

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

Trade and Development Board, sixtieth session
Geneva, 16–27 September 2013

Plenary on Item 12 b:
Report of the UNCTAD Public Symposium

Speaker: South Africa

Tuesday, 24 September 2013

*Not checked against delivery **

* This statement is made available in the language and form in which it was received. The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNCTAD.



**STATEMENT BY SOUTH AFRICA ON AGENDA ITEM 12(B): REPORT
OF THE FOURTH UNCTAD PUBLIC SYMPOSIUM ON THE NEW
ECONOMIC APPROACHES FOR A COHERENT POST-2015
DEVELOPMENT AGENDA
24 SEPTEMBER 2013**

Mr President

South Africa aligns itself fully with the statements made by the Distinguished Representatives of Ecuador, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and Ethiopia, on behalf of the African Group.

My delegation is grateful to the UNCTAD Secretariat for a most useful and comprehensive report on the 4th UNCTAD Public Symposium on new economic approaches for a coherent post-2015 agenda.

At the outset, Mr President, for South Africa, it is imperative that the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015 should

remain the paramount global development priority in the remaining period, prior to the target date for the attainment of the MDGs. South Africa's starting point therefore remains the need to accelerate achievement of the MDGs, including the flow of resources for this purpose, and the need to build on the MDGs beyond 2015, including addressing and "gaps" that are present in the existing UN development agenda.

My delegation has noted, with interest, the outcomes of the 4th UNCTAD multi-stakeholder Public Symposium which is the subject of the Report under discussion. In order to ensure coherence, the issue of trade, which is inextricably linked with inclusive and sustainable development, must underpin the UN development agenda beyond 2015. South Africa therefore concurs with the observation made by participants in the Symposium that the post-2015 development agenda needs to be comprehensive, including exploring the possible impact of new and emerging challenges on sustainable development. These include, high unemployment rates, particularly among the youth, capital flows and commodity price volatility, climate change, food security and access to basic services.

South Africa is committed to a fully inclusive inter-governmental process for the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda, with measurable and implementable goals, taking into account different national realities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities. In this context, Mr President, the development agenda beyond 2015 must of necessity be predicated on the Principles of Rio, especially the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR).

South Africa expects developed countries to engage in a genuine global partnership for development, honouring existing commitments that have been made in various international fora, including those reflected in the outcomes of relevant UN conferences and summits.

The primary focus of the development agenda beyond 2015 should be on the eradication of poverty, addressing income inequalities and unemployment, while achieving a balance between the environmental, economic and social dimensions of sustainable development.

Additionally, from a regional perspective, the UN development agenda should be closely aligned with regional priorities. With regard to Africa, it is important that it should enhance existing continent-wide initiatives, such as NEPAD, whose programmes are aligned to the MDGs.

My delegation notes the calls in the Report for targets included in the post-2015 development framework to be accompanied by appropriate instruments to implement them. Indeed, the Means of Implementation, including predictable and sustainable financial resources and access to, and transfer of, appropriate technologies and capacity building, are of critical importance for the development agenda beyond 2015.

South Africa notes the Report's focus on calls for new economic approaches for development to inform the post-2015 development agenda. These should be based on lessons learnt, including the experience of the implementation of the MDGs, as well a thorough analysis of how the current global financial architecture should be revised in order to better

serve the needs of developing countries. This includes a review of international governance principles, in order to accord greater voice and participation to developing countries in the decision-making processes in global International Financial Institutions. In this regard, my delegation commends the extensive analytical work conducted by UNCTAD which reflects the extent to which the current financial framework has not anchored development. South Africa urges UNCTAD to scale up its work in this important area, in support of Member States' ongoing participation in the discourse on the post-2015 development agenda.

My delegation also supports calls reflected in the Report for the review of international agreements, including those of the WTO and regional as well as bilateral trade and investment agreements, to ensure that they do not hinder development, but, rather, are shaped in a manner that supports global efforts for inclusive and sustainable development. The necessary policy space for developing countries to design appropriate financial and macro-economic policies which place their economies on a sustainable development trajectory is an overriding consideration.

In conclusion, Mr President, in order to strengthen the global partnership for development, South Africa believes that the UN development agenda beyond 2015 should reflect the highest common ambition of Member States, building, in particular, on the Principles of Rio and the historic commitments and obligations that have been made to date. The input of UNCTAD in this regard is welcomed.

I thank you for your kind attention.