

**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE, H. E. AMBASSADOR TAONGA
MUSHAYAVANHU: 67TH SESSION OF UNCTAD TDB, 2 – 3 JULY
2020**

Item 2 - Secretary General's Annual Report.

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

Thank you Mr President,

As I make the following remarks in Zimbabwe's own capacity, I
associate them with the statements made by Zambia and
Angola, on behalf of the G77 and China, and the African Group,
respectively.

At the outset, allow me to take this opportunity to congratulate
you, Ambassador Federico Villegas, on your election as the
President of the 67th Session of the TDB. We pledge our support
as we have the confidence that under your leadership, the TDB
will be able to implement its mandate and also marshal the
requisite energies towards the successful preparation for the
UNCTAD XV Ministerial Conference. In the same vein, I would
like to express my delegation's appreciation to Ambassador

Michael Gaffey of Ireland, for the professional manner in which he presided over the TDB during his tenure.

We also wish to express our appreciation to Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, for his comprehensive remarks made earlier today, remarks that are quite pertinent in these challenging times.

Mr President,

The COVID-19 triggered global crisis, the most devastating in modern history, could not have come at a worse time for Africa and the rest of the developing world. This is in view of the multifaceted challenges manifesting in a debt crisis and related financial weaknesses, and climate-induced disasters and vulnerabilities in the wake of an increasing frequency of extreme weather patterns, increased capital flight from developing countries, stagnation in FDI flows, shrinking government revenues, and declining aid. These challenges were there before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has made our situation untenable, and the achievement of the SDGs a nearly impossible proposition.

Mr President,

The multilateral trading system has also been facing unprecedented challenges over the course of the last few years. All these current dynamics call upon the global community, to put differences aside, and confront the common challenges as a collective. Not only do we need global cooperation to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic, but we also need the same to bring about stability to the world's economies through well planned and coordinated stimulus packages.

In view of these multifaceted challenges, we call upon UNCTAD to continue its efforts, in collaboration with other partners, to render increased support towards advancing the structural transformation of developing economies. An area for immediate attention is for UNCTAD to expand its initiatives, under the technical assistance pillar, to help developing countries build capacity in the area of essential materials, equipment and drugs, required in the fight against COVID-19, and as a way of fostering resilience against possible future pandemics and other public health emergencies. We look forward to the discussion of actions carried out, as well as actions planned, to support member States in response to the pandemic during the course of this Board Meeting.

Mr President,

If there is anything to take away from this crisis, it is that we are all bound together in a common humanity beyond our usual selfish interests. As is often said, let not a crisis go to waste. So, let us hope that this crisis has engendered in us the spirit of cooperation, well knowing that no one is safe as long as the disease lurks around somewhere in the world. No-one is safe anywhere, until everyone is safe everywhere.

As I conclude, and looking towards the fifteenth Ministerial Conference, the challenges at hand make it imperative that we further strengthen UNCTAD's development dimension if we are to maximize our capacity for investment and trade, and assist developing countries in their efforts to integrate into the world economy on an equitable basis.

Mr. President,

I thank you