40	76	147,360	17
Division of Management	12	25	35	93,226	11
Division on Globalization and Development Strategies (SP1: Globalization, interdependence and development)	14	36	63	154,708	18
Division on Investment and Enterprise (SP2: Investment and enterprise)	23	52	67	208,040	24
Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities (SP3: International trade)	13	38	52	113,175	13
Division on Technology and Logistics (SP4: Technology and logistics)	4	25	70	37,000	4
Division for Africa, LDCs and Special Programmes (SP5: Africa, LDCs and special programmes)	9	44	51	100,420	12
Total	85	N/A	414	853,929	100

Source: UNCTAD secretariat for the biennium 2010-11.

141. The process for recruiting consultants explicitly requires the hiring departments to confirm that no internal expertise is available to perform the requested work. It is the full responsibility of the hiring manager to confirm this information, which is not verified by HRMs. In practice, the non-availability of internal resources is due not to the lack of available expertise but more to the inefficient allocation of resources to work that do not correspond to the core expertise of staff members, which would often be able to do the task themselves but devote an important part of their time to “support administrative work” (including P staff).

142. Aware of the substantive expertise available within the UNCTAD secretariat, a highly technical organization recruiting mainly economists and development experts, the Inspector believes that better management of its knowledge capacities could result in savings for the organization and a stronger sense of professional achievement for the staff, by fully using their skills in performing their work. **The Inspector urges the secretariat to better allocate its Professional staff to substantive work and to release them to non-managerial administrative duties so that they can focus on substance.**

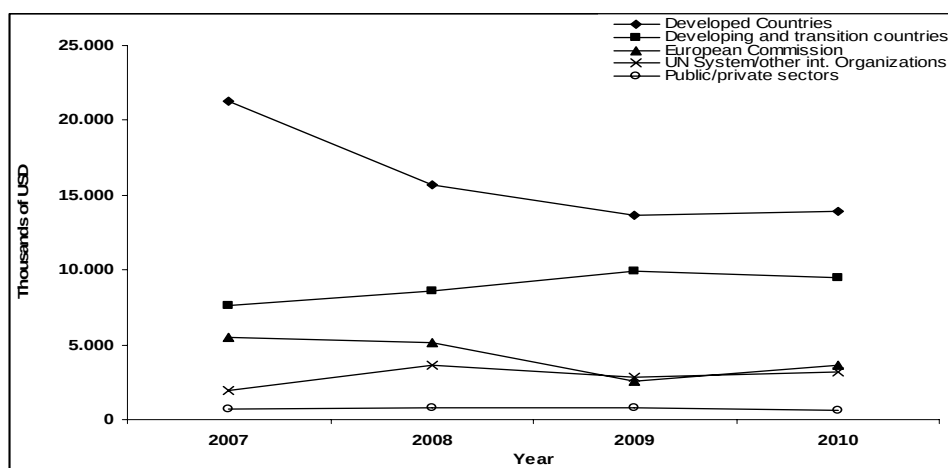
This could also reduce the needs for external consultancies when internal expertise would be made available by alleviating administrative work.

Budget and finance management

143. The Budget and Project Finance Section, one of the four Sections/Units of the RMS, provides support in all the areas related to managing budget and financial activities of the UNCTAD secretariat. It is the certifying office for all the financial transactions related to the implementation of UNCTAD's work, funded either from regular budget or extra-budgetary resources.

144. The UNCTAD secretariat is mainly funded through the regular budget of the United Nations while extra-budgetary contributions are provided on a bilateral basis from donors. For the biennium 2010-2011 the UNCTAD secretariat operated with a regular budget of US\$ 147.5 million as approved by the General Assembly after all necessary adjustments, and US\$ 76.6 million of extra-budgetary resources.⁴⁰ Ninety-one (91) per cent of the regular budget is used to cover staff-related cost, while extra-budgetary contributions are almost exclusively dedicated to country-specific technical cooperation activities.⁴¹

Figure 6: Extra-budgetary resources of the UNCTAD Secretariat - Contributions to UNCTAD Trust Funds



Source: UNCTAD (TD/B/WP/232)

145. With respect to extra-budgetary resources, the UNCTAD secretariat used to have a myriad of ad hoc trust funds, each one related to a specific project. After the in-depth external review of TC of UNCTAD, as well as following the recommendations of the Panel of Eminent Persons in 2006, an in-depth restructuring of the financing of trust funds in UNCTAD was launched. Accordingly, the UNCTAD secretariat has defined 18 thematic clusters.⁴² The aim of this exercise is to allow greater flexibility and report in a more transparent manner on the use of the XB resources. Donors' contributions to individual trust funds are, in most cases, earmarked for the corresponding project.

