

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

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

Opening Plenary

Speaker: Nepal

Monday, 16 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.

Check against delivery

Statement by H.E. Shanker D. Bairagi, Ambassador/ Permanent Representative of Nepal at the Opening Ceremony of the Sixtieth Session of Trade and Development Board, UNCTAD, 16 September, 2013

Mr. President,
Hon'ble Minister for Culture, Arts and Heritage of the State of Qatar,
Mr. Secretary General,
Excellences,
Distinguished Delegates,

I associate myself with the statements made by Ecuador on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, Iraq on behalf of the Asian Group, Benin, on behalf of the LDCs and Paraguay on behalf of the LLDCs.

At the outset, I wish to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election. I extend my delegation's full support to you in discharging your responsibilities during the course of this session of TDB. I am confident that we will be able to achieve a great deal under your leadership. I also congratulate the new Bureau members on their election.

We thank H.E. Mr. Hamad bin Abdulaziz Al-Kawari for his special address.

My delegation thanks the Secretary General Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi for his statement and heartily welcomes him as the new head of this institution. We extend our gratitude to his predecessor Dr. Supachai for his contributions to UNCTAD.

My delegation also commends the entire UNCTAD staff for their continued hard work and commitment.

Mr. President,

As we prepare for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of UNCTAD, we must bear in mind that the objectives with which this institution was established are as valid today as they were at the time of its inception. In fact, as an institution that aims at promoting the development-friendly integration of developing countries into the world economy UNCTAD's role is becoming more crucial at present. It is more so in the case of the least developed countries because UNCTAD's role to enable them to effectively address their multitude of development challenges and to help get integrated into global economy is critical.

The least developed countries like Nepal continue to face deep-rooted structural constraints and multiple vulnerabilities. With these challenges and multiple other crises combined with the disproportionately adverse impact of climate change, it is turning out to be virtually impossible for them to achieve the internationally agreed development goals. For the considerable transformation in their development landscape, there should be an enhanced and continued support from the international community.

The Doha mandate reinforces the role of UNCTAD as the focal point to deal with the issues of trade, development and investment in an integrated manner. The Mandate, in particular, calls on UNCTAD to strengthen its focus on the needs of the LDCs as outlined in the IPoA. The 'business-as-usual' may not be sufficient in this regard. So, UNCTAD's has to think 'out of the box' and take a strong coordinating role in the implementation of the IPoA.

The discourse of the Post-2015 Development Agenda has gained momentum in almost all international forums. There is no doubt that the development goals we set for the next decade must be ambitious. The recommendations of 'The Second Report of the Panel of Eminent Persons' are all important and essential. However, we must ensure that before we set goals for ourselves we must think about the means to achieve them. We look up to UNCTAD for its substantive contribution in this regard.

Mr. President,

The least developed countries like Nepal confront supply-side constraints and lack trade related infrastructure. This limits their ability to benefit from trade and investment. The recently released 'Trade and Development Report 2013' also shows a bleak picture of the negligible share of the LDCs in global trade and their constant struggle to cope with development challenges. Without ensuring the access of these weaker segments of the population to productive resources and capabilities, integrating them to the global economy is not possible.

We attach importance to the 9th WTO Ministerial Meeting to be held in Bali in less than three months time from now. My delegation has always said that the failure of this Ministerial will be colossal in terms of development deliverables especially for the poor countries. We want a balanced package for Bali and that it must deliver concrete outcomes in favour of the LDCs. The LDCs issues are longstanding and are not beyond the reach of the WTO membership. While we have expressed our commitment to a balanced outcome, our issues should remain beyond the ambit of any trade-off. UNCTAD could play a significant

role by continuously advocating for this genuine cause and by providing rich inputs to advance negotiations on core LDC issues.

The agenda item on global value chains and development to be discussed later in this session is of great importance from our perspective. We believe that one possible way to promote a more equitable and just growth will be to link the developing countries to global value chains (GVCs). For entering into the value chains system, poor countries need economic diversification and products expansion. Adequate value addition and retention of wealth will be critical to benefit from GRVCs. So, productive capacity building through the provision of infrastructure both hardware and software, transfer of technology and knowledge creation, must receive priority. This applies to regional value chains which are emerging as a consequence of growing regional integration.

To conclude, global problems require collective solutions. Individual acts will be inadequate. We need collective action if we are to effectively address the challenges that confront us today. We believe we will be able to achieve the desired outcome through the deeper and intensive deliberations in this session of the Trade and Development Board.

I thank you, Mr. President.