

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

Trade and Development Board, sixtieth session
Geneva, 16–27 September 2013

Opening Plenary
General statements by regional groups
Speaker: Group of Fifteen

Monday, 16 September 2013

*Not checked against delivery **

* This statement is made available in the language and form in which it was received. The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNCTAD.



GROUP OF FIFTEEN
Summit Level Group of Developing Countries

G-15 Joint Statement at the 60th Session of UNCTAD's Trade and Development Board; 16 September 2013

Mr. President,
Secretary General of UNCTAD
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen

1. Sri Lanka has the honour and the privilege to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of Fifteen (G-15), a Summit Level Group of Developing Countries, comprising 17 member States.*
2. At the outset, allow me to congratulate you Mr. President, on your election, and to assure you and the members of the Bureau on our full support as we work together towards the successful conclusion of our work
3. The Group also wishes to welcome and congratulate the new Secretary General of UNCTAD, Mr. Mukhisa Kituyi. We are confident that under your able leadership, UNCTAD will continue at the heart of the global discourse on development with its principle and the Group would also like to extend its sincere thanks to the Secretary General for his inspiring opening statement which has given us an overview of the strategic economic and development issues before this august gathering.

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

4. The complex dynamics of the world trade has a very close coupling with the economic and social development agenda of the developing countries. We are all united in our effort to see the world trade flourish

but for the ensuing multi-lateral trading system to drive the world trade, it must necessarily be fair, more equitable and responsive to the expectations, aspirations and legitimate concerns of all, especially developing countries and in particular the LDCs. The Group calls for engineering a multilateral trading system that seeks to integrate, through sustained effort, capacity building, wider participation in the decision making and value addition, the economies of the developing world with the global economy.

5. The Group remains concerned that despite the “rise of the South” with increasing trade and investment flows among developing countries, the fate of their economies remains dependent of external factors beyond their control.¹ It is only by united and sustained international engagement, especially in re-regulating international finance and assuring coherence and fairness of the multilateral trading system that we can fully tap the potential of trade in developing countries. The Group believes that appropriate macroeconomic policies along with appropriate industrial and labour market reforms can help foster, promote and boost inclusive growth.
6. The Group remains convinced that although globalization continues to serve as a powerful driver for strengthening cooperation and accelerating growth and development, it also presents risks and challenges, especially to the developing countries. The differential reach and impact of globalization has generated economic asymmetries, both at the global and national levels. The Group calls for intensified international cooperation that is driven by the country ownership, to support and bolster regional and national efforts so as to seize opportunities and reverse the unacceptable trends of marginalization.
7. The Group wishes to underscore that discussions on the reform of the global financial architecture should place more emphasis on financing for development, in addition to greater financial stability. It notes that these reforms should ensure greater participation by the developing countries in the decision-making processes of the international

¹ TB/B/60/7: Note by the UNCTAD Secretariat: High-level segment

financial institutions, consistent with the growing weight of these countries in international trade and investment.

8. The Group expresses grave concern at the drop of official development assistance (ODA) by 4% in real terms over the past year, following a 2% dip in 2011. The Group calls developed countries and all others in the position to do so, to deliver fully on their past commitments taking into account, the urgent need to fulfil the MDGs and other International Agreed Development Goals. The post-2015 development agenda would further need to be supported by a renewed global partnership grounded on the values of equity, solidarity and human rights, fully mobilizing developed and developing countries, leaving no one behind.
9. The Group calls for greater financial, technological and policy-development assistance to help developing countries, particularly LDCs, to advance from a commodity-oriented economy and to scale-up in Global Value Chains.
10. The Group particularly wishes to underscore the importance of South-South in complimenting North-South and triangular cooperation, and stresses on the importance of international cooperation as an ongoing process which helps developing countries to take advantage of existing and potential complementarities in their economies, sharing experiences and affinities and promoting their own sustainable development. The Group reaffirms its resolve to enhance South-South trade and further stimulate it by improving market access as also through the Global System of Preferences among Developing Countries (GSTP).
11. The Group continues to recognize and appreciate the critical role of UNCTAD to help reduce and eventually eliminate the trade gap between the developed and developing countries and to accelerate the rate of economic growth of the developing world. The Group commends UNCTAD for its incisive and independent economic research on global economic issues and encourages UNCTAD to

continue to support developing countries in their efforts to design and implement comprehensive, integrated and coherent national trade and development strategies and movement in the value chain.

12. Last but not least, the Group looks forward to an engaged participation at the 60th session of the Trade and Development Board and to support efforts aimed at enhancing UNCTAD's role in the evolution of a stronger global consensus on issues falling within its mandate. UNCTAD's mandate and its universal membership make it a valuable forum for development dialogue, for a more inclusive global development.

* *Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jamaica, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Venezuela and Zimbabwe*