146. Figure 6 above displays the evolution of donor funding by group of donors between 2007 and 2010. In 2010 about 45 per cent of the extra-budgetary resources of UNCTAD came from developed countries and about 33 per cent from developing countries.⁴³ Between 2007 and 2010 the trust fund

⁴⁰ Extra-budgetary resources (estimate) from the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011.

⁴¹ A/66/6 (Sect. 12).

⁴² TD/B/WP/232/Add.2; 17 clusters are thematic and one cluster comprises executive direction, management and support services.

⁴³ The overall 2010 extra-budgetary resources amounted to US\$ 39.2 million.

contributions of developed countries decreased from roughly US\$ 21.2 million to 13.8 million, while at the same time developing countries increased their contributions from about US\$ 7.6 to 9.4 million.⁴⁴

147. In the same period the overall extra-budgetary contributions to UNCTAD trust funds have fallen from US\$ 36.8 million in 2007 to 30.7 million in 2010 with varying shares from United Nations and other international organizations and the European Commission. The private and public sectors represent the smallest donor with a share of only 2 per cent of the resources.

148. In the Inspector's view, the decline in extra-budgetary contributions to UNCTAD trust funds cannot be attributed to the current financial crisis alone. It also reflects the decreasing interest of donor countries, as was repeatedly indicated by most donors' representatives during the interviews. Their concerns were mostly related to poor management practices and lack of transparency as to the use of their contributions which has led progressively to lower interest by some of the traditional donors to the organization, with the exception of some highly appreciated TC programmes such as DMFAS. In the midst of the current financial crisis and the competition for the same pool of resources with other organizations, the UNCTAD secretariat has to face the challenge of demonstrating its comparative advantages by designing attractive, well-packaged projects for consideration of the donor community. The UNCTAD secretariat should strengthen its communication strategy with member States and partners, organize news conferences and issue timely press releases to disseminate the information concerning their success stories and achievements.

149. The UNCTAD secretariat needs to rethink its fund-raising approach and activities and to diversify the funding base. For this purpose, a strategic approach with more effective mechanisms should be established.⁴⁵ However, the term "fund-raising" is not mentioned in the annual reports of the secretariat for 2008 and 2009 and only in connection with two specific projects in the 2010 report. This reflects the fact that the UNCTAD secretariat does not have a clear fund-raising or resource-mobilization strategy.

150. On the contrary, the Inspector came across two main flaws in the UNCTAD secretariat fund-raising approach. Firstly, the fund-raising is carried out in a very bureaucratic fashion: the requests are collected from interested countries and presented to the potential donors in a meeting usually attended by low-level officials from the permanent missions, who normally come with strict instructions on the projects the donors have decided to finance. Secondly, often the Divisions compete among themselves for fund-raising without a coordinated approach with a first-come/first-served approach to the donors.

151. The UNCTAD secretariat has undertaken various initiatives to engage in dialogue with the private sector.⁴⁶ These initiatives mainly comprise panel discussions and capacity-building sessions at international trade fairs or symposia and mainly relate to substantive topics. However, it remains unclear how the UNCTAD secretariat itself enters in this engagement. Currently, contributions from the private sector are negotiated on a case-by-case basis and usually are confined to limited operations with small budgets (financing a publication or a translation, or organizing a specific event in partnership with UNCTAD). The Inspector believes that established standard operating procedures should be strictly adhered to with a view to supporting a smooth functioning of engagements with the private sector and promoting partnerships with non-traditional donors. The JIU has produced several reviews on this subject which could be used by the UNCTAD secretariat in its dialogue and engagement with the private sector.⁴⁷

152. The Inspector believes that a well-defined fund-raising strategy with clear objectives should be established for the UNCTAD secretariat within the scope of a RBM framework.⁴⁸ In this exercise, the UNCTAD secretariat should show and communicate its expertise and the value added of capacity-building in trade-related issues for all, developing and developed countries and the private sector. The

⁴⁴ TD/B/WP/232.

⁴⁵ UNCTAD/IAOS/2008/2, para. 217.

⁴⁶ TD/B/WP/229.

⁴⁷ JIU/REP/2010/9, JIU/REP/2002/1, JIU/REP/1999/6.

⁴⁸ JIU/REP/2004/6, A/RES/60/257

responsibility for fund-raising and the corresponding accountability should be clearly established and linked to the corporate strategy. In this context, a fund-raising unit could be set up and located under the overall responsibility of the DSG, interacting closely with the TC service in order to coordinate the organization's overall strategy with clearly identified goals and priorities, be they thematic or country/region-specific. This will be further developed in the following section of this review concerning the TCS.

The implementation of the following recommendation is expected to lead to enhanced coordination and cooperation in delivering the work of UNCTAD.

Recommendation 7

The Secretary-General of UNCTAD should elaborate, in close consultations with the Member States, a well-defined fund-raising corporate strategy with clear objectives, goals, priorities and targets in a results-based management approach containing clear lines of responsibility and accountability by the parties involved to be considered for adoption by the Trade and Development Board.

