

**Statement by Cuba on behalf of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean
at the Sixty-fourth Session of the Trade and Development Board**

Item 6: "Economic development in Africa: Tourism for transformative and inclusive growth"
Wednesday, 13 September 2017 (morning session)

Mr. President, H.E. Mr. Tudor Ulianoschi (Moldova),
Mr. Isabelle Durand, Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD,
Mr. Paul Akiwumi, Director, Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes,
Excellencies,
Distinguished colleagues and officials of the Organization,

1. GRULAC member countries of the Group of 77 and China associate ourselves with the address of Tanzania on behalf of the Group.
2. Mr. Chairman, GRULAC welcomes the presentation of the "Africa Economic Development Report 2017: Tourism for Transformative and Inclusive Growth" and commends UNCTAD's work in support of Africa and its concerns and needs in areas such as the structural transformation and the fight against vulnerabilities.
3. As recognized in the Report, tourism is an important sector in many African economies and has therefore been included in the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the Tourism Action Plan under the New Partnership for Africa's Development. The importance of this sector to the continent is also recognized at the sub-regional and national levels as most African countries have national plans that identify the policies and priorities of tourism development.
4. GRULAC agrees with the Report's approach that tourism can provide opportunities, economic diversification towards productive sectors and activities that can provide livelihoods, thus fostering the structural change. Tourism is an important economic, social and cultural driver in Africa, particularly in remote rural areas and represents one of every 14 jobs on the continent, where women and young people play a key role in this item of the economy, as indicated in the Report.
5. Our Group believes that African tourism must be based on sound interregional and intraregional policies that promote strong cross-sectoral links. The report identifies the main barriers to unlocking the potential of tourism in Africa, helping to structurally transform the continent's economy, and provides policy recommendations on how to overcome them.

6. In short, we consider that tourism can be an engine of inclusive growth and a complement of the development strategies aimed at fostering economic diversification and structural transformation within an appropriate context. In many developing and least developed countries, tourism is a viable and sustainable economic development option and, in some of them, the main source of foreign exchange. Focusing primarily on poverty eradication can directly benefit the most vulnerable groups through the use of local people in tourism enterprises, the provision of goods and services to tourists, the management of small enterprises and community enterprises, among other actions, with the consequent positive impact on the reduction of poverty.

7. Mr. Chairman, GRULAC commends the activities undertaken by UNCTAD in support of Africa and expresses its readiness to support the work of the Organization in this area.

8. Likewise, you can count on the support of the Latin American and Caribbean Group in your efforts to meet the challenges that lie ahead at this 64th Session of the Trade and Development Board.

Thank you very much.