



United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

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Nairobi Azimio

We, the member States of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), gathered in Nairobi from 17 to 22 July 2016 for the fourteenth session of the Conference (UNCTAD XIV), under the theme “From decision to action: Moving towards an inclusive and equitable global economic environment for trade and development”, agree on the following declaration, hereinafter referred to as the Nairobi Azimio,¹ that is firmly anchored in the heritage of the achievements of UNCTAD since its creation in 1964 and places UNCTAD on a strong footing to enter a new and revitalized phase in its history so it can contribute to prosperity for all:

1. We thank the Government and the people of Kenya for hosting UNCTAD XIV and for the warm hospitality extended to delegations.
2. We recall that 40 years ago, Kenya first welcomed the international community to the fourth session of UNCTAD, held in Nairobi in 1976, when developing countries sought a new international economic system in which all would benefit, requiring “nothing less than a Nairobi charter for some new and truly international economic order”.²
3. We reaffirm our commitment to UNCTAD. The important role of UNCTAD will be strengthened as the focal point within the United Nations system for the integrated treatment of trade and development and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development as dispensed through its three pillars of consensus-building, research and analysis, and technical assistance, with the overall objective of achieving prosperity for all.

¹ *Azimio* is Swahili for declaration.

² See the statement of Mr. Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, President of Kenya, delivered at the inaugural ceremony of UNCTAD IV in Nairobi on 5 May 1976, in *Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Fourth session, Nairobi*, vol. 1, *Report and Annexes* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.76.II.D.10), annex III, p. 96.

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4. We uphold the decisions taken at UNCTAD XIII and urge member States and UNCTAD to fully implement the Nairobi Maafikiano,³ which places UNCTAD on a strong footing to ensure prosperity for all.

5. We recognize that UNCTAD XIV is the first major United Nations conference in the area of trade and development since the landmark outcomes of 2015. It should seize the opportunity and take the lead in charting the way towards moving from decision to action. We underscore the important role of UNCTAD in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is a transformative and universal development agenda emphasizing that prosperity is for all, as well as relevant aspects of other major outcomes of the recent past that include the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development; the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as adopted by the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties; and the Nairobi Ministerial Declaration of the World Trade Organization. Its focus should be on addressing the trade and development challenges of all developing countries across all regions, and especially those with specific needs such as in Africa, the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

6. We acknowledge that, over the years, the world has witnessed a decline in global extreme poverty and other positive developments, although these have not been equally shared. The benefits of globalization, combined with a general improvement in macroeconomic management, have helped the integration of many developing countries into the global economy.

7. Nevertheless, the world continues to face the persistent effects of the global economic and financial crisis, the spectre of a prolonged period of slow growth in some countries, the challenges represented by new technologies for the future of labour and the creation of employment, the re-emergence of unsustainable debt burdens, continued volatility in commodity prices, widening levels of income and wealth inequality, and unprecedented migration flows, as well as the challenges arising from climate change, food and energy insecurity, and the associated economic, political and social instability.

8. UNCTAD XIV provides an opportunity to look forward towards the realization of a global and universal development agenda. We still face an unequal global distribution of resources and opportunities, but today we are better placed to take concrete actions that can address the inequalities between and among countries and peoples. In 2015, world leaders agreed on how to better position the international community to address some of the most pressing global challenges. These agreements and outcomes collectively offer a blueprint for how the global economy, society and environment should look in 2030. The outcomes further spell out the means of implementation that will guide global collective action on development for the next 15 years. If implemented effectively, these agreements will contribute towards the realization of common aspirations to achieve prosperity, dignity and a better planet for all.

9. We recognize that economic activities should be at the service of persons. Any development and growth strategy should aim at the promotion of every human being and at the primacy of human work.

10. We also recognize that achieving gender equality and the empowerment and promotion of entrepreneurship of women and youth are vital to achieve sustainable development and significantly enhance economic growth and productivity for present and future generations. We reiterate the need for gender mainstreaming, including targeted actions and investments in the formulation and implementation of all financial, economic, environmental and social policies.

³ *Maafikiano* is Swahili for consensus.

11. We emphasize the importance of strengthened global partnerships to eradicate poverty and leave no one behind. In this regard, we reaffirm the importance of North–South, South–South and triangular regional and international cooperation, while taking into account that South–South cooperation is not a substitute, but a complement to North–South cooperation. We further recognize the importance of partnerships between and among policymakers and major stakeholders including the private sector, academia and civil society in achieving sustainable development.

