

**Statement by
H.E. Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail Elamin, Ambassador and Permanent
Representative of Sudan
on behalf of the African Group at the Ninth Session of the Trade and
Development Commission
27 November to 1st December 2017**

**Ms. President,
Deputy Secretary General of UNCTAD,
Excellences,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

Ms. President.

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 Ambassador of Tanzania on behalf of G.77 and China.

Allow me **Ms. President** to congratulate you and the members of the bureau on your election. The African Group is full assured that your able leadership will contribute to the success of this Trade and Development Commission Session. The African Group would like to thank Ms. Isabelle Durant, Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD for her opening remarks.

Ms. President.

The African Group would like to thank UNCTAD for the its technical assistance and capacity building programs provided to the member states specially in the field of trade facilitation which assisted the beneficiary countries in establishing and organizing National Trade Facilitation Committees as well as supporting the countries through the ASYCUDA program and the UNCTAD Trade Portal initiative. The Group encourages UNCTAD to continue its effort in collaboration with other international organization to deliver efficient and coordinated technical assistance and capacity building programs for the benefit of the developing countries.

The African Group acknowledges UNCTAD's assistance on preparing trade policy frameworks and Services Policy Reviews for some African Countries. These countries have now embarked on implementation of these policies and will further need UNCTAD's financial and technical support. Trade policy can help African countries to achieve Sustainable Development Goals although much more needed to be done especially in addressing the supply bottlenecks. Linking trade policy and productive capacity and structural transformation is very crucial for the achievement of SDGs.

Ms. President.

The African Group would like to thank UNCTAD for its support to the African Member States through the African Union Commission in the negotiations of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA). This support contributed to the final adoption of Modalities for goods and services liberalization in June this year by African Ministers of Trade. UNCTAD is encouraged to continue its support to the CFTA negotiations.

Ms. President.

The African Group expresses its deep concerns that Africa's share in the International Trade eroded to 2.2%. In absolute terms for example, Africa's total exports fell by nearly half from \$639.7 billion in 2012 to \$348.5 billion in 2016. To simply recover from this loss, and develop resilience in future, Africa will need to invest more in the development of robust supply capacity to trade in upgraded products especially services and manufactured goods because they are less vulnerable to external shocks. In this regard UNCTAD's support to Africa must be strengthened and put in the context of the continent's participation in international trade.

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

I thank you Ms. President.