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Statement

By

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United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organization in

Switzerland

At

The 26th Special Session of the Trade Development Board of UNCTAD

19 June 2012

Mr. President,
Dr. Supachai, Secretary-General of UNCTAD
Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to associate myself with the statements made by Indonesia, on behalf of G77 and China, Zimbabwe, on behalf of the African Group and Nepal on behalf of LDCs. Our best wishes to Amb. Djani of Indonesia.

My delegation thanks Mr. Even Fontaine Ortiz of JIU the flu for preparing the report entitled the "Review of Management and Administration in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)" and for his brief introduction statement today. My delegation also welcomes the Management Response of UNCTAD's Secretariat to the Review. We thank the Secretary General Dr. Supachai for his statement, which has placed the secretariat's response in the proper context.

Mr. President,

The Review has provided an opportunity to identify areas requiring further improvement in the management and administration of UNCTAD Secretariat. Since 1964, UNCTAD has been supporting developing countries to better integrate into the global economic system. It has played a significant role in shaping the global debate on development issues and as an important international forum for consensus building. Its flagship reports such as the TDB report, LDC report and World Investment Report are some of UNCTAD's excellent products that should be continued. UNCTAD has also provided technical assistance programmes which contribute to capacity building efforts of developing countries, particularly to LDCs. Ethiopia is grateful for long and fruitful association with UNCTAD's technical assistance program.

Mr. President,

There is always room for improvement in any human endeavour. As such, we congratulate UNCTAD Secretariat for the constructive and transparent manner in which it has responded to the recommendations of the Review.

My delegation would like to make specific comments on the role of member states in consensus building, as well as on policy analysis and research and technical assistance work of the Secretariat.

The strength of UNCTAD lies in enhanced and active participation of all member states. This enables UNCTAD to better respond to the demands of member states and strengthen the consensus building pillar. At the same time, UNCTAD should continue providing required and requested support to facilitate the effectiveness of the intergovernmental machinery. It is thus up to member states to enhance their effective participation and provide clear guidance whenever the Secretariat support is required.

UNCTAD's research and analysis work particularly case studies of individual countries and sectors could provide even better support for policy-makers if UNCTAD Secretariat enhances consultation with and the robust engagement of concerned member states. The use of local consultants in such works could be useful if UNCTAD Secretariat could show that it has consistent and established practice to assure itself and members states on the intellectual credibility and integrity of those domestic consultants. It would also be useful that Members States are consulted when its flagship publications specifically select them for illustration; not for censoring the publication but to ensure their perspectives as they relate to facts are well reflected.

UNCTAD could take additional measures to improve its communications and engagement with member states particularly through Permanent Missions at Geneva on such matters.

Similarly UNCTAD's technical cooperation pillar could be further strengthened by enhancing the appropriate flow of relevant information between the Secretariat and member states particularly through Permanent Missions. This ensures that technical assistance programs are well-coordinated at the national level. Such cooperation could enhance monitoring and evaluation mechanism to comprehensive assessments on the impacts of these programs.

Moreover, we support the JIU recommendation as rightly accepted by UNCTAD Secretariat to develop a pro-active fund-raising strategy and establish long term partnership with partners to successfully implement demand-driven technical cooperation programmes. We also welcome the response of the Secretariat to present a first draft of the fund-raising strategy before the end of the year.

Mr. President,

The integrated implementation of the three pillars of UNCTAD-policy analysis and research, consensus building and technical cooperation require effective internal coordination of the Secretariat. UNCTAD Secretariat is encouraged to further enhance its mechanism of internal coordination as it could improve its management effectiveness.

It is in the interest of member states to see UNCTAD remain ahead of the curve. This could be maintained with highly motivated staffs. Thus, JIU report's assertion that "the staff members were highly dissatisfied, frustrated and de-motivated by the functioning of human resource management" is a source of concern. Given the importance of this matter, my delegation proposes that the Secretariat undertake a comprehensive review to assess the reaction of the staff and implement possible solutions as might be required.

My delegation also welcomes the response of the Secretariat to provide regular updates on HR-related indicators to the November session of the Working Party.

Mr. President,

The Doha Mandate is a significant achievement for all Member States of UNCTAD. It is a result of constructive and open engagement of all member states. It has reaffirmed UNCTAD's mandate. We should now build on this success and further reinforce UNCTAD's crucial role as an important global forum to continue its valued contribution in addressing the global economic challenges. It is the responsibility of all member states to closely work together with the common objective of successfully implementing the Doha Mandate. Constructive engagement on JIU's Report could further reinvigorate UNCTAD.

I would like to assure you that my delegation would continue its engagement in all inter-governmental activities of UNCTAD. Ethiopia fully supports the work of UNCTAD and is ready to contribute further to see strengthened UNCTAD Secretariat.

Thank you.