



# 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 Commerce Secretary of India

Wednesday, 20 July 2016

Speaker: Ms. Rita A. Teotia

*Not checked against delivery\**

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\* 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.



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**Statement by India during the General Debate of UNCTAD XIV, Nairobi on 20 July 2016 delivered by Ms. Rita A. Teotia, Commerce Secretary of India**

Distinguished Chair,  
Excellencies,  
Fellow delegates,

1. It gives me great pleasure to be here in Nairobi, a city popularly known as 'the Green City in the Sun', for the Fourteenth Ministerial Conference of the UNCTAD. I express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Government of Kenya and its people for the warm hospitality extended to me and to my delegation. My thanks also to Secretary General UNCTAD Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi and his team for their dedication in preparing for this Conference. Our appreciation to G-77 Chair Ambassador Wayne McCook of Jamaica for his ceaseless efforts in steering the negotiation process ably on behalf of the group.

Ladies and Gentlemen

2. The establishment of UNCTAD in 1964 was a landmark event in the history of the evolution of the United Nations. India was the first country to host the UNCTAD Conference outside its Headquarters in Geneva in 1968. From its inception UNCTAD was the focal point for an integrated and holistic management of all trade and related development challenges. It has been a useful forum for challenging conventional wisdom and, thereby, providing policy analysis to help transform and democratize international economic relations.
3. UNCTAD XIV Conference is taking place at an opportune moment when the world is seeking answers for the many challenges it is facing. At a

time when unfulfilled promises are leading to pessimism, this Conference reminds us of the urgent need for translating ideas into reality and decisions into actions. In doing so we should give primacy to the well established principles of equity, inclusiveness, common but differentiated responsibilities and special and differential treatment.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. Last September the world community set for itself ambitious SDGs to be realized in the next 15 years. India believes these SDGs can be achieved through well coordinated multilateral actions based on partnership, mutual trust and collaboration. Harnessing technology is most crucial for achieving SDGs at a faster rate. The use of Information and Communication Technologies can go a long way in plugging leakages and waste. Access to technologies is crucial for many developing countries. In this regard the establishment of Technology Facilitation Mechanism was timely. We strongly believe this Mechanism must support technology access and transfer to developing countries. Similarly, access to credit and finance is equally critical for infrastructure development and fostering entrepreneurship in developing countries.
5. The South-South cooperation is an important voluntary paradigm. Global challenges demand global responses and collective actions, which is why, North-South cooperation is imperative for realizing SDGs. I am confident that greater transparency in North-South cooperation, in the inter-governmental context, will enrich this dialogue further. India strongly believes that UNCTAD should take a lead in this regard.
6. We also welcome the UNCTAD's analytical tools to serve as an effective guide for course correction. We believe that such tools should take into account the initiatives of developing countries that have a direct bearing on poverty alleviation. At the same time we should remain cautious of any prescriptive approaches that set high benchmarks and parameters, which will only make it difficult for developing countries to accede. We commend UNCTAD on the launch of a global NTBs data base which, we urge, should form the basis of a framework and guidelines to develop a globally acceptable architecture on NTBs.
7. India feels that the policy space for all countries should be preserved as we move towards achieving SDGs. We are grateful to UNCTAD that has pioneered and articulated this concept since its inception. This freedom

of choice is especially important for developing countries because their public policies and national development strategies are still evolving.

8. India believes that UNCTAD can play an important role in creating effective global responses for tackling tax evasion and tax avoidance by Multinational Corporations. These lost revenues could be used for mobilizing resources for implementation of the SDGs by developing countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen

9. The role of the multilateral trading system is particularly crucial in the current global economic slowdown. The credibility of the institution rests on ensuring outcomes that respond to the needs and interests of all its members, and not just a few. It is also important that trade remains inclusive and is able to support the 'development' initiatives of the nations. In this regard UNCTAD need to work closely with WTO in designing an inclusive trade liberalization strategy.
10. Implementation of the Bali and Nairobi Ministerial decisions would, in our view, produce positive outcomes and restore the credibility of the WTO. Advancing negotiations on the remaining DDA issues, including in the area of agriculture, should remain a priority for the multilateral trading system. One of the most significant outcomes of Nairobi MC 10 was our commitment to the Trade Facilitation Agreement. However, this work remains incomplete until it encompasses Services which is the fastest growing segment of global trade. We strongly support a Trade Facilitation Agreement for Services to complete the work of Trade Facilitation in the WTO and also support the critical SDG number 9 that pertains to Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure.
11. It is coincidental that the UNCTAD XIV is taking place in Kenya, a country which is considered as a gateway to Africa. India considers Africa a cherished partner in progress. Our Prime Minister Modi recently concluded a successful tour of four African Nations, including this beautiful country Kenya in order to deepen India's engagement with Africa. The third India-Africa Forum Summit took place in New Delhi in October 2015. the India Africa Framework for Strategic Cooperation was adopted at this Summit which outlines a multi-faceted strategy to actively partner Africa's Agenda 2063.

12. India is committed to the development agenda of all developing countries. Our Developmental Cooperation is based on the principle that our partners determine and decide the priorities and contours of their development projects. This fundamentally differentiates our “partnership model” from the traditional “donor-recipient model”. Besides, Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme has for years been delivering technical assistance, technology transfer and capacity building for our developing country partners. Through India’s Duty Free Tariff Preference (DFTP) scheme LDC countries are able to enjoy zero tariff market access upto 98.2% of our tariff lines. Similarly Services our sector has been considerably liberalized for LDCs.

Ladies and Gentlemen

13. I would like to reiterate India’s continuing support for UNCTAD as the focal point within the UN for the integrated treatment of trade and development and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development.
14. India wishes to see UNCTAD play a more active role in working towards a balanced agenda that is able to bring greater equity, transparency, inclusiveness and openness in trade related issues so that development remains at the center stage of the Multilateral system and the Sustainable Development Goals realized fully for the greater good of humanity.
15. We wish UNCTAD 14 all success.

Thank you.