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General Debate

Statement by the Minister of Trade of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

Monday, 18 July 2016

Speaker: H.E. Yaekob Yalla

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**Statement by H.E Yaekob Yalla, Minister of Trade of the Government of the Federal
Democratic Republic of Ethiopia at the General debate**

**Mr. Chaiman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

At the outset I would like to express Ethiopia's appreciation to the Government of Kenyan for hosting this important Ministerial Conference and for its generous hospitality and excellent organization.

Mr. Chairman,

The theme of the conference "From decision to action: Moving towards an inclusive and equitable economic environment for trade and development": underlines the overriding desire of the international community on how to ensure an inclusive and sustainable development for all in the face of systemic challenges that we are confronted with today. Today, the hindrances that nations find themselves under different socio-economic conditions and the challenges of making the process of globalization are huge.

Regardless of the achievements obtained in implementing most of MDGs in a good number of our countries, it is unfortunate that, millions of people are still living in extreme poverty and hunger without access to basic needs and services. The gap between the poor and rich has widened; climate change and environmental degradation are undermining development gains, conflicts and terrorism continue to pose the biggest threat to human development and even to the day-to-day activities in all corners of the world. All these challenges call for an urgent collective and concerted actions of the global community.

This conference is taking place in the aftermath of the adoption of an international framework; the Agenda 2030, which has not only gone considerable lengths in crafting targeted gals, but also in addressing challenges associated with their implementation based on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. The SDG recognizes, inter alia, trade as an engine for helping to ensure economic growth and sustainable development for all nations.

However, without addressing fair and equitable international trade environment, implementation of the global agenda will remain as a serious challenge in the future. The efforts of developing

countries by itself without favorable international economic environment cannot achieve the intended purpose. In this regard, this conference should set clear direction and its outcome document should strengthen the developmental efforts of our countries at both national and global levels.

Mr. Chairman,

In Ethiopia we have been successfully implementing development strategies, policies and programs that aim at achieving broad-based, rapid and sustained economic growth in the past 12 years. Notwithstanding global fluctuations in commodity prices and global financial crises, our economy has registered a continuous double digit growth annually. As a result, the level of extreme poverty has significantly reduced from close to 40% in 2010 to 23% in 2015. In absolute terms 2.5 million people or 50,000 people per year have been pulled out of poverty. Ethiopia believe that the time has come for the international community to show its collective wisdom and leadership to effectively deal with the issues of common interest.

Mr. Chairman,

I need to stress here that, in order for developing countries, including Ethiopia to better equip themselves to deal with the challenges of development, policy space in the areas of trade and development, is more than critical. It is also equally important to underline the fact that the enhanced support of international community in the form of dealing with fair and equitable international trade including reducing domestic support and subsidy, development assistance, flow of FDI and transfer of technology is also critical.

In this regard, the outcome document of this conference need to address these issues through pragmatic decisions and action-oriented ways that ensure an inclusive and equitable global economic environment.

In conclusion Mr. Chairman, it would be a remiss if I do not express our gratitude for UNCTAD's decision to open its first Regional Office for Africa in Addis Ababa to closely and better serve the continent. We praise UNCTAD for this major decision and would like to reassure the full commitment of the Government of Ethiopia in supporting UNCTAD's effort.

I thank you