

**Statement by H.E. Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail Elamin
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sudan,
Coordinator of the African Group
at the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission, 9th
session,
20–24 November 2017**

Deputy Secretary General,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates.

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group. The Group fully associates itself to the statement delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of Tanzania on behalf of G.77 and China. The African Group thanks Ms. Isabelle Durant, Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD for her opening remarks.

The African Group wishes to acknowledge the significant contribution of UNCTAD's programme on investment and enterprise to the promotion and facilitation of SDG implementation efforts in member countries. The African Group appreciates UNCTAD commitment through the development of a series of policy frameworks to help countries build investment policies solutions suitable to advancing investment in SDG sectors. The Group acknowledges the rate of progress in the area of investment and enterprise for sustainable development.

The African Group wishes to express its appreciation for UNCTAD's foreign direct investment (FDI) policy research and statistical analysis. The Group would like to point out that the World Investment Report 2017 provides important insights into the implications of the digital economy for global investment. The Group notes that the report highlights the concerns of our countries about the negative consequences of the digital divide and reaffirms our commitment to implementing policies to assure the rapid development of digital technologies and digital investment in Africa.

Mr. Chairman,

The African Group wishes to express its concerns about the continued overall decline of FDI flows to the continent in 2016 – by 3 per cent to \$59 billion. The Group nevertheless remains buoyed by the prospect of longer-term recovery citing the potential of increased regional integration as a means to spur on the continent’s global competitiveness and boost FDI levels overall.

The African Group believes that UNCTAD’s Investment Policy Reviews (IPRs) remain a robust vehicle for technical assistance in the area of investment for development in support of Agenda 2030. The African Group wishes to commend UNCTAD for the programme’s continued success in supporting member States’ policymaking efforts, and encourages UNCTAD to expand its work in this area. To date, 25 African countries have benefited from the programme. With the objective of channelling foreign direct investment more effectively towards the SDGs, UNCTAD’s IPRs provide national governments with tailored policy recommendations to improve the investment environment within beneficiary countries. The Group appreciates the finalization of the IPR for The Gambia and look forward to the future delivery of the IPRs for Angola, Cabo Verde and Chad, as well as the implementation report for Mauritius. We further look forward to the formal presentation of the IPRs of The Gambia tomorrow morning in the context of this Commission. The African Group also commends UNCTAD on the value of its follow-up technical assistance supporting the IPR implementation process, and notes with appreciation the implementation reports recently prepared for Benin and Botswana, as well as additional technical assistance activities provided to Benin, The Gambia and Kenya. Emphasizing the positive impact of UNCTAD’s policy assistance on global SDG implementation efforts, we call upon the donor community to continue its critical support to this programme into the future.

Mr. Chairman,

The African Group appreciates UNCTAD’s work with partner organizations, including UN entities, such as UN-OHRLLS, the ILO, as well as the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA), to broaden the offering of training for IPA officials. This work is of particular importance for the promotion of FDI to SDG sectors. In this

regard the Group notes UNCTAD's work with African investment promotion agencies (IPAs) to prepare and market SDG projects – as was done during the regional seminar for African IPAs held in South Africa in May 2017. We look forward to the discussion this afternoon on this matter. The Group encourages UNCTAD to continue the exchange of best practice in this critical area, including through its annual UN Investment Promotion Awards to be held later today.

The African Group acknowledges UNCTAD's commitment to strengthening entrepreneurship in the region through the *Entrepreneurship Policy Framework* (EPF). The Group commends the progress of the UNCTAD's work in this vital area answering to the GA call in resolution A/RES/71/221 to assist countries through the development of effective entrepreneurship policies and promoting SMEs. In particular, the Group wishes to recognize UNCTAD's collaboration with the African Union Commission, through the introduction of its work on entrepreneurship policies and enterprise development will be a strong complement to the African Union's Master Plan for SME development.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, the Group looks forward to the constructive and fruitful discussions.

I thank you Mr. Chairman