C. Technical Cooperation Service

153. The Technical Cooperation Service (TCS) is located within the Programme Support cluster. Its function is to provide centralized coordination on TC to the secretariat. As one of the three pillars of UNCTAD, technical cooperation activities implemented by the UNCTAD secretariat are a very important component of its substantive work to assist developing countries, in cooperation with ITC, either by building capacities at the country level or by contributing to increased awareness on salient trade issues, such as the trade negotiations agenda.

154. As such, TDB has carefully reviewed the TC activities of the secretariat, with the aim of improving transparency and effectiveness in delivering its work. Multiple efforts have been made to streamline the fragmented situation in delivering TC activities by the UNCTAD secretariat as it was reflected by the situation described by the Report of the Panel of Eminent Persons prepared in 2006. Important recommendations were made by the Panel, as follows:

Recommendation No. 18: UNCTAD should increase its participation in country-level mechanisms for technical assistance and regional development programmes, including within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals.

Recommendation No. 19: UNCTAD's technical assistance should build on its technical excellence in economic policy issues. **It should consolidate its 400-plus projects** into four to five major technical-cooperation programmes centred on overarching themes, with a view to maximizing impact and increasing efficiency and coherence. UNCTAD should also diversify its funding base.

Recommendation No. 20: UNCTAD should consider establishing an advisory body for technical assistance, comprising representatives of development assistance and recipient agencies, to advise its Secretary-General on formulating institutional strategies for technical cooperation and reviewing the impact of this work.

155. Significant progress has been made since the issuance of the above report, but work is still in progress. Internal initiatives to promote further concentration and coordination in the area of TC provision have been articulated by TCS. The main obstacle to undertake such an internal reform has been the organizational culture in this regard. For several decades, TC projects and capacity-building activities flourished without a centralized strategy, mainly based on ad hoc initiatives from the different divisions, branches or services, developing their networks of contacts with targeted countries or regions, selected not necessarily on the basis of an objective and comprehensive needs-assessment exercise.

156. As a result of these recommendations, in particular recommendation No. 19, TDB adopted at its 54th session decision 492 (LIV) on the “Review of technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD”. It requested the secretariat to initiate the process of the establishment of thematic trust funds within and among divisions and technical-cooperation programmes, in close consultation with member States. On 19 December 2007, the General Assembly resolution on development operations of the United Nations system “Recognize[d] the establishment of thematic trust funds, multi-donor trust funds and other voluntary non-earmarked funding mechanisms linked to organization-specific funding frameworks and strategies established by the respective governing bodies as funding modalities complementary to regular budgets.”⁴⁹ This request was further reaffirmed in TDB decision 495 (LV) of September 2008, General Assembly resolution 63/232, paragraph 13, of December 2008 and TDB decision 498 (LVI) of September 2009. As a direct result of these requests, the UNCTAD secretariat, in consultation with member States, proposed a regrouping of the TC activities under 17 thematic clusters.

157. While the Inspector commends the efforts displayed by the secretariat to implement the Panel’s recommendations, he considers that the secretariat and the Member States should more actively pursue their implementation.

158. The Accra Accord also recalled the importance of UNCTAD’s role in technical cooperation, as follows:

UNCTAD should:

[...]

(c) Help develop capacities in developing countries and countries with economies in transition to establish their own negotiating priorities, and their capacity to negotiate and implement bilateral, regional and multilateral trade agreements;

(d) Intensify its trade and trade-related technical cooperation and capacity-building activities. It should strengthen its contribution to the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries and the Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Programme (JITAP);

(e) Continue to provide and strengthen technical support to and cooperation with developing countries, according to their level of development, particularly LDCs and countries with economies in transition, prior to, during and in the follow-up to their WTO accession process.

159. The Accra Accord not only requested the secretariat to strengthen and develop its technical cooperation activities in a more systematic and coordinated manner in consultation with donors and beneficiaries but it also referred to the need of a more systematic monitoring and evaluation of performance of these activities, as follows:

Efforts should be pursued to improve the management, evaluation and reporting of all technical assistance activities, with greater attention being paid to:

82 (a) **Measuring the effectiveness and evaluating the impact of those activities**, in accordance with the relevant paragraphs of Trade and Development Board decision 478 (L) and relevant United Nations rules and procedures on technical cooperation evaluation;

(b) Clearly identifying the roles and responsibilities within the secretariat; and

(c) **Tracking the demand for assistance and the availability of funding**. There should be more cross-divisional cooperation in order to promote a holistic, UNCTAD wide-perspective and to enhance synergies; cost-effectiveness and the sharing of best practices and lessons learned in the design and implementation of technical assistance activities.

