



**Statement by the Republic of Zambia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China
at the Trade and Development Board, sixty-seventh Session**

**Statement on Item 2 – Annual Report of the Secretary-General
Geneva, 2 to 3 July 2020**

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,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China in relation to agenda item 2: Annual report of the Secretary-General.

2. We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his detailed and comprehensive statement. UNCTAD embodies the common cause of development that led to the creation of the Group of 77 and China. Over 50 years later, we have made progress in many respects, but we are still faced with an unequal world, and in fact, emerging challenges such as climate change, the digital economy and the impact of ongoing pandemic are likely to give rise to new systemic challenges and growing inequality. Therefore, today, a strong and effective UNCTAD is needed more than ever.

Mr. President,

3. As we advance on the road to UNCTAD 15 Ministerial Conference, there are a number of areas that we would like to bring, with your indulgence, to the attention of the Secretary-General, to serve as inputs for the coming year.

4. We are pleased to have witnessed the capacity of UNCTAD to continue attracting considerable extra-budgetary resources, despite decreasing trends in other organizations. This not only reflects the importance of traditional technical cooperation programmes of UNCTAD such as ASYCUDA and DMFAS, but also the growing importance of new areas of work such as the digital economy with the aim of bridging the digital divide.

5. Nevertheless, numerous technical cooperation requests from Member States need to be considered with the given limited resources available. We need to therefore find mechanisms to respond to areas which, despite not being of strategic interest to donors, are of high demand amongst member States, such as advice on debt issues, commodities, climate change, support to LDCs on their issues of special interest and, most importantly nowadays, support in overcoming the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We look forward to the finalization of the UNCTAD technical cooperation strategy and its implementation to ensure the translation of UNCTAD's work into tangible assistance to developing countries.

6. The Group of 77 and China underscores the central and important role of the research and analysis pillar of UNCTAD. This institution is the preeminent entity examining economic issues from a development perspective and providing actionable policy recommendations and advice. We therefore reiterate the need to preserve the substantive research capacities and expertise of the UNCTAD Secretariat, from the decrease in regular budget resources, the main source of funding for this pillar.

7. In the context of research and analysis, UNCTAD has presented very useful reports on economic impact of COVID-19. The G-77 and China underscores the importance of mainstreaming the impact of the pandemic on developing countries into international development, finance and trade discourse and due reflection of these trends in the Secretary General Annual Report 2020.

8. One related concern in research and analysis is the need to ensure the availability of publications in all official languages. We would request you, Secretary-General, to issue relevant instructions and liaise with your counterparts at UNOG to ensure the timely availability of publications in languages other than the original English edition.

9. We must not forget the pillar of UNCTAD's work for which we are gathered today, the consensus building pillar. The Group of 77 and China assigns great importance to the continued dialogue on key development questions of our time, in the spirit of building consensus on how to effectively tackle them. In this connection, the Group would wish to reiterate the importance of various elements for a more effective consensus building pillar, including expanding the number of items for which agreed conclusions are negotiated, linking our work better with the work of the General Assembly, for which we can harness the ongoing Second Committee revitalization efforts, among others.

10. To conclude, the Group of 77 and China would like to take this opportunity to reiterate its continued support and commitment to the work of this organization.

I thank you, Mr. President.