Statement
By
H. E. Mr. Esmaeil Baghaei Hamaneh
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations Office in Geneva
Before
The 67th Session of the Trade and Development Board
Geneva, 7 September 2020

Mr. President,
Secretary-General Mukhisa Kituyi,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

My delegation would like to thank you, Mr. President, and your team in the Secretariat for organizing this second segment of the TDB and are looking forward to a fruitful debate and meaningful outcome.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by Zambia and Iraq on behalf of G77 and China

Mr. President,

Today's world has to deal with accumulating and overlapping crisis ranging from continuing insecurity and political instability caused by unresolved conflicts and foreign interventions of all sorts, environmental degradation and climate change, massive human displacement, increasing natural and man-made disasters as well as sweeping poverty and famine mainly in the South.

The Covid-19 viral pandemic, as a shocking challenge, has only exacerbated the situation by further deepening the ever-increasing economic gap and development divide between and within societies. While the constrains dictated by the global pandemic have affected all countries regardless of their size or wealth, the developing and least developed nations have been bearing the brunt of abrupt sharp decline in economic growth and commercial activities. The responses to tackle the pandemic should take into account the needs of all, especially the least developed and developing nations. In particular, we need to ensure universal, affordable and timely access to medicine and medical products and devices as well as vaccines as a top priority.

Mr. President,

Only through genuine human solidarity and true sense of shared responsibility can the community of States manage to overcome these extremely consequential
challenges. That's why multilateralism and multilateral approaches are critical in dealing with the multi-faceted old and new challenges we face.

The prospect is not so heartening, though, as the reckless whims of radical unilateralism continue to weaken the fundamentals of post war legal and institutional constructs by ravaging the well-established multilateral institutions that are the product of several decades of costly trial and error between and among nations, and by undermining the rule of law and normative order that have long underpinned inter-State interactions including in the area of global trade and economy.

Mr. President,

Unilateral coercive measures in the form of economic, trade and banking sanctions and restrictions against developing countries as a political leverage to pressurize the targeted nations require urgent attention by all responsible stakeholders, in particular this body. Unilateral economic sanctions and embargoes are not only illegal and wrongful but also immoral and criminal due to their indiscriminate genocidal impacts on the life and livelihood of huge populations.

The immediate and long term economic and humanitarian consequences of unilateral sanctions on hundreds of millions of people across the 4 continents including against my own country Iran cannot be underestimated. There should be no illusion; the economic sanctions, as inhuman and unlawful as they are, are deliberately designed to affect maximum number of the targeted populations and to hit them hard. That's the reason why food and medicine and other basic commodities constitute the principal soft targets for inflicting pain and suffering on the ordinary people. The so-called ‘humanitarian exception’ is, then, a travesty coined by the masters of sanctions to cover up their extremely evil and unlawful scheme.

Mr. President,

The UNCTAD is expected to play its unique role in empowering the developing countries to tackle the external shocks and pressures through its 3 pillars of Technical Cooperation, Consensus Building and Research Analysis. To address the old and emerging challenges, the UNCTAD needs to act swiftly and innovatively. The upcoming UNCTAD 15 Ministerial Conference will be a critical test for UNCTAD’s relevance and efficiency in finding workable solutions for the serious challenges the developing nations face, among them the increasing technological/digital divide further aggravated by advances in artificial intelligence.

Promoting and facilitating transfer of technology has long been an irreplaceable component of the policies to reduce technological gap. We need to craft solutions, within UNCTAD, to assist developing countries on transfer of technology and knowledge-sharing for development. The UNCTAD should further provide support for improving domestic absorptive capacities and stimulate local innovation as well as international efforts to develop a supportive and conducive environment for technology transfer.

Last but not least, we welcome the progress made in preparations for the UNCTAD 15 and appreciate the efforts of the host country Barbados in this regard.

I thank you, Mr. President.