Statement by the Russian Federation  
at the 67th session of the Trade and Development Board of UNCTAD  
(second segment)  
Geneva, 7-9 September 2020  

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

Dear Mr. President,  
Dear Mr. Secretary General of UNCTAD,  
Dear colleagues!  

The report of the Secretary-General to the Board provides a detailed overview of the diverse activities of UNCTAD in support of Africa from May 2019 to March 2020. We highly appreciate and support the work of UNCTAD, in particular, with regard to the integration processes within the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), investment attractiveness and strengthening productive capacities of the region.  

The success of the AfCFTA negotiations on, inter alia, intellectual property rights, investment and competition policy will determine whether Africa could benefit from the economic integration as well as create new beneficial opportunities for collaboration with third countries. We support the intensification of UNCTAD's technical cooperation on these issues.  

We would like to suggest that future reports contain greater emphasis on the contribution of the UNCTAD’s support of Africa to the achievement of the SDGs. At the time of persistence of the COVID-19 pandemic, this issue becomes particularly relevant.  

UNCTAD's comprehensive assistance to Africa makes it possible to have access to high-quality expertise and innovative ideas, which we also try to use in building partnership between the Russian Federation and African States.
As the first Russian-African Summit (October 2019) confirmed, Russia and Africa share a mutual interest in further enhancing cooperation in a wide variety of areas - industry, transport, energy, food security, health and others.

On the Russian side, coordination of the cooperation with African countries at the bilateral and multilateral levels is entrusted to the Secretariat of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum under the aegis of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Association of Economic Cooperation with African Countries was established in June this year. In the near future, a common strategy for Russian-African economic cooperation will be developed, which we will make public.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant damage to the economies of African States. According to the World Bank, Africa’s real GDP will fall by 3.4% this year, which could lead to economic losses of $190 billion.

Russia provides all possible and selfless aid to Africa by supplying test systems, personal protective equipment, medical devices and medicines.

Russia supports African countries in their efforts to increase food security with a view to alleviate the crisis related to the loss of income and disruption of food supply chains caused by COVID-19 pandemic. In cooperation with the World Food Programme (WFP), food was delivered to Burkina Faso, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe. An additional annual contribution of $10 million is expected to be made to the WFP Fund (recipient countries are Burundi, Djibouti, Somalia, Sierra Leone and the Central African Republic). $10 million contribution will be provided to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to combat locusts in East Africa (recipient countries are Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia - $ 3 million per each country - and South Sudan - $1 million).

Russia is committed to pursue its efforts to assist African countries bilaterally and through multilateral institutions, to deepen and strengthen trade and investment cooperation.

Thank you.