



UNCTAD 14

Nairobi, 17–22 July 2016

FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT



UNITED NATIONS
UNCTAD

General Debate

Statement by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic

Wednesday, 20 July 2016

Speaker: Mr. Martin Tlapa

*Not checked against delivery**

* This statement is made available in the language and form in which it was received. The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNCTAD.

**UNCTAD XIV
Nairobi, Kenya
17 – 22 July 2016**

**Statement of the Czech Republic at the General Debate
Delivered by Mr. Martin Tlapa, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs**

Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentleman,

I would like to express, on behalf of the Czech Republic, my sincere thanks to the hosting government of Kenya for the excellent organisation of this event. It is a great pleasure and honour for me to participate in the 14th session of UNCTAD and to address this distinguished audience.

I would like to associate fully with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union as well as the statement of Group D.

As correctly stated in the Report of the Secretary General of UNCTAD to UNCTAD XIV (fourteen), an increased number of developing and transition economies have managed to integrate into the world economy since the time UNCTAD was brought into being more than 50 years ago. Today, exports from developing countries account for half of the world total and even the least developed countries (LDCs) have seen an almost fivefold increase in merchandise exports. Similar trends can be detected in services as well. Developing countries are also a growing source of foreign direct investment, accounting for over one-third of total global outward FDI.

A number of developing countries have become important engines of growth not only for their own regions but also for the global economy. As a consequence, nearly 1 billion people have been lifted out of extreme poverty. This is certainly great news and very welcome development.

However, the same report of the Secretary General of UNCTAD mentions that despite all the remarkable achievements of the developing countries, there are still too many nations and people left behind. Poverty and inequality, both between and even more within nations, remain a challenge. Over 1 billion people continue to live in extreme poverty and dramatic reduction in poverty occurred only in a few large emerging countries. In some countries, the number of people living in extreme poverty has even increased and many people in our world have been experiencing chronic hunger.

The year 2015 witnessed several important and successful international conferences that addressed these issues. The 3rd International Conference on Financing for Development, the United Nations Sustainable Development

Summit, the 21th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 10th World Trade Organisation Ministerial Conference were the most important of them.

I strongly believe that it is not our task to renegotiate the consensual results of these conferences. We have rather contribute to their implementation. The main topic of our conference “From decision to action: moving toward an inclusive and equitable global economic environment for trade and development” should certainly be guidance for us.

UNCTAD should fully and as soon as possible mainstream the globally adopted goals into its daily work. Despite the universally shared consensus that each country has the primary responsibility for its own economic and social development, UNCTAD can, according to my opinion, play a positive role in implementation of SDGs. While assisting its Member States, UNCTAD should stick to its core mandate and concentrate on areas where it has built a competitive advantage and gained value added.

UNCTAD should remain the focal point in the United Nations for the integrated treatment of trade and development, and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development. UNCTAD should also continue working through its three pillars of consensus-building, research and technical assistance, which remain useful platform for dialogue between developed and developing partners. However, we would suggest that UNCTAD focus on what it does best - well-targeted assistance on the ground.

UNCTAD should closely cooperate with other international organisations such as ILO, WTO, the OECD, regional and international financial institutions or the International Trade Centre. At the same time their work should not overlap.

The Czech Republic agrees with the proposal of the Secretary General of UNCTAD, contained in his Report to UNCTAD XIV, that the specific action lines where UNCTAD can and should make maximum contribution for the post-2015 era are fourfold:

- (a) Building productive capacity to transform economies;
- (b) More effective States and more efficient markets;
- (c) Tackling vulnerabilities, building resilience;
- (d) Strengthening multilateralism, finding common solutions.

As a representative of a country, which believes in market economy, I would like to express our strong conviction that markets can work efficiently only if governments are competent enough to ensure a level-playing field for all

their actors. Therefore, we especially welcome all UNCTAD activities aimed at this target.

Equally important are, in our opinion, the programmes of UNCTAD that tackle inequalities between urban and rural areas and between men and women as economic players.

I would also like to express our opinion that priority of UNCTAD should continue to be the most vulnerable economies, in particular the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, Small Island Developing Countries, African economies and fragile states.

To conclude, let me assure you that my country, the Czech Republic, is fully committed to the success of UNCTAD XIV (fourteen) and to its positive and ambitious outcome based on a global partnership for development. We hope that the result of our deliberations will serve as a good basis for the work of UNCTAD in the next four years. The time to move from decision to action is now.

Thank you for your attention.