



**STATEMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
DELIVERED BY H.E. MR. LONG KEMVICHET
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CAMBODIA
AT THE 70TH ANNUAL SESSION OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
19 – 28 June 2023**

General Debate and item 4: Annual report of the Secretary-General

Your Excellency Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, President of the Trade and Development Board,
Ms. Rebeca Grynspan, Secretary-General of UNCTAD,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

1. At the outset, I would like to join others in congratulating you, **Ambassador Hashmi of Pakistan** on your election as President of the TDB as well as **Ambassador Febrian A. Ruddyard of Indonesia**, as Vice-Chair. We look forward to your leadership as we seek to address developmental challenges of global significance and impact. At this juncture, would also like to thank the outgoing president, **Ambassador Bahtijors Hasans of Latvia**, for his stellar leadership of the TDB for the past year.

2. Firstly, we would like to align ourselves with the statement delivered by **Ambassador Tarishi of Tanzania** on behalf of the G77 & China, the statement by **Ambassador Suphatra of Thailand** on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group and the statement made by **Ambassador Bhattarai of Nepal** on behalf of the LDC Group.

3. We would like to thank the Secretary-General for presenting UNCTAD annual report 2022. Once again, the works done by UNCTAD across the 3 pillars – Consensus building; Research and analysis; and Technical cooperation – in the past year reflects the relevance and the importance of UNCTAD as the focal point for development of the United Nations system. The key role of UNCTAD in the Global Crisis Response Group to analyze the impact of the conflict in Ukraine and in the Black Sea Initiative have proved pivotal in addressing the cost-of-living crisis and food security crisis that are before us, to bring the price of food down and stabilizing the market. Moreover, through its various meetings, conferences and events in 2022, UNCTAD has brought governments and all stakeholders together to collectively address and build consensus around trade and development challenges. UNCTAD has also been very prolific, in the past year, in publishing high-quality research and analytical reports in the form of their flagship publications, policy briefs and other documents. We found the publications to be insightful, impactful and applicable for policy consideration. In terms of technical cooperation, Member States continue to enjoy UNCTAD's flexibility, accessibility and demand-driven approach in providing technical assistance required by Member States in a wide-range of fields. On this matter, we look forward to learn how UNCTAD has used the Technical Cooperation Strategy to support the developing countries to meet their developmental needs.

4. For the coming years, UNCTAD should continue to strengthen the implementation of these exemplary works across the board including the 4 transformations of the Bridgetown Covenant. This is even more critical as we move toward the 60th anniversary of UNCTAD and the preparation phases of UNCTAD 16.

Mr. President,

5. As an LDC, who is expected to graduated in the near future, we also look forward to UNCTAD's leadership in implementing the Doha Programme of Action (DPOA). After the lost decade, between 2011 to 2020, in which the objectives of the Istanbul Programme of Action failed to materialize, we have to, once again, take up the objectives of the previous decade of actions instead of building on the achievements of that decade. Therefore, this decade is very critical for the LDCs and we cannot afford to lose another 10 years. As we start preparing for UNCTAD 16, we should start to look at how we can formulate responses to the DPOA. Broadly speaking, we expect UNCTAD to be at the forefront in supporting LDCs in achieving outcomes of the DPOA in all 6 key focus areas, but most importantly:

- Leveraging the power of science, technology & innovation;
- Supporting structural transformation as a driver of prosperity;
- Enhancing international trade and regional integration; and
- Mobilizing international partnerships for sustainable graduation.

Mr. President,

6. Cambodia and UNCTAD have been close collaborators for many years and in many projects. We took note of some highlights of achievements made by Cambodia with support from UNCTAD in the annual report which include the effectiveness of ASYCUDA system in assisting Cambodia's Customs Department to increase its customs revenue by 17% from 2021 to 2022 and the cooperation between Cambodia and UNCTAD in following up on the eTrade Readiness Assessment from 2017, when Cambodia became the first pilot country to conducted this report, which has now become a gold standard for e-commerce assessment. We are pleased to report that Cambodia has implemented 92% of its policy actions identified in the eTrade Readiness Report, which is among the top performers in this regard. Relating to this, Cambodia and UNCTAD is working to formulate a paper on e-commerce challenges face by Cambodia for submission to the WTO as part of the discussion on the e-commerce work programme and in building capacity to improve e-commerce and digital economy statistics. Recently, we are working toward integrating electronic advanced data between Customs Declaration System of Cambodia Post with ASYCUDA system of General Department of Customs and Excise to facilitate small parcel shipments.

7. Cambodia and UNCTAD are currently cooperating in other projects as well. This includes the collaboration to support in overcoming trade policy challenges faced by Cambodia that caused by drastic changes in the trade policies of major trading partners. This project undertook a study on the impact of the loss of regional cumulation on the bicycle industry of Cambodia and to provide policy recommendations to overcome those challenges. Another cooperation that is on-going is the support by UNCTAD in formulating the LDC graduation strategy of Cambodia. We are pleased to inform that, recently, a workshop has been conducted to validate some of the findings of the study.

Mr. President,

8. The task before us is of critical importance. We would like to reemphasize that the most vulnerable should be given priority in times of crisis. In the short term, how UNCTAD can respond to the needs of the developing countries and LDCs during the time of polycrisis will define the role of UNCTAD for the coming years. In the long run, UNCTAD's role will be critical in supporting the long-term transformation and developmental needs of the LDCs and graduated LDCs consistent with Bridgetown Covenant and the Doha Programme of Action.

9. I thank you, Mr. President.