⁴⁹ General Assembly resolution 62/208, para. 22.

160. TCS has deployed commendable efforts in responding to these requests. An interdivisional structure was set up, and the Project Review Committee (PRC) facilitates the internal enhanced inter-divisional coordination in the area of technical cooperation. It has been instrumental in designing the new thematic clusters, which have grouped the existing projects and the proposals for new ones, by thematic areas.⁵⁰ Under the overall guidance of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, the PRC is the interdivisional mechanism which reviews technical-assistance projects. Focal points have been nominated by each division to participate in the PRC. They are responsible for sharing decisions and issues and for following up within their divisions.

161. The PRC terms of reference define its competences covering the following areas: (a) information sharing and reporting; (b) analysing UNCTAD's TC programme; (c) improving procedures; (d) supporting resource-mobilization efforts; (e) ensuring overall coherence; (f) enhancing the role of UNCTAD at the country level; and (g) interface with the Accra Accord steering group. PRC holds monthly meetings convened by TCS. Other ad hoc meetings can be convened by the members at any time. TCS chairs the PRC and coordinates meetings and follow-up. While the terms of reference of the PRC provide the necessary framework to promote enhanced coordination within the UNCTAD secretariat under the leadership of TCS, in practice the acceptance and cooperation from the other divisions has not always helped in progressing towards collegial management of technical cooperation.

162. The UNCTAD secretariat has also created an interactive IT tool, called the Technical Cooperation Portal. This centralizes the information available on all existing technical cooperation projects and facilitates the exchange of information among the divisions and TCS. In turn, the existence of such a tool facilitates timely consolidated reporting by TCS to donors on the use of their extra-budgetary contributions. TCS is in charge of monitoring its update contents and to identify actions for improvement. It helps monitoring the implementation of earmarked XB country or regional projects. **The Inspector believes that it could also be used to monitor and report on the use of a new, non-earmarked general trust fund to be established by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, as per recommendation 9 below, to attract financial support to UNCTAD substantive operations, in particular its research and analysis work to feed into capacity-building and technical cooperation processes.**

163. The UNCTAD secretariat, under the coordinating role of TCS in the area of TC, has been making sustained progress to consistently implement the recommendations issued from the Panel of Eminent Persons, TDB, the Accra Accord, and the in-depth external evaluation on TC activities prepared in 2010 by an independent external panel.⁵¹ Nevertheless, this is an untiring effort that requires a more effective understanding and support from top management and all divisions, programmes and services.

The implementation of the following recommendations is expected to lead to enhanced efficiency in securing resources for TC activities responding to the needs of the beneficiary countries.

Recommendation 8

The Secretary-General of UNCTAD should take action to upgrade and strengthen the Technical Cooperation Service, transforming it into a fully-fledged division which is instrumental in coordinating and providing support to other substantive divisions in matching needs and resources to deliver technical assistance to beneficiary countries, leading the definition and implementation of a corporate fund-raising strategy for UNCTAD, and coordination partnerships for development.

⁵⁰ Detailed information on TC clusters available at: www.unctad.org/sections/tc/docs/dom_tcs_2008_08_en.pdf

⁵¹ This evaluation (TD/B/WP223) was prepared by an independent evaluation team: Dr. Thierry Apoteker, Managing Director of Thierry Apoteker Consultants (TAC); Mr. Sylvain Barthélémy, Research Director at TAC; Ms. Heli Niemi, representative of the Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations in Geneva; and Mr. Khondker M. Talha, representative of the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations in Geneva. A related case study on Zambia can be found in the document TD/B/WP224. Supporting materials can be found in the document TD/B/WP/223/Add.1.

Recommendation 9

Beside the current earmarked and proposed cluster trust funds, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, in consultation with the Trade and Development Board, should seek authorization from the General Assembly to establish a non-earmarked general trust fund to support UNCTAD substantive operations, in particular its research and analysis work and technical-cooperation activities.

D. Interdivisional management**Dismantling the silo approach**

164. Historically, the substantive divisions of UNCTAD have worked quite independently from one another, without an effective, established interdivisional coordination mechanism or a steering group. It appears that ad hoc inter-divisional meetings at a high level (Directors with OSG) are set up during the preparations for the quadrennial conferences, but there is no permanent inter-divisional steering committee with clear TOR and agenda which meets and report regularly and follow-up its decisions.

165. Within the divisions, management structures vary to a great extent. A series of interviews were conducted with senior staff from the UNCTAD secretariat, including all division directors and the top management of the secretariat. In these interviews the Inspector observed that the vast majority of them recognized the need for improvement and for further cooperation and communication, from the top management and among the divisions.

166. Another major obstacle that was revealed in the interviews was the lack of top management commitment to initiate coordination and improve communication between the divisions. A recent attempt to set up an interdivisional study group was discontinued after meeting only once, as no further efforts were made from top management to institutionalize it.

