

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

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**Item 3: High-level segment Tackling inequality
through trade and development: A post-2015 challenge**

Speaker: EU

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Item 3: High-Level Segment: tackling inequality through trade and development: a post-2015 challenge

EU SPEAKING POINTS

- The EU and its MS very much welcome the note 61/7 by the UNCTAD Secretariat, which makes a compelling case for tackling inequality in the post-2015 agenda. As it is stressed in the note, there is increasing evidence that “high inequality is detrimental to growth and may also have adverse effects on social and political stability”. Indeed, research increasingly shows that there can be no inclusive and sustainable development without addressing inequality.
- Inequality – in its many dimensions, including income and wealth disparities, as well as non-economic inequalities – affects people in high, middle and low income countries, and both present and future generations. Therefore, addressing inequalities is clearly a universal concern, which forms an integral part of the post-2015 agenda.
- The post-2015 agenda should ensure a rights-based approach encompassing all human rights and be based on the principles of justice, equality, democracy, good governance and the rule of law.
- The EU and its Member States emphasize the need for sustainable economic growth that addresses the needs for employment, social inclusion and environmental protection in mutually reinforcing ways. In this context, we emphasise the following points:
 - The future framework must have the ambition of halting, and indeed reversing, the existing trends of increasing income and other inequalities, and must acknowledge that tackling inequalities, marginalization and discrimination is indispensable for effective poverty reduction and sustainable development.
 - The future framework should also promote inclusive economic growth underpinned by effective institutions, including mechanisms for equitable redistribution, and by good governance. We need a broad, job-centred sustainable development agenda characterised by productive and decent job creation, equitable distribution of economic opportunities, and universal access to basic social services, which are important preconditions for social and economic inclusion, and full participation in society.

- Social protection is an investment in human development and inclusive and sustainable economic growth.
 - Addressing inequality must also be seen in the broader context of ensuring sustainable prosperity for all within planetary boundaries. Development strategies which fail to protect the environment undermine our efforts to reduce poverty and thus contribute to increasing inequality. This is also a matter of intergenerational equity.
 - The EU and its MS consider gender equality and women's and girl's rights and empowerment as a universal priority for the post-2015 agenda. Post-2015 provides us a unique opportunity to complete the "unfinished business" but also to tackle the structural causes of gender inequality in a more comprehensive and transformative way.
- The EU and its MS are keen to have a clear recognition of the positive role played by openness to trade in fostering inclusive growth and sustainable development, provided it takes place on the basis of development strategies that fully integrate the trade dimension and in the context of good governance, sound domestic policies and reforms.
 - Looking at the future, the EU and its MS remain committed to playing a leading role in promoting inclusive growth and sustainable development through its trade and development policy and related instruments, with a strong focus on LDCs and other developing countries most in need.
 - At the same time, the world has changed and we see a growing role for emerging economies in global efforts towards sustainable development and poverty reduction, notably in terms of market access and Aid for Trade. This is a major dimension that the EU and its Member States would also like to see fully reflected in the post-2015 agenda.