STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA AT THE SIXTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD 7 – 9 SEPTEMBER 2020

Agenda Item 17 (a): Report by the Chair of the Advisory Body set up in accordance with paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action on the implementation of courses by the secretariat in 2019–2020 and their relevant impact; and the appointment of members of the Advisory Body

President of the Trade and Development Board Ambassador Federico Villegas,
Ambassador Michael Gaffey, Chair of the Advisory Body
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Kenya aligns with the statement that has been delivered by Zambia on behalf of the G77+China, and commends the Chair of the Advisory Body for the comprehensive report.

Kenya also wishes to convey profound appreciation to the Advisory Body set up under paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action, for honouring Kenya, and in particular the University of Nairobi, as the multi-year host for regional courses for African economies for the period 2019 - 2023.

Kenya was proud to host the 41st Regional Course under the P-166 program from 25 March to 5 April 2019. This course brought together 21 participants from 27 countries across Africa. The diversity of the participants allowed for profound sharing of experiences on development and implementation of different economic policies, while benefitting from the expertise and vast experience of UNCTAD facilitators.

This regional course provided an invaluable opportunity for the participants, who were senior government officials and policy-makers in their respective capacities, to discuss and share views on topical economic issues at the regional and global levels, as they explore their implications for development strategies at the national level. The course considered the emerging views regarding the nature and role of the developmental state in light of emerging challenges at a global level and rising opportunities at the regional level, more specifically, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Further, this course focused on key issues on the International Economic Agenda such as: development policies and the role of international trade and finance in a globalized world; harnessing the benefits of trade in the changing dynamics in the multilateral trading system, trade logistics, regional trade agreements and digital economy; and enhancing productive capacities through foreign direct investment, enterprise development and science, technology and innovation.

In addition, the program delved into the interdependence between national, regional and international economic realities and their policy implications. The participants
discussed the pursuit of national and international development policies and strategies in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as the African Union Agenda 2063 - the Africa We Want.

In terms of the changing dynamics of the multilateral trading system, the participants deliberated on the role of trade and technology as an enabler of development. They also addressed best practices and policy norms for harnessing the benefits of trade, including the evolving digital economy. The course highlighted the changing dynamics of trade negotiations at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals and their impact on trade agreements.

Furthermore, participants analysed the features of enterprise development, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) and their development implications, and the policy challenges they raise, in the context of broader development strategies, and their relationship with enterprise and industrial policies aimed at enhancing productive capacity.

As FDI is mainly a complement to domestic investment, the facilitators and participants discussed how domestic productive capacities can be enhanced through local enterprise development and how promoting technological upgrading and innovation capacity can enhance integration in the global value chains.

Mr. President

We believe that this regional course has been impactful as the participants have been empowered with the necessary knowledge and skills to pursue a greater level of development through economic and trade policies formulation and implementation.

Kenya therefore commends UNCTAD for mounting these regional courses for the developing world and economies in transition and most importantly, for being an invaluable partner in technical cooperation, training and capacity building. Kenya is grateful as the host of UNCTAD’s Regional Course for African economies, and equally grateful to the coordinator of the P-166 for successfully coordinating the program, together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the University of Nairobi. The lessons learnt and the experience gained in the first course will certainly be handy in better hosting the forthcoming course.

I thank you.