167. At present, no Director at the D-2 level, such as the former Director of the Division of Management, participates in meetings of the division Directors with the DSG and the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, since the DoM was abolished. In the Inspector's view, this practice can seriously hamper planning and coordination, in particular as DoM performed cross-cutting functions which are relevant for all divisions and managed the most important resource of the secretariat i.e. the staff and financial resources. Taking into account the ongoing efforts to enhance coordination and planning in the area of TC, while the current setting applies, TCS should participate in the interdivisional meetings.

The implementation of the following recommendation is expected to lead to enhanced efficiency in the preparation and coordination of work programmes and their implementation in the UNCTAD secretariat.

Recommendation 10

The Secretary-General of UNCTAD should establish a permanent interdivisional steering committee involving all Directors, the Chief of the Resources Management Section, the Chief of the Intergovernmental Support Service and the Chief of the Technical Cooperation Service to coordinate the preparation of work programmes, oversee and monitor their implementation, evaluate their performance and report on lessons learned and achievements.

The “3C statement” of the UNCTAD Secretary-General

168. In interviews with the UNCTAD Secretary-General and managers, the Inspector came to know that the former had established, soon after the Accra Conference in 2008, a strategy of Communication, Concentration and Coordination (the “3C statement”) as a common vision for the secretariat. The Secretary-General considers this initiative as one of the main tools to destroy the current silo’s approach prevailing in UNCTAD operations. He is the main advocate for an UNCTAD delivery as one management culture. However, it became clear that the organization has not been able to translate the 3C statement into a One-UNCTAD corporate identity.

169. This should be achieved by implementing a coherent strategic-management approach. In this context and taking into account that the Secretary-General of UNCTAD is in charge of the overall direction in his leadership role, the DSG should play a central managerial role. He/she should provide overall programmatic and management oversight by effectively exercising his authority as the immediate supervisor of division directors and as the strategic link between division directors and OSG.

E. Monitoring and evaluation

170. Evaluation and oversight are increasingly requested by member States so they can be better informed on the performance of the organizations of the United Nations system. UNCTAD is not an exception. Indeed, it has been subject to an increasing number of evaluations and audits in the last years, and has been looked at by different evaluators and auditors. This has been done either by external evaluators – such as the annual independent external evaluation of UNCTAD activities that is considered by the Working Party – or by professional audit and evaluation bodies, such as the Board of Auditors, OIOS and JIU. Indeed, “oversight” fatigue was one of the factors that delayed the launching of this review, at the request of UNCTAD secretariat, which alluded to an increasing workload resulting from the different audits and evaluations to which it was being exposed.

171. These evaluations and audits have covered practically all areas of UNCTAD, from technical cooperation to human resources, as well as its administrative and financial management. Every year, the regular session of TDB selects a particular programme for evaluation for the next annual session. The findings of these evaluations and their recommendations pave the way to identifying weaknesses and the potential for improvement, and are being followed-up regarding progress made on their implementation in subsequent years.

172. In theory, the UNCTAD secretariat has received enough recommendations for action on all relevant areas of its work from member States, external evaluations and audits. JIU requested during the course of the review to be provided with the updated status of implementation concerning the most recent evaluations of OIOS and the Board of Auditors. The response from UNCTAD secretariat was that the follow-up on implementation of these recommendations is prepared manually and that it would be time-consuming and complex to respond to the JIU request, which reveals in itself a clear weakness in the management processes. In this respect, the Inspector is of the view that it would be advisable to keep the corresponding data in electronic files for reporting purposes.

173. OIOS undertook in 2010 an inspection of the programme level of monitoring and evaluation in place at the UNCTAD secretariat⁵², and issued a series of recommendations. It was recommended that the UNCTAD secretariat formalize its organizational evaluation policy by submitting it to the Governing Bodies and/or to the Secretary-General of UNCTAD for review and approval, preparing annual progress reports to address evaluation updates and provide further details on evaluation activities. It was also recommended that the responsibilities for articulating monitoring and evaluation within the UNCTAD secretariat should be better defined among senior managers.

⁵² Inspection of Programme Level Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD): 28 September 2010 Assignment No. IED-10-010. OIOS.

174. The UNCTAD secretariat should also reassess core resources to reach at least one per cent of regular budget allocated to monitoring and evaluation in line with evaluation resource benchmarks. OIOS reported that the resources dedicated by the UNCTAD secretariat to the conduct of monitoring and evaluation represented 0.72 per cent of its budget for the biennium 2008-2009. While this was above the average of the performance observed by evaluating the United Nations Secretariat programmes, with an average of only 0.43 per cent, OIOS noted that part of the resources came from extra-budgetary resources to evaluate the programmes they are funding. The Inspector agrees with the recommendation that more resources from the regular budget should be allocated to the monitoring and evaluation in the UNCTAD secretariat.

