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UN trade meeting to focus on ‘development-centred globalization’



UNCTAD Secretary-General Supachai Panitchpakdi (left) and General Assembly President Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser hold press conference. UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

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On the eve of a major United Nations ministerial conference on international trade and development, a senior UN official today said the event is taking place at a turning point during which leaders of the global community must step forward to lead the world out of “round after round of financial crisis.”

“Do not be misled by the pep talks and some of the short-term viewpoints that we’re seeing recovery here and there – we are not out of the woods, we are far and away not out of the woods yet. Some of the recoveries are fragile, only in some parts of the world are we seeing some real recovery,” the Secretary-General of the UN Conference on Trade and Development ([UNCTAD](#)), Supachai Panitchpakdi, said at a joint [press conference](#) in Doha.

The 13th session, known as [UNCTAD XIII](#) and taking place in Doha from 21 to 26 April, is the first such conference since the fallout from the 2007-2008 global economic crisis. The sessions are held every four years, and the theme of this year’s session is ‘Development-centred globalization: Towards inclusive and sustainable growth and development.’

Mr. Supachai said the global trading system’s gains over the last decade had been lost in the recent crisis, and, in what amounted to an increasingly multipolar world, the meeting would provide a crucial platform for Member States to share experiences and lessons learned – and, hopefully, concrete recommendations based on their experiences would emerge.

Speaking at the same press conference, the President of the General Assembly, Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, said the Assembly remains concerned about the current global economic situation.

“I am here in Doha to participate in this high-level UNCTAD Conference because I wish to give this event all the attention and support it deserves,” Mr. Al-Nasser said. “It is also in the interest of developed countries to support UNCTAD since the benefits would be shared between developed and developing nations based on what we call in the UN, South-South and Triangular Cooperation for development.”

Established in 1964, UNCTAD promotes the development-friendly integration of developing countries into the world economy, and seeks to help shape current policy debates and thinking on development, with a particular focus on ensuring that domestic policies and international action are mutually supportive in bringing about sustainable development.

It has long maintained that the current global economic and financial system has allowed a lopsided system to flourish, with some participants reaping the benefits while global income inequality and financial imbalances have also accumulated.

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