



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA TO UNOG

REMARKS BY H.E. MS. SABINE BÖHLKE-MÖLLER AMBASSADOR/ PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA, ON AFRICAN GROUP AT THE AGENDA ITEM 5 OF 63RD SESSION OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD GENEVA, 7 DECEMBER 2016

Madam Vice President
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

Madam Chair

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the African, on UNCTAD's contribution to the debate on agenda item 5, **Activities carried out by UNCTAD from 2011 to 2015 implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA)**.. While the African Group aligns itself to the statement that was delivered by the Argentina on behalf of the G.77& China, allow me to make some additional remarks. The African Group would like to express its appreciation to the UNCTAD secretariat for preparing the report and also thank s Mr. Osakwe for introducing the report.

Madam Chair

More than half of the African Countries are LDCs as such, what happens in African LDCs affects the whole continent. We take note with appreciation, of the range of activities conducted by UNCTAD in support of the LDCs, since the adoption of the Istanbul Programme of Action. The African Group is however concerned that, midway through the Intanbul Programme of Action, indications are that the objectives set in the Proramme of Action are not likely to be met in LDC the majority of the LDCs. According to the report under consideration, only nine LDCs have gross domestic product growth rates target of 7% per annum, only 14 LDCs meet the graduation criteria and that LDCs as a group lagged behind other developing countries in achieving most of the Millennium Development Goals.

Madam Chair

We note that there has been some progress made in the LDCs, however, such progress is limited to a few of them and it is not evenly distributed, across all regions, with African LDCs faring worst..

It is therefore crucial that, for the LDCs to be able to meet the SGDs, UNCTAD and the whole international community need to double their efforts towards assisting the LDCs, in accordance with the eight priority areas identified in the Istanbul Programme of Action and reaffirmed in the Political Declaration of 29 May 2016. UNCTAD's mandate on LDCs has not only been renewed but also strengthened in the Nairobi Maafikiano, although not with matching resources.

We thank UNCTAD for the good job they do with advocating for the trade, investment and development interests of the LDCs, however more needs to be done if the LDCs are to meet their Development goals.

Madam Chair,

The Group welcomes the decisions taken on LDC, as contained in paragraph 38 (s) of the Nairobi Maafikiano, stressing the need to assist the LDCs in making use of existing initiatives and programmes such as duty-free and quota-free schemes, preferential rules of origin for these countries and the least developed countries services waiver, as well as targeted assistance under initiatives such as the Enhanced Integrated Framework and Aid for Trade. Another important area of our work is Cotton, on which we agreed. The Group calls on Donors to continue their support to the African countries, in particular to the LDCs that produce cotton, in order to build capacities and develop a sound value chain in the cotton sector.

Finally, Mr. President, the African Group reiterates that UNCTAD needs to be provided with additional resources in order to meet its expanding mandate and demands from the developing countries, especially the LDCs.

We look forward to the discussion at this session, as well as to the executive session, dedicated to the LDCs, in January 2017.

I thank you