



**Statement by Mr. Abbas Kadhom Obaid Al-Fatlawi, Deputy Permanent Representative  
and chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Republic of Iraq  
On behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group  
at the Sixty-Seventh Session of the Trade and Development Board  
Geneva, 2 July 2020**

Agenda item 1(a): Election of Officers

President of the Trade and Development Board Ambassador Federico Villegas (Argentina),  
Secretary-General of UNCTAD Mukhisa Kituyi,  
Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD Isabelle Durant,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group. The Group would like to associate itself with the statement delivered by Ambassador Martha Mwitumwa of Zambia on behalf of the Group of 77 & China.
2. The Asia-Pacific Group would like, at the outset, to congratulate His Excellency Ambassador Federico Villegas, the Permanent Representative of the Argentine Republic to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva, on his election as the president of UNCTAD'S Trade and Development Board for the 67<sup>th</sup> Session. We are full of confidence that under his guidance and leadership the Intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD will continue its function in the most effective way. The Group would also like to congratulate the newly elected members of the Bureau and wish them and the president every success.
3. The Asia-Pacific Group would also like to extend its thanks and appreciation to the outgoing president of the Trade and Development Board, His Excellency Michael Gaffey, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Ireland, for his tireless efforts and dedication in guiding the work of the board. A special mentioned must be made of his able leadership and wisdom in approaching delicate issues during a critical period that witnessed the start of the preparation process for UNCTAD XV, and the unprecedented challenge of the spread of COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. President,

4. We would like to reassure you of the Asia-Pacific Group's full support in your endeavor of leading the intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD during this testing times. There is a great deal of work ahead of us from preparations for the next conference to day to day running of various activities of intergovernmental machinery whilst staying mindful of restrictions on normal activities and new modalities of work and public gatherings imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Group stands ready to cooperate with you and other groups and member states in every step of the way to achieve successful execution and delivery of all envisaged tasks and targets.

5. Finally, the Asia Pacific Group would like to pay tribute to the memory of the late Ambassador Christopher Onyanga Aparr, Permanent Representative of Uganda, who served as President of the Trade and Development Board of UNCTAD from 2016 to 2017. Our thoughts and prayers are with Ambassador Aparr's family and with our colleagues in the Permanent Mission of Uganda.

I thank you Mr. President