STATEMENT BY ANGOLA ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP AT THE SIXTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE UNCTAD TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Item 13. UNCTAD contributions to the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields.

President of the Trade and Development Board, Ambassador Federico Villegas, Secretary-General of UNCTAD Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD Madam Isabelle Durant, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,

I am honoured to present this statement on behalf of the African Group.

The Africa Group aligns itself with the statement presented by Zambia on behalf of the G77 and China.

Mr. President,

Way before the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic generated crisis, prospects for meeting the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development targets for the majority of developing countries was declining, prompting the United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres to call for a ‘step up of our efforts’. In its analyses and conclusions, UNCTAD had stated that the SDG funding gap for developing countries hovered around US$2.5 trillion per year. With this surging COVID 19 paralysis, therefore, the target of meeting 2030 Agenda, a decade shy away, is undoubtedly going to be a tall order for the continent.

In the spirit of leaving no one behind, time is now for UNCTAD, the focal point within the United Nations system for the integrated treatment of trade and development and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment, and sustainable development to candidly, address the two major issues at the nexus of development, Trade and Aid for development.

Mr President,

The international trade plays a fundamental role in contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UNCTAD research placed Africa’s contribution to global trade in 2019 at a mere 2.7% by value, yet international trade is one of the main drivers for inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction, as noted in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. Regrettably, the UNCTAD WIR 2020, forecasts FDI flows to Africa to fall by 25 to 40%, notwithstanding that in 2019 FDI flows to Africa already declined by 10 per cent to $45 billion.

Furthermore, low commodity prices faced by most countries on the continent is hampering efforts towards domestic resource mobilisation in an environment where additional resources is needed to respond to the ravaging effects of Covid pandemic. In this situation,
Africa has been left with only one window of last resort which is borrowing. This is however, of particular concern to the Group more especially that the scenario is happening at the backdrop of an increase in debt unsustainability on the continent, and the attendant debt distress.

Like Trade, Aid, if redesigned to a new architecture model aligned to the National Development Plans, plays a fundamental role in facilitating development. Whilst, we acknowledge, our partners that have over the years committed ODA to this cause, it’s proportion to developing countries has remained way below levels agreed to in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2015 Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) on financing for development. Of particular note is that the bulk of the aid flows have largely been going towards humanitarian emergencies and conflict.

**Mr. President**

The African Group recognises UNCTAD’s work and contributions in the area of science and technology. UNCTAD over the years has been responsible for the organization of the meetings of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council. We encourage UNCTAD to continue its vital role in this important commission which can be used to bridge the technological gap between developed and developing countries and accelerate the process of technological transfer.

The African Group recalls the substantial work done by UNCTAD towards achieving the goals of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) aimed at overcoming the structural challenges faced by Least Developed Countries (LDCs), many of whom are in Africa, in order to eradicate poverty, achieve structural transformation which will enable them to graduate from the least developed country category. Indeed, as we prepare for the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in 2021 in Doha, the Group would like to see UNCTAD’s role in support of LDCs reinforced through the outcomes of the UNCTAD 15 which can feed into the LDCV Conference.

**Mr. President**

Given UNCTAD’s role as the focal point, within the United Nations system, for the integrated treatment of trade and development and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment, and sustainable development, it is the Africa group’s contention therefore that UNCTAD is better placed to lead global efforts to assist developing countries in Africa, and elsewhere, to ride the current crisis and champion the development aspirations, towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Africa Group therefore calls for further strengthening of UNCTAD’s three pillars of work, consensus-building, policy-oriented analysis, and technical cooperation, as we go into the UNCTAD XV Ministerial Conference, to effectively respond to these complex challenges including:

- promoting the proposed series of reform measures to make debt, capital and banks work for development, tackling illicit financial flows, capitalising of development and public banks, establishment of global sustainable development fund and global SDG-
related concessional lending programme (TDR 2019 - the bold action to finance a global green new deal).

- Promoting policy options for structural transformation and diversification of economies; new models for aid architecture as well as enhancement in share of global trade as a means of implementation for the global partnership for sustainable development, SDG 17.

I thank you.