

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

Opening Plenary
General statements by regional groups
Speaker: G77 and China

Monday, 16 September 2013

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**GROUP OF 77 & CHINA
G E N E V A**

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Miguel Carbo Benites,
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the WTO,
on behalf of the Group of 77 & China, at the sixty session of the
Trade and Development Board - Inaugural session**

Monday, 16 September 2013

H.E. Mr. Triyono Wibowo (Indonesia), President of the Trade and Development Board,
Mr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD,
H.E. Mr. Hamad bin Abdulaziz Al-Kawari, Minister of Culture, Arts and Heritage of Qatar, President
of UNCTAD XIII,
His Excellencies,
Directors,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

1. It is a great honor to address this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Allow me to begin by congratulating Ambassador Wibowo on his election to preside over the Trade and Development Board. I am confident that under your leadership we can successfully face the series of challenges in front of us during the next year, especially the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of UNCTAD and the participation of this organization in crucial processes such as the generation of the post-2015 development framework.

2. I would also like to extend my congratulations to the elected members of the Bureau and especially to Ambassadors Juri Seilenthal and Mukhtar Tileuberdi, who developed an excellent work in their terms as Presidents of the Trade and Development Board, leaving for the new President a well worked agenda on the main aspects of interest in this organization.

3. Finally, I will conclude this introductory part with my greetings and wishes of success to Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD. The words that you have conveyed to us this morning, Mr. Secretary General, confirm us the good signals with which you have assumed this high responsibility position. Since the outset, allow me to convey you the support of the Group of 77 and China for achieving the high goals that you have set for UNCTAD.

Mr. President,

4. It has been over a year since the adoption of the Doha Mandate. While progress has been made in the implementation of its contents, there is still much to do. We must always remember that UNCTAD is the focal point for the integrated treatment of trade and development and interrelated issues in finance, investment, technology and sustainable development. The organization's mandate is quite broad and this makes the expectations of beneficiaries, especially developing countries, even greater.

5. This is why it is necessary to reiterate the call to all UNCTAD's members to support this organization in order to develop the most efficient and expeditious manner to provide to the organization the means necessary to contribute to the fulfillment of these legitimate expectations. Obviously, within this process the financial support is very important, but attention should be paid also to the decision processes.

6. It is not healthy to fall into the inertia of the lowest common denominator, which risks to empty the development agenda, so painstakingly negotiated. To solve the problems related to poverty and development shortcomings, we must be creative, energetic and audacious. We are aware that the problems we face are quite serious and is our obligation to be prepared for them. The credibility of the multilateral system is at stake in issues and processes such as those to be discussed at this meeting.

Mr. President,

7. As advanced earlier, in the year of your chairmanship of the Trade and Development Board we must work on several important processes. On the one hand, we have the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of UNCTAD, an occasion that shall be harnessed to strengthen the set of principles and objectives that motivated its creation and which are as valid now as they were in the beginning. We already have an agreement about the activities that will be undertaken to commemorate this event, now it is time to work together to fill them with substantial elements that allow us to strengthen the image and scope of action of this organization.

8. At the same time, and as a sign of the deep bond between UNCTAD and the group I represent, next year will also mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Group of 77 and China. The objectives for which this group was created are entirely consistent with the mandate of UNCTAD. Hence its interest in contributing to strengthen this organization in its half century of existence.

9. The other process of great importance that must be faced during 2014 will be the contribution of UNCTAD to the generation of the post- 2015 development framework. Without denying the merits of other multilateral process, the post-2015 development framework will be the most important achievement in which our countries will be involved throughout this decade and possibly beyond, depending on the degree of commitment and ambition that we show in their formulation. No one can deny that UNCTAD must have a fundamental role in this process, so hopefully we can continue to work in their development with the support of all member.

Mr. President,

10. I do not want to miss this opportunity to mention the work done by the UNCTADs Secretariat in the preparation of publications. This organization has become for many years a source of reference and guidance for our countries in a variety of fields that are not covered by any other multilateral organization.

11. For constrains of time, I will just refer to the most relevant publication to guide this meeting: the Trade and Development Report 2013, which gives us a clear overview of the current situation of the world economy, with a mention of the possible scenarios to address the recurrent crisis in the world.

12. One of the main messages that can be drawn from this publication is that some developing countries have weathered the crisis better, but they are still vulnerable. In order to improve their options, they should, among other things, boost domestic consumption and promote investment and regional integration. In this process, the regulation of the financial sector also plays a crucial role.

Mr. President,

13. The session that brings us together today has a quite broad agenda, which will allow us to discuss and seek consensus on a variety of topics. While we will have time to deal with them with more detail in each thematic session, I want to take this opportunity to make a few comments on their contents.

14. The high-level segment will be dedicated to analyzing the current state of the global economy and its prospects for the future, focusing in the scenarios for developing countries. For almost five years, we have been witnessing that the global economic recovery is uncertain and there is no clear sign of the economic scenario that will frame the future world. The long duration of this crisis show us that their

causes have been very deep and that the solutions to be adopted must be ambitious. Repeating past mistakes is a scenario that none of our countries is able to afford. Experience shows that the bets must be made on the real economy and the institutional and regulatory framework should be at its service.

15. As it is a tradition in this meeting, the agreed conclusions will address two groups of countries with special needs: the least developed countries and Africa. The Group of 77 and China has a special interest that these conclusions reflect clearly the role that UNCTAD can play both in the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action and in the economic development of Africa.

16. We look with particular interest the work of UNCTAD in the definition of indicators of production capacity of the least developed countries , as well as the contents of the report "Economic Development in Africa 2013" , which shows the potential of intra-African trade to create employment, catalyze investment and promote growth in that continent.

17. Similarly, we look forward to the discussions around the issues of trade, balanced and sustained economic growth, interdependence, investments for development, among others. Well focused, they are all are critical elements that contribute to develop a healthy national, regional and international economic framework, that support the harmonic strengthening of the three pillars of sustainable development. I am sure that the discussions in this meeting will help us to build consensus about the paths to follow to achieve that goal.

18. I do not want to miss this short review of the topics to be treated in this session, without reiterating the call made by the Group of 77 and China at this meeting last year. We believe that the role of UNCTAD in the multilateral arena must be promoted. That is why we look with concern the limited slot available to discuss the monitoring made by UNCTAD to the follow up of the United Nations summits and conferences. This capacity shall be enhanced, especially when we are building the post- 2015 development framework.

Mr. President,

19. I cannot end this speech without mentioning that we are just three months before the Bali Ministerial Conference of the WTO. The forecasts are not the best, we have a fairly small package, which not even remotely reflect the legitimate aspirations of developing countries, and still we do not have any assurance that we can get something tangible in that conference.

20. In this context, we must turn our eyes to organizations, such UNCTAD, which have been often overlooked in the belief that only those organizations working on normative issues are relevant to the countries. UNCTAD has made a hard job interpreting the international economic system and supporting the positive integration of developing countries in it.

21. I think this is a good time to restore the credit and the impulse to UNCTAD as an entity in which we examine the economic issues in all their scope, without forced simplifications, seeking for causes and possible consequences, but especially for solutions. The relevance of organizations like this is beyond doubt and I urge to the participants in this period of sessions to take this opportunity to reflect on how we can work together to achieve a more equitable world.

Thank you.