



**GROUP OF 77 & CHINA
G E N E V A**

**Statement by the Group of 77 and China to be delivered by the
Chairman of the Group of 77 and China in Geneva
H.E. Ambassador Farukh Amil (Pakistan)**

**General Debate
The 65th Annual Session of the Trade and Development Board
Geneva, 6 June 2018**

**Mr. President,
Secretary-General/Deputy-Secretary-General
Distinguished colleagues,**

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We congratulate you on your election as the TDB President and assure you of the Group's full support in discharge of your duties. We hope that under your leadership the TDB would again resume its normal functions and serve as important part of the UN development pillar.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his detailed annual report outlining important milestones. We also appreciate the Secretariat for their work.

Mr. President the G77 and China welcomes the State of Palestine as a full member of UNCTAD

Mr. President,

This important session of the Trade and Development Board is being held in the background of momentous challenges posed to multilateralism as a whole and international trading system in particular. Forces of protectionism are seeking to overturn the painstaking accomplishments realized by multilateralism over the decades – a multilateralism which is deeply anchored into hard-won principles. Whilst we can argue whether or not multilateralism is delivering for developing countries, it is now developing countries alone who continue to defend it in the face of indifference of developed countries.

Amidst challenges of world economy and international trade, upholding multilateralism is absolutely critical which can deliver for all and not just for the few. To that end any trust hurting moves which make trading atmosphere turbulent, including unilateralism in its all forms and politicization of developmental issues should be avoided and development approach should be accommodated the the center of all negotiation process.

The Group calls for a constructive dialogue between developed and developing countries for strengthening of international cooperation and the promotion of economic growth and development of developing countries. The dialogue – reflecting mutual interdependence – should be based on common interests and benefits to developed and developing countries. Shirking from such a constructive engagement would further erode the trust and confidence reposed to international trade and economic system in general and multilateral institutions in particular.

Mr. President,

The role of UNCTAD is critical in narrowing the trust deficit especially on trade and development issues. UNCTAD speaks the language of future and it is important that developed and developing countries maintain and enhance their support to UNCTAD for it to continue functioning as a great space of dialogue between governments and with other important stakeholders especially the private sector.

The contribution of UNCTAD is invaluable in support of all developing countries especially Africa, LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. We would like UNCTAD to continue focusing on longstanding issues including debt and international finance, investment, structural transformation and industrialization, transport and logistics, trade facilitation, trade trends and regulations as well as emerging issues of technology, innovation and growing role of e-Commerce and digital economy.

Mr. President,

The Group of 77 & China attaches great importance to the work of this Conference and would like to see its intergovernmental machinery delivering to its potential and working for consensus-building which remains its raison d'être. Fulfilling the mandate given by the Nairobi Maafakiano, we should all strive for revitalization of intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD to better respond to contemporary challenges and support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Group believes that the process of revitalization – to be concluded by this session – should focus on strengthening the outcomes of the Trade and Development Board and other intergovernmental bodies of the Conference. Robust, practical and concrete outcomes of excellent discussions held at the intergovernmental meetings would ensure better impact of UNCTAD's contribution to the UN's development agenda. Due consideration and follow-up of outcomes of UNCTAD intergovernmental machinery at the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly would help in addressing development challenges. This would also neatly fit into the "ECOSOC Review" process currently going on in New York where a reformed ECOSOC is being envisaged to play active role in building strong linkages with entities across the UN system.

Mr. President,

The Group of 77 & China would like to highlight few institutional issues of importance to the Group:

- The Group calls for establishing an institutional mechanism to assess and follow-up the implementation of the Conference's outcome as well as decisions taken by the TDB. Such a stocktaking exercise established on an institutional basis would ensure strong, effective and efficient working of the Conference and its Secretariat;
- The Group is concerned over the delay in filling the post of Group Liaison Unit, and Director of Trade Division even after its being vacant for more than a year. We call on the Secretary-General to urgently address the matter and report to Member States;
- The Secretariat must ensure the availability of parliamentary documents and reports in advance of all meetings especially the TDB, as per Rules of Procedure. We understand that due to rescheduled regular session of the TDB, some documents could not be made available on time. However, this must be taken as an exception rather than routine practice.

Mr. President,

The Group would actively participate in the session's proceedings and assure you of our cooperation for a successful TDB. We would highlight other issues of importance under their respective agenda items.

I thank you Mr. President.