175. Further efforts should be made in strengthening intra-divisional self-evaluation with results being shared among divisions and with top management in the UNCTAD secretariat to improve self-evaluation techniques and strengthen performance.

176. The report from OIOS acknowledged good performance on IMDIS reporting. This tool is the official tool for reporting on performance achievement by the UNCTAD secretariat, based on the indicators of performance defined to measure it on a biennial basis (programme planning cycle). While there is full and accurate compliance with IMDIS reporting, OIOS reported that staff found it difficult to report through IMDIS the internal knowledge and innovation in self-evaluation that could bring value added to the organization.

The implementation of the following recommendation is expected to lead to enhanced accountability in all areas of management and administration of the UNCTAD secretariat.

Recommendation 11

The Conference should direct the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to ensure the sufficient allocation of resources for strengthening an independent and efficient evaluation capacity within the UNCTAD secretariat.

F. Organizational culture and working environment

177. The Secretary-General of the United Nations always recalls that the staff is the main asset of the Organization. Indeed, in the context of the United Nations reform many initiatives have been launched within the Secretariat to revamp the working environment so as to create an enabling atmosphere for effective and efficient delivery of duties. Some entities within the United Nations seem to need more urgently than others an in-depth renovation of their management strategies to ignite the necessary motivation among its staff to promote enhanced coordination and better collaboration among the different departments of the organization.

178. The results of the JIU staff survey show that the UNCTAD secretariat would greatly benefit from undertaking an objective, unbiased and comprehensive self-evaluation to internally take stock of its strengths and weaknesses and build on its findings. Such an internal reform needs to be dynamically led and promoted by top management, under the leadership of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD and with the assistance of the DSG.

179. Poor communication and lack of transparency about the internal functioning of the organization can be at the root of an organizational “malaise” that is consistently expressed throughout the responses to the staff-at-large survey⁵³ undertaken by JIU in the course of this review.

⁵³ More than 50 per cent of all staff responded to the survey: 41.7 per cent of the respondents had been more than 10 years in UNCTAD, which makes them an invaluable source to thoroughly evaluate their organization and their experience of it; 40 per cent of the respondents had supervisory responsibilities.

180. The overall picture resulting from the analysis of the responses conveys a message of hope and despair; there emanates a strong sense of belonging to the organization and belief in its core mandate, coupled with a deep loss of trust and confidence in the functioning of the secretariat in terms of leadership, management transparency, communication and fairness of treatment for the career development of staff. It also appears that there is a disconnect at some level between middle-management and top management, as many of the respondents clarified that they were reasonably satisfied with their direct environment, while less satisfied with the functioning of top management in the organization. Indeed, 56 per cent of the respondents indicated to have no confidence in UNCTAD management.

181. Other striking results from the survey indicated that 61 per cent of respondents considered that UNCTAD top management was not communicating adequately with the rest of the organization; 62 per cent believed that the organizational structure of the UNCTAD secretariat was not functioning effectively. A strong result regarding the perceived lack of communication is reflected by 70 per cent of the respondents considering that there were no opportunities for open and regular communication with UNCTAD top management. Fifty-four (54) per cent of respondents disagree with the statement about top managers fostering an organizational culture of integrity. This is even more disappointing in the light of the Integrity Survey undertaken by the UNCTAD secretariat in 2005 and followed-up by a consistent report from an internal staff task-force resulting into a series of recommendations to improve integrity and its perception and implementation in the organization. It appears as if the necessary measures have not yet been put in place for a successful achievement.

182. A general concern is reflected in the responses assessing the prospects for career development and performance appraisal. In particular, 65 per cent of respondents consider that promotions are not based on staff performance. This is a really worrying perception that says it all about the daily perception of non-transparency within the organization.

183. From his interviews, including two with the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, three with the Assistant Secretary-General and one with each Director of a division, the Inspector perceived a high degree of knowledge, commitment and understanding of the issues at stake. Therefore, it appears that those perceptions are associated with the poor communication displayed by the UNCTAD top management.

184. The Inspector is of the view that the Secretary-General could address the current situation with a strong signal of commitment and action, by convening an internal task force composed of staff representatives, other members elected by the UNCTAD secretariat for this specific purpose, and management representatives from all divisions and grade levels, to undertake an in-depth self-evaluation. The results of the task force should help in identifying strategies for improving internal communication, inter- and intra-divisional cooperation and concrete measures for creating a better working environment within the UNCTAD secretariat. The findings of the task force should be an input into the Communication, Concentration and Coordination (3C) strategy and could be reported to a TDB session.

