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Opening Plenary item 1:

Speaker:
The African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP)

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FIFTY-EIGHTH EXECUTIVE SESSION OF TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
OF UNCTAD: LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES REPORT 2013
STATEMENT BY HEAD OF ACP GENEVA OFFICE; MJ KISIRI

Thank you Mr President,

Allow me on behalf of ACP Secretariat to make short points on the agenda under consideration by Executive Board. We thank UNCTAD Secretary General and Director for their presentations to the session.

ACP wishes to commend the UNCTAD Secretariat for the valuable work they have done in completing LDCs 2013 detailed and informative report which examines the link between investment, growth and employment in Least Developed Countries (LDCs). This report will be important not only to LDCs, but to the whole of the ACP Group. The majority of the LDCs are members of the ACP Group, and account for slightly over fifty per cent of the Group's membership.

Economic growth and job creation are primary strategic goals which any country would like to achieve. There is a notion that economic growth can automatically translate into benefits for poor through creation of jobs. However, the analysis from the report indicates that growth in the LDCs has not been inclusive and its contribution to poverty reduction has been limited. It has not generated enough quality jobs.

This indicates that unemployment remains an obstacle in many countries, in particular, Least Developed Countries. As has been outlined in the report, economic growth which does not create decent jobs in sufficient quantity is unsustainable. Therefore creating employment opportunities is critical for poverty alleviation.

We believe the Least Developed countries will find this report useful and adopt the policy framework recommendations outlined in this report in order to promote growth that generates an adequate number of quality jobs and that enables them to attain UNCTAD's current pivotal goals and the goals of poverty reduction, inclusive growth and sustainable development in the post 2015 Agenda.

We feel that this is a timely report in terms of assisting in the analysis of LDCs issues in the context of Istanbul Plan of Action, the recently concluded Bali conference (MC9) of WTO and the ongoing preparation for the post-2015 UN Agenda.

There are two other important areas that are raised in the report that are seriously addressed namely; the need to design and enhance programmes in favour of the rural-based communities in LDCs and the significance of supporting the role of diaspora in the development of LDCs.

We would like to remind the Board that the ACP Ministers Declaration adopted in Brussels in October 2013 in the run up to the Ninth WTO Ministerial Conference also endorsed the proposals put forward by the LDC Group for a decision at the Ninth Ministerial Conference to advance a consolidated LDC package covering duty-free quota-free market access for LDC's, simplified and flexible rules of origin for exports that qualify for duty-free, quota-free treatment, the operationalization of the LDC services waiver, and outstanding proposals on cotton. In this regard, WTO Members were urged to reiterate their commitment toward the greater integration of the LDCs into the multilateral trading system and to take all possible steps towards realising this commitment in line with the respective mandates on LDCs issues. The ACP Group welcomes the corresponding decisions taken in these areas at MC9 and hopes that this will help boost the participation of LDCs in the Multilateral Trading System and create jobs and opportunities and hence boost these countries' economic growth and sustainable development.

The ACP Group Secretariat also expresses its gratitude to UNCTAD, WTO, ITC and other international organisations as well as development partners for supporting LDCs in different areas of development.
