

**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE, H. E. AMBASSADOR TAONGA
MUSHAYAVANHU: 65TH EXECUTIVE SESSION OF UNCTAD TDB:
17 JULY 2017**

Mr President,

Let me also start by congratulating Secretary-General, Dr Mukisa Kituyi, on his confirmation by the General Assembly for a second term. Further, I wish to express my thanks to him for the important report on "Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in support of Africa." We also wish to express our appreciation for the useful oral introduction given at the beginning of this meeting by the Secretariat.

As we add our national statement in this debate, we wish to align ourselves with the statements made by the United Republic of Tanzania and the Sudan, on behalf of the G77 and China and the African Group, respectively.

Mr President,

The period under discussion, that is May 2016 to April 2017, marks in part the second year of implementation of the 2030 Agenda, our global blueprint for development. As the focal point in the United Nations for the integrated treatment of trade and development, and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development, we expect UNCTAD to play a critical role in the implementation of the global development agenda, especially as it relates to the African region.

We also wish to recognize the auspicious timing of this report, whose publication marks the second year of our implementation of the Nairobi Maafikiano. Indeed the importance of the report before us stands in sharp relief if we consider that, as the weakest link in the global economy, our region has the highest stake in the successful implementation of the SDGs and the broader 2030 Agenda. It is in this light that we appreciate UNCTAD's role in supporting our development efforts through various activities under its broad mandate.

Mr President,

We note with appreciation the efforts of the Secretariat in responding to the concerns that my delegation and others raised repeatedly in the last few years, with regard to the impact of UNCTAD's activities in support of Africa. We welcome in particular, UNCTAD activities designed at advancing the structural transformation of African economies, with industrialization and the enhancement of productive capacity at the centre. We believe that this is the area where UNCTAD should focus more of its resources and attention. It is in this context that my delegation welcomes the UNCTAD-sponsored project on "Industrialisation and Regional Integration in Southern Africa" which, inter alia, aims to identify promising regional value chains, as well as promote industrial and trade policy co-ordination. This project dovetails very well with SADC's Regional Industrialisation Strategy which, in its current phase, that is 2015 to 2020, frontloads industrial development and market integration in the region. We wish to register our profound appreciation to UNCTAD for coming up with this project which speaks directly to African priorities.

Another area where we want UNCTAD to do more work, is that of illicit financial flows from the continent. Since the launch of its final report in February 2015, the Mbeki Commission remains a reference point for capital flight from Africa, calculated to exceed the official development assistance to the continent. Since this shocking report came out, the international community is still to deliver a decisive response to the report's key recommendations aimed at combating illicit financial flows from the continent. While we acknowledge the work that UNCTAD has done in this area, we nevertheless believe that it has both the mandate and responsibility to intensify this work that it is doing so as to breathe new life into the Mbeki report by updating and adding to it.

Finally Mr President,

With the Trade Facilitation Agreement coming into force earlier this year, UNCTAD appears to have deployed considerable effort and resources to support its implementation. While we welcome these developments, which seek to facilitate international trade, UNCTAD should maintain its focus on enhancing African countries' productive capacity, economic diversification and industrialization.

In concluding my remarks, my delegation wishes to register our concern with the organization of our meeting this year. There have been scheduling issues surrounding the meeting. The 65th Executive Session on Africa has also been truncated from its traditional three days to three hours. Going back to last year and before, Executive Sessions on Africa have been scheduled for three days. This is of course important for us to

project that we are giving African issues the importance that they deserve. And on that we wish to point out, once again, that the Africa initiated a Single-Year Expert Meeting on Value Addition remains unimplemented three years after its adoption by the Board. And now the traditional 3-day programme has been unilaterally cut to three hours. There is need for consultation for such decisions, especially at a time that we are supposed to revitalise the inter-governmental machinery.

I wish to end with two questions for the Secretariat. First, why have they cut our meeting on this report from three days to three hours? Secondly, when are they going to comply with a 2014 Board decision to organize a Single Year Expert Meeting on Value Addition?

I thank you Mr President