12. We thank the Secretary-General of UNCTAD for his report to the Conference. The report contributed to our discussions and in articulating our common cause in going forward towards the implementation of various issues, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

13. We underline the importance of major events of UNCTAD XIV, including the World Leaders Summit, the fifth World Investment Forum, the Civil Society Forum, the seventh Global Commodities Forum and, indeed, the first ever global Youth Forum. The diversity of thematic issues and participation reinforces the principle of partnership while recognizing the transgenerational vision and perspective that today’s world calls for.

14. We welcome the formal unveiling of the eTrade for All initiative at UNCTAD XIV. It provides a new approach to trade development through electronic exchanges by allowing developing countries to more easily navigate the supply of technical assistance for building capacity in e-commerce readiness and for donors to get a clear picture of programmes that they could fund.

15. We recognize that UNCTAD XIV is an important step in strengthening multilateralism and an international economic system that recognizes the interdependence of trade, finance, investment, technology and development. We commend UNCTAD for its substantial contribution since its creation in 1964 to advancing the global discourse on development and in enhancing the beneficial integration of developing countries into the global economy. In this regard, we reiterate our commitment to UNCTAD and to revitalize its intergovernmental machinery so that it continues to serve as an important incubator of ideas, including for collective global action.

16. We underscore international trade as an engine for inclusive economic growth, poverty eradication and the promotion of sustainable development and, therefore, continue to promote a universal, rules-based, open, transparent, predictable, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system. We recommit to continuing to make positive efforts designed to ensure that developing country members, and especially the least developed country members among them, secure a share in the growth of world trade commensurate with the needs of their economic development, and that provisions for special and differential treatment shall remain integral. In this regard, we call for strengthened complementarity between the work of UNCTAD, the World Trade Organization and other relevant agencies with a view to realizing the full developmental potential of trade. Accession to the World Trade Organization by developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, enhances the universality of the trading system.

17. Investment, particularly in infrastructure development, is a critical issue that cuts across the implementation of all the Sustainable Development Goals. We emphasize the importance of investment and enterprise development for enhancing productive capacities to transform economies. A sound investment climate is necessary to attract foreign direct investment flows, encourage domestic investment and support sustainable development. We call upon UNCTAD to further develop its activities for promoting and facilitating investment and entrepreneurship for sustainable development.

18. We are aware of the negative effects of unsustainable debt on development, particularly for developing countries, and recognize the need to assist developing countries

to achieve long-term debt sustainability through sound debt management and coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief and debt restructuring, as appropriate, and to address the external debt of highly indebted poor countries to reduce debt distress. Recalling that debtors and creditors must work together to prevent and resolve unsustainable debt situations and that maintaining sustainable debt levels is the responsibility of the borrowing countries, we reaffirm that lenders also have a responsibility to lend in a way that does not undermine a country's debt sustainability.

19. We support the mobilization of all means of implementation – financial and human resources, technology and capacity-building, including through technical assistance – to enable full implementation at all levels of the multilateral commitments and targets agreed in 2015. We therefore reaffirm the importance of stronger North–South cooperation as imperative to the successful implementation of the various outcomes of major United Nations summits and conferences, in particular the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. While recognizing the need to enhance resource mobilization at all levels, including from public and private sources, we reiterate the need to fulfil all official development assistance commitments by some developed countries, including the achievement of the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance, as adopted in United Nations General Assembly resolution 2626 in October 1970, and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of gross national income as official development assistance to the least developed countries, as emerged from the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action) in May 2011.

20. We reiterate that each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development and that the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized. We will respect each country's policy space and leadership to implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development, while remaining consistent with relevant international rules and commitments.

21. Our accomplishments in Nairobi and our actions to strengthen the important role of UNCTAD as the focal point within the United Nations system for the integrated treatment of trade and development and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development reflect our common conviction that, by enhancing its developmental role, impact and institutional effectiveness, UNCTAD will help turn a new page in international economic relations, in support of the new consensus for development. In this spirit, let us move forward to UNCTAD XV and pave the road towards 2030 with this Nairobi Azimio and the Nairobi Maafikiano as our guide.
