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**EU Statement**

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**Item 3**

**Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in support of Africa**

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**Check against delivery**

### **Item 3: Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in support of Africa**

Mr President, Secretary General, Excellencies, distinguished Delegates,

I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

We thank the Secretariat for the background document 'Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in support of Africa'. The EU highly welcomes UNCTAD's work documented in this most recent report; UNCTAD's engagement in trade facilitation, regional integration, its support for the CFTA negotiations and debt management as well as on women's empowerment and gender equality is crucial for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union's 2063 Agenda.

First and foremost, we acknowledge the various activities undertaken in Africa in the area of transforming economies, tackling vulnerabilities and building resilience, improving competitiveness, enriching multilateralism and empowering people and investing in their future. These objectives are closely interlinked and their individual realisation depends on their joint success.

The EU firmly believes in the close relationship with our African partners and its strong cooperation in the field of (1) peace and security; (2) democratic governance and human rights; (3) trade, regional integration and infrastructure; (4) the development goals; (5) energy; (6) climate change; (7) migration, mobility and employment and (8) science, information society and space, as lined out in the 2007 Joint Africa – EU Strategy.

In this context I would like to quote Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy: "We should not ask what we can do for Africa. The right question to ask is: what can we do with Africa?"

On this note I would like to introduce to you several institutional support mechanisms in place to contribute to the ongoing development activities within Africa.

1. The EU- Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund is one of the EU's instruments to mobilise additional finance for key infrastructure projects in sub-Saharan Africa, thereby increasing access to energy, transport, water and sanitation, as well as communication services. It contains resources of €812 million from the EDF and EUMS, of which roughly 60% is appropriated for the promotion of infrastructure projects with a demonstrable regional impact. This assistance – in particular the development of ICT

infrastructure- will contribute to the economic transformation of African countries to accelerate sustainable development and facilitate the region's integration into the world economy.

2. The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa assists countries that are the most fragile and affected located in the Sahel region, Lake Chad, the Horn of Africa and the North of Africa. Its resources amount to 2.8bn contributed through EU funds as well as its member states, Norway and Switzerland. The Trust Fund aims to tackle the vulnerabilities of African economies, fighting the root causes of irregular migration and displacement in countries of origin, transit and destination through economic programmes, resilience, migration management and promotion of stable governance. In doing so, it works to realise the SDGs and enables a more stable environment for further regional investments.
3. The Africa Investment Facility (AfIF) is another EU mechanism supporting sustainable growth in Africa through an innovative financial mechanism combining grants with other resources. The Investment Facility provides not only investment grants but also technical assistance and risk capital sharing instruments to foster investments which will have a positive impact on the socio-economic development.

These financial instruments are intended to assist the implementation of the 2063 Agenda for a more regionally integrated and politically united Africa and, hence, enable sustainable development.

Mr. Chair,

The recently released Africa report on Tourism ("UNCTAD Economic Development in Africa Report 2017: Tourism for Transformative and Inclusive Growth ") also highlights the beneficial direct and indirect contributions regional integration can have on the tourism industry. This of course will be further elaborated during the upcoming main session of the TDB in September; however we would like to note that we would have appreciated to include this standalone flagship report in today's discussion for a more coherent dialogue.

Suffice it today to say that the report rightly points towards the vast potential of inter- and intra-regional tourism within the African continent and how for instance liberalized air transport can create employment opportunities, economic growth and consumer benefits at the same time. The tourism industry has the potential to foster inclusion by reducing poverty and

inequalities among vulnerable groups such as the poor, youth and women; however it often lacks a comprehensive tourism strategy integrated into their national development plans.

Mr Chair:

The EU is committed to supporting our African partners in transforming and advancing their economies, promoting intra-African trade and integration, so they can attain sustainable economic growth and prosperity. The way forward will bring stability and development but this requires not only international cooperation but also South-South cooperation among African countries. The EU firmly believes that this integrated approach will allow a joint empowerment of the African continent.

Thank you.