G. The way forward

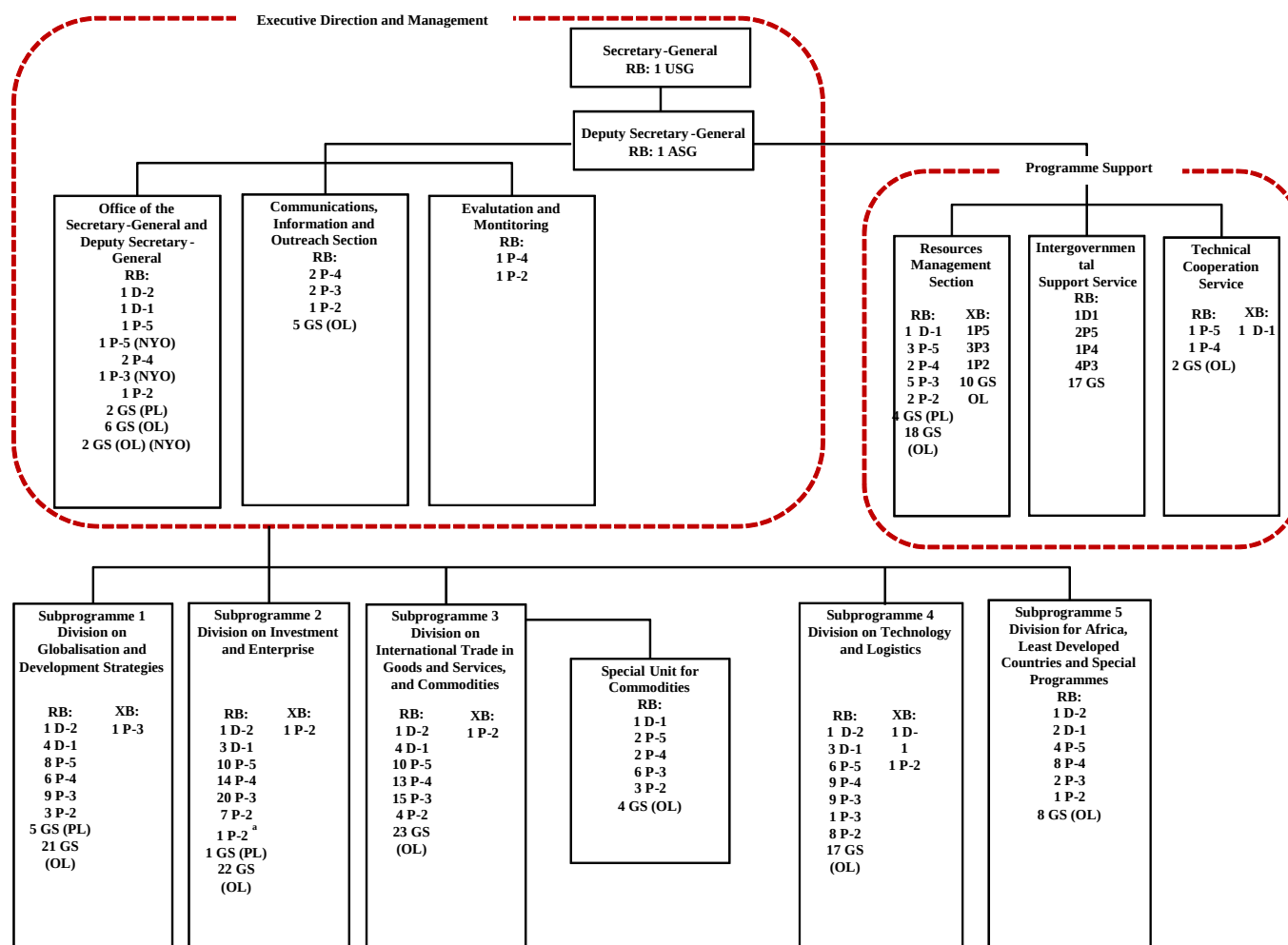
185. The Inspector expects that the present management and administration review of UNCTAD will be soon debated by Member States and become a tool of reference for UNCTAD's governing bodies and secretariat to address jointly a constructive dialogue leading to organizational reforms necessary to address some of the weaknesses identified during the review.

186. Clearly, UNCTAD is an organization with a golden opportunity of addressing its mandate and all the opportunities to better contribute to face the current economic challenges that characterize the global economic process of change in the world. To make good use and honour the mandate given by the General Assembly and its subsidiary governing bodies to UNCTAD, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD and his management team will have to undertake courageous reforms within the realm of the ongoing United Nations reform. Such a change will have to be participatory, involving the governing bodies and the secretariat in a constructive dialogue. However, the Inspector expects that

efforts undertaken will not result in a mere “new report” that will remain as a wish-list for action, but that indeed become a concrete and timely action plan that will be put into place thanks to this collective effort. This would result in major new effectiveness, impact and visibility for the role that UNCTAD can effectively play in assisting its Members.

