



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA TO UNOG

REMARKS BY H.E. MS. SABINE BÖHLKE-MÖLLER AMBASSADOR/ PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA, ON AFRICAN GROUP AT THE 63RD SESSION OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD GENEVA, 5 DECEMBER 2016

President of the TDB,
Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD,
Excellencies, Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives,
Distinguished delegates

Mr. President,

I would like to commend, His Excellency Ambassador Alfredo Suescum for the time and energy he invested in the work of the TDB, especially during the negotiations prior and during the 14th Ministerial Meeting of UNCTAD (UNCTAD XIV), leading to adoption of the Nairobi Maafikiano and the Nairobi Azimio. We look forward to his continued engagement in implementing the UNCTAD XIV Nairobi outcomes. Allow me also to thank Secretary-General Kituyi, and his team for the documents before us, as well as for his illustrative opening remarks.

Mr. President,

The African Group aligns itself with the statement by the representative of Argentina, on behalf of the G.77 & China. I would however like to make some remarks on behalf of the African Group.

Mr. President,

This regular session of the Trade and Development Board is crucial as the first, regular session following UNCTAD XIV. We are pleased to note that Agenda Item 7, ***Matters requiring action by the board in the follow-up to the fourteenth session of the Conference***, will be the first item the Session will address. We note that none of the items on the agenda of this session are new and that the African Group has, on prior occasions, expressed its views on them. As such, we will not repeat all our positions but rather limit our comments on follow-up to, and the implementation of the UNCTAD XIV Nairobi outcomes, while we may make additional comments on other items, at a later stage, we would like to address some specific matters requiring action by the Board, as follow;

1. It is our expectations that this Session of the TDB will kick start discussion and give directives on the preparations for the Mid-term review, ***on evaluation and review of UNCTAD's implementation of the quadrennial conference outcome*** in accordance with paragraph 15 of the Nairobi Maafikiano. The group will grateful to exchange views on possible timing and modalities of the mid-term review,

2. We would also like to consider and agree on concrete actions towards the operationalization of the two new **Intergovernmental Expert Groups on financing for development and e-commerce and digital economy**, respectively. As we state earlier, we would like to see fair, balanced and equal treatment of the two. As per paragraphs 10 (r) and (s) of the Nairobi Maafikiano, we look forward to meaningful consideration of the proposals by the Secretariat, in this regard. In relation to the IGEG on e-commerce and digital economy, we would like to emphasize that the proposals should be geared towards addressing digital gap and development dimension of e-commerce. Consequently, the IGEG on FFD should address development finance challenges including policy recommendations on illicit financial flows.

3. At the 74th Working Party on the Strategic Framework and Programme Budget last week, we considered and agreed on the **revised programme budget for the biennium 2016/2017 and 2018/2019** for consideration and follow-up actions by the Board. Once considered by this board, we expect these and other decisions of the Board to be fully implemented.

4. During the deliberations at the Working Party, we have taken note of the realignment of Subprogramme 3 whereby the Commodities functions have been brought under the International Trade Division. It is our hope that this realignment will enhance the delivery of commodities output to the satisfaction of the commodity-dependent developing countries, without negatively affecting the visibility and funding levels.

5. The African Group's would like to reiterate it's position that all UNCTAD mandates, whether emanating from UNCTAD XIV or the outcomes of other relevant international conferences and summits, should be respected and continue to be implemented. In view of this, we call upon the international community to ensure that UNCTAD receive the additional resources to, commensurate with its expanded mandate.

Finally, Mr. President, I would like to reiterate the full support of the Africa Group for UNCTAD, and our best wishes for a successful conclusion of the 63rd TDB session.

I thank you.