

**Trade and Development Board,
Fifty-seventh executive session
Geneva, 26–28 June 2013**

Opening Plenary

**Speaker: Iran
On behalf of Asian Group**

Wednesday, 26 June 2013
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**Statement
by the Islamic Republic of Iran,
on behalf of the Asian Group
at the 57th executive session of the
Trade and Development Board
Wednesday, 26 June 2013**

**Mr. President,
Secretary General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Asian Group. The Group aligns itself with the statement made by the distinguished Ambassador of Ecuador on behalf of the G77 and China.

Mr. President,

First allow me to thank you for your efforts and stewardship. We are thankful to you for leading the TDB as well as conducting extensive consultations on different issues -- including the modalities for the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of UNCTAD. I must also thank the Secretary General, Dr. Supachai for his opening statement and the Secretariat for the preparation of this meeting.

With respect to the 50th anniversary of UNCTAD, we hope that after finalizing your proposed guidelines in this session, the secretariat can then start preparations for a deserved UNCTAD commemoration. We believe that this event would be a good opportunity to have a backward as well as forward-looking approach to the UNCTAD's work, and strengthen the role of this organization in the global development framework.

The next important issue is UNCTAD's role -- as the UN focal point on trade and development and interrelated issues on finance, technology, investment and sustainable development -- in shaping the post-2015 development framework. We are confident that UNCTAD, drawing on five decades of experience, could contribute significantly to this process. The Public Symposium which was held this week is a good example of how this organization can bring together all experts and play a major role in this process.

Mr. President,

With regard to the agenda item on activities undertaken by UNCTAD in Support of Africa, we underline that Africa remains severely affected by poverty, lack of infrastructure, natural disasters, and many other challenges. Africa needs support to eradicate poverty and move towards sustainable development. In this context, we thank UNCTAD for supporting African countries in their efforts to bring about structural transformation of their economies, diversifying their export products, adding greater value to their products and services, identifying innovative ways to adapt and develop technologies, implementing mechanisms to incorporate sustainable elements in production, as well as many other elements. Africa can also benefit from the potential of the South-South cooperation. We encourage UNCTAD to continue its support for African countries as they work to address the above challenges.

Mr. President,

Expert meetings are one of the major contributors to the research and analysis pillar of UNCTAD. However experts from developing countries need the support of the secretariat in order to be able to participate in these meetings. To this end we encourage all member states to contribute to the trust fund created for this purpose.

Finally, Mr. President, we would like to add our voice to that of the G77 coordinator and express our gratitude to Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi for his dedicated service. We are proud that in the past eight years, a member of the Asian family has,

with great professionalism and wisdom, led this Organization. We also hope that the Asian Group and developing countries in general, will continue to benefit from Dr. Supachai's knowledge and wisdom as they work towards sustainable development.

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman.

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