Statement by
Her Excellency Mrs. Margarida Izata
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Angola
on Behalf of the African Group
at the Sixty-Seventh Session of the Trade and Development Board

Agenda item 8: Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in support of Africa

Geneva, 7-9 September 2020
Palais des Nations, Room XX

President of the Trade and Development Board Ambassador Federico Villegas,
Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD, Madam Isabelle Durant,
Director of the Division on Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes,
Mr. Paul Akiwumi,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

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

At the outset the African Group commends the work of UNCTAD in support of Africa
and recognizes it’s tireless, consistent and coherent work in harnessing international
trade and its interrelated areas as a means to achieve sustainable development and the
Sustainable Development Goals as well as its commitment to achieving prosperity for
all.

Mr. President,
As we all know, African countries continuous to face persistent and emerging challenges
in ensuring their economic growth and some of them are struggling to deliver the basic
social, economic and structural conditions. These challenges include among others, fluctuating currencies, commodity dependence, increasing debt, growing energy demands, slow economic growth and challenges of climate change. Building resilience to these challenges is critical to achieving inclusive sustainable development.

The ongoing coronavirus pandemic has put into sharp focus the inevitable linkages between health issues and economic and commercial activity, including trade. Therefore, more than ever before, African Countries are in need of the international community, including UNCTAD’s support, to overcome their multiple challenges.

Mr. President,

We recognize the work of UNCTAD in many areas such as:

Reducing the vulnerability of African Countries economies to commodity dependence and seeking opportunities to increase value addition in their economic activities based on commodities. UNCTAD.

Supporting countries in Africa in improving their competitiveness by assisting them in improving the functioning of markets in Africa, enhance the efficiency of their State apparatus and achieving a better distribution of functions between States and markets. UNCTAD assists countries in Africa in creating a favourable environment to benefit from opportunities created by information and communications technology and in using such technology to promote trade through e-commerce.

Providing expertise in developing and designing the African Continental Free Trade Area country business index, a perception-based questionnaire aimed at analysing the business environment and opportunities and obstacles in countries as perceived by business actors. In collaboration with the International Trade Centre, UNCTAD has advocated for the empowerment of the most vulnerable social groups, namely, women and youth.

Mr. President,

UNCTAD published the second creative economy outlook and country profiles report, including profiles of 23 countries in Africa, which showed that there had been significant growth in the creative economy in developing countries and the least developed countries and that the sector could make a valuable contribution to the achievement of the Goals.
In 2019, Train for Trade delivered capacity-building and training for 285 trade practitioners and policymakers (117 women) from 41 countries in Africa, training specialists on issues such as trade in services statistics and merchandise trade statistics, in collaboration with the United Nations Statistics Division and the World Trade Organization.

Mr. President,

We recognize that UNCTAD is working in cooperation with the Economic Commission for Africa and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNCTAD on developing a measurement framework for indicator 16.4.1 of the SDG. The project involves defining and designing measurement tools to capture both illegal and illicit activities which, by their nature, are deliberately hidden.

As a custodian of indicator 16.4.1, UNCTAD is working on defining, estimating and disseminating statistics on illicit financial flows in the context of developing economies in Africa, which are some of the economies most affected by this developmental challenge. In this context the Group welcomes the guidelines designed for measuring illicit inflows and outflows of financial activities.

I thank you, Mr. President.