

**Statement by H.E. Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail Elamin, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sudan on behalf of the African Group at the Tenth Session of the Trade and Development Commission 12-16 November 2018**

**Mr. Chair,**

**Mr. Dan OWOKO, Chief of the Cabinet, UNCTAD,**

**Excellences,**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

**Mr. Chair.**

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group. The Group fully associates itself to the statement delivered by the distinguished Representative of Pakistan on behalf of G.77 and China.

Allow me Mr. **Chair** to congratulate you and the members of the bureau on your election. The African Group is fully assured that your able leadership will contribute to the success of this Trade and Development Commission Session. I would like to like to thank Ambassador Karda of Dijipotti for her efforts in steering the committee for the last year. I would like also to welcome Ms.Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Director, Division on International Trade and Commodities, UNCTAD and wish her a success on her new task.

The African Group notices with appreciation the comprehensive support UNCTAD provides to its members in the area of Trade Facilitation. A large number of African countries are benefiting from the Empowerment Programme for National Trade Facilitation Committees, and we very much look forward to the upcoming First African Forum for National Trade Facilitation Committees in Addis Ababa end of November this year.

The group values the efforts made by UNCTAD in disseminating policy and technical analysis highlighting the importance of trade facilitation. Furthermore, we encourage UNCTAD to continue its important work as a convener for intergovernmental discussions, including the various Fora for national Trade Facilitation Committees, on trade facilitation opportunities and challenges to highlight the importance of this issue in the context of the sustainable development agenda.

The Group also urges UNCTAD, and development partners, including developed country members in collaboration with UNCTAD to continue to provide and redouble this support, particularly in the implementation phase considering that since the WTO TFA has entered into force, deadlines for the implementation has started ticking for all countries.

**Mr. Chair,**

The African Group welcomes UNCTAD's continued efforts aimed at building the capacity of the region in the field of sustainable freight transport as well as corridor management. This work is important and needs to be supported and encouraged.

Under its Project “Building capacities of developing countries to shift towards sustainable freight transport”, UNCTAD has successfully rolled out its activities in East Africa. By working closely with local stakeholders, namely, the Northern Corridor Transit and Transport Coordination Authority (NCTCA) and the Central Corridor Transit Transport Facilitation Agency (CTTFA), UNCTAD’s technical assistance is promoting ownership by the beneficiary countries and context-specific approaches that are tailored to the needs of the countries and the region.

The African Group notes with appreciation the UNCTAD-UNEP collaboration that helped the Northern Corridor to develop its Green Freight Programme. This programme is now integrated into the NCTTA Master Plan and will be mainstreamed into the NCTCA’s long term Sustainable Freight Transport Strategy. The Group also takes note in particular of the current work aimed at helping the Central Corridor articulate its Sustainable Freight Transport strategy that will be integrated in the Central Corridor Transit Transport Facilitation Agency Master Plan.

The African Group welcomes the new collaboration between UNCTAD and the Islamic Development Bank relating to the commercialization and the management of the Trans-Saharan Road corridor linking Algeria, Tunisia, Niger, Nigeria, Mali and Chad.

The African Group welcomes ongoing UNCTAD research and analytical work to assist developing countries in the understanding of the often complex international legal regime for transport, with a view to assessing the merits of ratification of relevant legal instruments and, as applicable, their effective implementation and application at the national level.

The Group thanks UNCTAD for supporting countries through the ASYCUDA Programme, used by 43 countries and territories of the continent.

In the context of the Regional Course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda, the next regional course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda, focusing on African economies, will be held in the first quarter of 2019 at the University of Nairobi, Kenya. In this regard, The Group appreciates UNCTAD’s Notification on this matter and for offering our mid-government officials such opportunities, to be inducted in economic issues on UNCTAD’s various areas of work. These courses have been highly regarded in the past, as one of the main vehicles for boosting human capital and strengthening policy formulation, among mid-government officials.

In conclusion, the Group looks forward to the constructive and fruitful discussions.

**I thank you Mr. Chair.**