

GRULAC UNCTAD
G E N E V A

Statement delivered by the delegation of Guatemala on behalf of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean at the Sixty-fifth Session of the Trade and Development Board

Item 6 – Technology and innovation as effective means of implementation of the Sustainable development

Friday, 8 June 2018 (afternoon session)

Mr. President, H.E. Mr. Ambassador Salim Baddoura (Lebanon),
Ms. Isabelle Durant, Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD,
Ms. Shamika Sirimanne, Director of the Division on Technology and Logistics
Excellencies,
Distinguished Colleagues,

1. Guatemala has the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of Latin America and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC). We thank and congratulate the Secretariat for the publication of the Technology and Innovation Report 2018, that has given us facts, data and analysis that will enrich our discussions today.
2. GRULAC believes that technology can be an important instrument for the implementation of the Agenda 2030 and the attainment of the SDGs as long as proactive policies are adopted to build productive capacities that are relevant to the new digital economy.
3. GRULAC recognizes that there is a need for better comprehension on the new technologies such as advanced robots, artificial intelligence, internet of things, cloud computing, big data analytics and three-dimensional printing. We thank UNCTAD for contributing on the knowledge and comprehension of these technologies and encourages the Secretariat to continue its research and analysis of these topics, focusing on their effect in trade and development.
4. We concur with the Report's conclusion that innovation has a central role in structural transformation of the economies of developing countries, and that it can have a positive effect in the attainment of the SDGs.
5. The Report notes that Latin America was identified as the developing region where a lack of adequate skills is a problem for recruiting firms. We recognize that, like many developing regions, Latin American countries need to reinforce their education systems to respond to the technological advances and focus on building digital skills as necessary.
6. GRULAC commends UNCTAD's contribution to the development of national capacities in science, technology and innovation to enhance development strategies and to improve the competitiveness of the productive sectors in the region. The continuation of this type of capacity-building work, as well as foresight analysis of emerging themes in STI can enable countries in the region to harness the potential of frontier technology for the achievement of the SDGs.

Thank you, Mr. President,

Item 9 - Report of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy

Mr. President, H.E. Mr. Ambassador Salim Baddoura (Lebanon),
Ms. Isabelle Durant, Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD,
Madame Shamika Sirimanne, Director of the Division on Technology and Logistics
Excellencies,
Distinguished Colleagues,

1. Guatemala has the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC). We would like to congratulate the Secretariat for the excellent organization of the E-commerce week and the second session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and Digital Economy which successfully concluded in substantial agreed policy recommendations, which the group supports and expects that they are endorsed on their entirety by the Trade and Development Board.
2. The group notes the active engagement and interest by Members on the topic of the role of digital platforms in e-commerce. The group notes the concerns expressed by several Members regarding the lack of access to global platforms, in particular for Small and Medium Enterprises from developing countries.
3. The group appreciates the work that the Secretariat has done with the electronic trade readiness assessments for Least Developed Countries and recalls agreed conclusion number thirteen that requests the extension of such studies for other developing countries.
4. GRULAC welcomes the establishment of the Working Group on Measuring E-commerce and the Digital Economy, and hopes that the such decision is also endorsed by the trade and development board.
5. The GRULAC would like to suggest that for the next year, it is ensured a more direct connection between the e-commerce week and the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and Digital Economy. The group notes that important data and information shared during the sessions held in the e-commerce week, did not permeate the discussions of the IGE. The group would like to suggest that more synergies are created between both events, and that rapporteurs from e-commerce week sessions might participate as discussants during the IGE.

Thank you, Mr. President.