Annexes

Annex I: Organigramme of the UNCTAD secretariat (Source: UNCTAD website, 2011)



Annex II

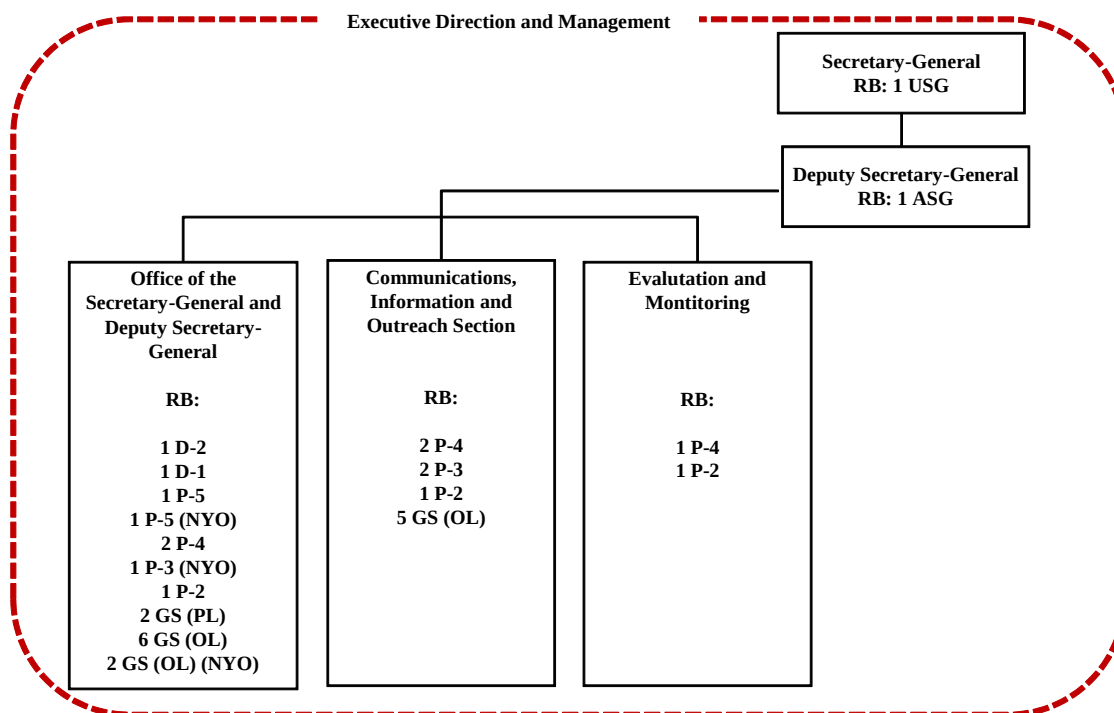
Office of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD

Staff composition for 2010-11 and proposed for 2012-13

Composition of OSG for 2010-11
(A/64/6 Sect. 12)

RB:
1 D-1
2 P-5
2 P-4
1 P-3
1 P-2
2 GS (PL)
7 GS (OL)

Composition of Executive Direction and Management including the OSG office for 2012-13
(Information provided by the UNCTAD secretariat)



Annex III
Overview of actions to be taken by participating organizations on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit
JIU/REP/2012/1

		Intended impact	United Nations, its funds and programmes												Specialized agencies and IAEA											
			United Nations*	UNCTAD	UNODC	UNEP	UN-Habitat	UNHCR	UNRWA	UNDP	UNFPA	UNICEF	WFP	OTHERS*	ILO	FAO	UNESCO	ICAO	WHO	UPU	ITU	WMO	IMO	WIPO	UNIDO	UNWTO
Report	For action			☒																						
	For information		☒		☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
<u>Recommendation 1</u>		e		L																						
<u>Recommendation 2</u>		c		E																						
<u>Recommendation 3</u>		c		E																						
<u>Recommendation 4</u>		e		E																						
<u>Recommendation 5</u>		e		E																						
<u>Recommendation 6</u>		g		E																						
<u>Recommendation 7</u>		c		E																						
<u>Recommendation 8</u>		g		E																						
<u>Recommendation 9</u>		g		L																						
<u>Recommendation 10</u>		g		E																						
<u>Recommendation 11</u>		a		L																						

Legend: L: Recommendation for decision by legislative organ E: Recommendation for action by executive head

☐: Recommendation does not require action by this organization **Intended impact:** a: enhanced accountability b: dissemination of best practices c: enhanced coordination and cooperation d: enhanced controls and compliance e: enhanced effectiveness f: significant financial savings g: enhanced efficiency o: other.

* Covers all entities listed in ST/SGB/2002/11 other than UNCTAD, UNODC, UNEP, UN-Habitat, UNHCR, UNRWA; Others: UNOPS, UN Women, UNAIDS