

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Mustafa Osman Ismail Elamin
Permanent Representative of Sudan, On behalf of the African Group**

HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT ON AGENDA ITEM 2 (a) : New ways in which the United Nations could address the crisis of multilateralism and trade and its development machinery, as well as what the contribution of UNCTAD would be.

Mr. President,

Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates.

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group. Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the Presidency of the Trade and Development Board. The African Group has confidence in your able leadership to steer our work during your tenure. The Group fully associates itself to the statement delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of Pakistan on behalf of G.77 and China.

I would like to thank Mr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD for his opening remark and the panellists for their informative presentations under this important agenda item.

Mr. President,

The crisis of multilateral trading system may be traced back to the lack of implementation of outcomes of the Doha Round and indeed to the arrival of new protectionism and inward-looking stances in developed countries. When the “Development Round” in the Doha was launched, Africans had strong hope, that finally, the development promises of the multilateral trading system would be addressed and imbedded into the system's rights and obligations through the Doha Round. Yet, 17 years later, this dream continues to elude the developing countries.

The African Group is concerned by the rise of nationalist sentiment, the increased use of trade-restrictive policies and increasing difficulties in adopting hard rules in multilateral trade negotiations which negatively affected the multilateralism

and international trade. This recently rise of protectionist may provoke trade disputes, retaliations or trade wars.

Mr. President,

Africa's share in world exports of goods eroded from 5% in 1970 to 2% in 2016. For Africa, the crisis is that its share in the world trade is less now than it was before the spread of globalization and liberalization including after global trade liberalization under the Uruguay Round. In Services, Africa's share fell from 2.3% in 2005 to 2.0% in 2016. This shows the fact that Africa continues to be marginalized in multilateral trade and trading system unless the system and its rules become development-oriented.

The African Group stresses that addressing the Multilateral Trading System MTS crisis should be taken by a wholesome approach for Africa. That means going beyond trade rules. It means increased FDI, and in general, addressing all the key fundamentals of Agenda 2030 related to supply, capacity building and industrialization. Trade and trade rules alone are not enough to address Africa's development needs.

Mr. President,

Governments need to advance an economic agenda that is not only outward looking but also fair and equitable and that brings benefits to a much larger share of constituents. In the absence of a coherent multilateral agenda that responds to the headwinds faced by globalization, the world may continue to drift toward nationalism and multipolarity. It is therefore important to establish robust multilateral hard trade rules, to provide predictability, transparency and stability in market openings.

African Group strongly believes that UNCTAD through its three pillars of work could play a crucial role in this direction by continue to monitor trade trends and trade policy developments and to provide a forum for countries to meet and discuss recent trends and possible measures to prevent the rise of protectionism, and promotion of trade as an instrument for attaining the SDGs especially in developing countries.

I thank you Mr. President.