

**GENERAL STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA AT THE 64<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD ON 14<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2017 IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND.**

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MR. PRESIDENT.

YOUR EXCELLENCY THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OF VIETNAM, MR.HU

THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF UNCTAD,

EXCELLENCIES,

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

Mr. President,

My delegation congratulates you upon your elevation to the high office as President of the 64<sup>th</sup> Session for the period 2017-2018. In the same vein, we congratulate those Excellencies elected as Vice Presidents of the Board. We wish all of you success in your tenure.

Further, my delegation extends its utmost sincere gratitude to the out-going President of the TDB, Amb. Christopher Onyanga Aparr of the Republic of Uganda, for all his accomplishments in the past year as President of the TDB, and notably in realising the operationalisation of the Inter-Governmental Expert Group on E-commerce and the digital economy, and the Inter-governmental Expert Group on Financing for Development.

Mr. President,

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the delegation of Tanzania on behalf of the G77+China, and that delivered by the Sudan delegation on behalf of the African Group.

We do commend the secretariat for preparing documents that have significantly guided discussions during this session of the TDB.

Mr. President,

My delegation notes that the World Investment Report 2017, reports a decrease in the global flows of FDI by about 2%, with flows to LDCs reducing by 13%, and representing a very marginal percentage of the global FDI flows. In addition, commodity prices have remained low, and considerably affected investment in the commodity sector upon which most of these Least Developed countries are dependent.

This is a negative indication towards the global efforts in the implementation of the Istanbul Program of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the decade 2011-2020, to assist LDCs graduate to middle income status, and the attainment of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. We believe foreign direct investment is critical for sustained economic growth and the achievement of the SDGs. This is because, among other benefits Foreign Direct Investment is an aid in technologies transfer, infrastructural development, building productive capacities, and adding value to commodities.

Mr. President,

We know the fourth Industrial revolution has got its benefits, especially to member states that have built the required infrastructures. It will indeed benefit enterprises in maximising profits and reducing costs, as digitalisation reduces the international footprint of international companies, increases automation and customization of manufacturing, eliminates intermediaries and increase servicification of production.

Nonetheless, the said benefits create challenges to especially low developing counties, based mainly on the fact that these countries depend mainly on the provision of low cost wages to

attract foreign companies. But digitalisation means that enterprises now look for high skills and low cost energy, which are available only in their parent countries. This creates huge unemployment challenges to countries like mine, unless we build the infrastructures and skills necessary to adapt to this change.

Mr. President,

Despite the global rush to embrace digitalisation, it does not minimise the benefits that industrialisation would generate to least developed countries. To LDCs with economies mainly dependent on commodities, the need for technologies to mitigate the effects of climate change, add value to primary commodities and build productive capacities is very essential in order to achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development. For this, we will need all the support from development partners to achieve inclusive development and integrate into the global trading system.

At this juncture Mr. President,

My delegation extends its appreciation to UNCTAD and other development partners for all the technical assistance received, and requests their continued support towards the achievement of the sustainable development goals and graduation with momentum to the middle income status.

Notably we appreciate UNCTAD's technical assistance extended to Uganda through the UN Development Account Project 1617K 'Improving the value added on cotton by-products in eastern and southern Africa', and the 'Building the capacities of selected developing countries in Africa and Asia to upgrade and diversify their fish exports', which we believe will enhance the productive capacities of the beneficiaries and contribute to reinvigoration of these sectors.

**We Thank You.**