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**Statement of H.E. Ambassador / Permanent Representative Moshe Neo Kao
65th Executive Session of the Trade and Development Board
July 17, 2017**

Mr. Vice President of the 65th TDB,
Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary General of UNCTAD,
Mr. Paul Akiwumi, Director for Africa, LDCs and Special Programmes,
Excellences,
Distinguished delegates

Mr President,

At the outset, the Lesotho Delegation aligns with the statements delivered by the United Republic of Tanzania on behalf of the G77 and China, Sudan on behalf of African Group and Bangladesh on behalf of the LDCs.

Allow me to also take this opportunity to congratulate the Secretary General on his reappointment and wish him all the best in his efforts in contributing to the development of developing countries especially the LDCs.

The Lesotho delegation would like to express appreciation to the Secretariat for preparing the Report. The Report highlights the activities carried out by the different UNCTAD Divisions in support of Africa as outlined earlier this morning.

We would like to congratulate UNCTAD for convening UNCTAD XIV last July and for providing a platform to deliberate on global economic challenges. Indeed, the conference in Nairobi brought to the fore issues that will impact on policymaking on the continent and provided a platform for policymakers to engage in dialogue on issues of critical importance to Africa such as investment, commodities, trade in services, trade facilitation, regional integration, among others most importantly, stressing that proactive industrial policies must facilitate the shift in employment from low-productivity sectors such as agriculture to higher productivity industrial and modern services sectors

Mr President

We take note of UNCTAD's continued commitment to delivering on the Maafikiano mandate. Lesotho delegation reaffirms the notion that UNCTAD's work on African activities must contribute to the overall objectives of the *Agenda 2063, the Africa we want*. These must entail *inter alia* harnessing investment for structural transformation, leveraging technology for Africa's economic transformation through ICT to enhance competitiveness, promoting sustained economic growth that foster structural transformation as well as addressing climate change by promoting climate-friendly trade and production strategies in order to leverage trade's potential to contribute to economic development. We further express appreciation for all efforts and initiatives towards the establishment of the CFTA, noting with appreciation and commend the role of the Regional Office in Addis Ababa.

We further take note of UNCTAD's continued commitment to supporting Africa to tackle its development challenges which are reflected in the wide range of activities undertaken in 2016 at national, regional and continental levels. Lesotho as an LDC and LLDC applauds UNCTAD in assisting Africa to improve her competitiveness as highlighted in Section C of the report. The Lesotho delegation recognizes the impact and importance of the Empratec programme and to this end, aims to be part of the programme to stimulate entrepreneurship particularly the youth and women by leverage the use of ICT to promote competitiveness as outlined in paras 62 to 63 in the report. We also strive to graduate with momentum from the LDC status by 2024 in line with the UNCTAD Report.

Mr President,

In conclusion, chair, the Lesotho delegation expresses appreciation to development partners for the UNCTAD regular and extra budgetary funds. We call upon more contributions to assist Africa in her vision to achieving the SDGs and *Agenda 2063, the Africa we want*.

Thank you chair.