

**GRULAC UNCTAD**  
**G E N E V A**

**Statement by H.E. Ms. Rhoda M. Jackson**  
**Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas**  
**on behalf of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean at the**  
**Eight Session of the Trade and Development Commission**

*Geneva, 4 November 2016*

Mr. President, Mr. Faïçal Souissi (Morocco)

Mr. Guillermo Valles, Director, Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities  
Ambassadors,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Mr. Chair,

1. It is my pleasure and distinct honour on behalf of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) to extend warm congratulations on your election as Chair of the Eighth Session of the Commission on Trade and Development, as well as on the election of the other members of the Bureau. Chair, you can count on GRULAC's support and positive engagement throughout the Session.

2. Since the last meeting of the Trade and Development Commission in May 2015 much has transpired in UNCTAD most significantly is the successful conclusion of UNCTAD XIV. The Nairobi Maafikiano speaks to the revitalization of the UNCTADs intergovernmental machinery. The Trade and Development Commission is a key component of this machinery, as it serves to consolidate the work of the various expert meetings.

3. With regard to these expert meetings, GRULAC wishes to recall paragraph 95 of the Maafikiano which states that "Expert group meetings should be improved by ensuring through and within all available means, more participation of experts from developing countries, and by exploring all links with the Sustainable Development Goals, thus better supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. They should lead to concrete outcomes for consideration by all countries. Expert group meetings should be more distinct from the discussions in the Trade and Development Board".

4. In that regard, GRULAC welcomes the reports emanating from the various expert meetings and wishes to express its gratitude to the Groups and to the Secretariat for their work in the preparation of these Reports. The work of these Groups will undoubtedly, contribute to and assist with the formulation of policies in the interest of GRULAC member states.

5. One example of this is the development of regional **Transport Observatories** which provide a useful means of obtaining factual data on transit and transport issues. Networks of Transport Observatories could provide a useful tool to compare transport services and learn from best practices. Experiences gained by GRULAC member countries through an Inter-American Development Bank project on developing Freight Logistics Observatories in Latin America and the Caribbean could be shared by member countries within UNCTAD for wider applicability. Likewise experiences from other regions could also be shared with GRULAC.

6. Another example is the session on **Links between trade and gender in the services sector** held during the Multiyear expert meeting on Trade as a Tool for the Economic Empowerment of Women. The session discussed measures for ensuring that opportunities for increased participation by women in the sector prove beneficial to them and lead to the adoption of gender-sensitive policies in the sector.

7. The services sector has taken on greater meaning in GRULAC countries post industrialization. For that reason, the Multi-year expert meeting on Trade, Services and Development is of critical importance for the region. GRULAC notes that the experts emphasized the importance of sound institutional mechanisms enabling multi-stakeholder consultation and coordination, involving ministries, the private sector, civil society and consumers, to identify challenges faced and develop policy solutions in a holistic manner, linking domestic policies and negotiating positions. This engagement ought to be led by the highest government level to demonstrate political commitment, ensure effectiveness and be embedded in existing agencies to reduce resource requirements.

8. The Group commends UNCTAD for the relevance, high quality and successful impact of its cross-divisional training and capacity building programmes, in particular the Course on **key Issues on the International Economic Agenda** (also known as the P166 Course) and the TrainForTrade programme from which many GRULAC member states have benefitted. The mandate of these programmes has been reaffirmed by Member states in the Nairobi Maafikiano and these programmes should be strongly supported with the call for resources to be reestablished to their previous levels, in order to respond to the increasingly constant demands from member states.

Mr. Chair,

9. Mindful of the inherent pillars of this Organization, GRULAC reiterates the need to further strengthen the structure and functioning of the technical assistance framework to ensure that funds are utilized efficiently with increased delivery and greater coherence among UNCTAD's work, in particular, in areas such as debt management, customs management, globalization and development strategies, investment facilitation, non-tariff measures among others.

10. Finally, Mr. Chair, GRULAC recognizes that the strengthening of UNCTADs intergovernmental machinery can only be effective through an increase in UNCTADs financial and human resources. At the close of UNCTAD XIV in Nairobi, GRULAC called for "a deeper commitment by all stakeholders to a more inclusive and sustainable development framework designed for all." As we embark on the journey ahead, we pause to renew this call and recommit ourselves to this process.

11. The members of GRULAC who are part of the Group of 77 and China associate ourselves with the statement made by the distinguished Chair of the G77 and China, Ambassador Marcelo Cima.

I thank you.