



# UNCTAD 14

## Nairobi, 17–22 July 2016

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### General Debate

Statement by the Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives of the Republic of Uganda

Tuesday, 19 July 2016

Speaker: Honourable Amelia Anne Kyambadde

*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.



**THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

**MINISTRY OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES**

**STATEMENT BY HON. AMELIA ANNE KYAMBADDE  
MINISTER OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES**

**DURING UNCTAD XIV, NAIROBI, KENYA, 17th – 22nd  
JULY,  
2016**

**19th July, 2016**

Your Excellencies  
Secretary General UNCTAD  
Distinguished Delegates  
Ladies and Gentlemen

Chairperson

Uganda applauds the Government and the people of the Republic of Kenya for hosting UNCTAD 14, just after hosting the 10<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference in December 2015.

UNCTAD 14 Conference could not have been held under a better theme than: ***“From decision to action: Moving towards an inclusive and equitable global economic environment for trade and development”***.

This theme challenges us not only to make the right decisions but to implement them for the transformation of our countries, particularly, the LDCs.

Isn't it unfortunate that the total share of Global trade for all Least Developed Countries is less than 2% when UNCTAD has existed for more than 50 years? Isn't it clear

that the disparity continues to expand and that the rich continue to get richer and the poor poorer? How can we then aspire to deliver the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development?

Chairperson,

UNCTAD should now focus on the needs of the LDCs with the aim of strengthening their role in the global economy on the basis of the principles of justice, equity, inclusiveness and differential treatment.

Africa with her vast natural resources should adopt a paradigm shift of investing in them; minerals, tourism, agriculture, women and youth. It has about 600 million acres of uncultivated arable land, roughly 60% of the global total arable land and it has 30% of global mineral reserves. It has rich water bodies. It has a huge young population which though currently poses an employment crisis, can be harnessed into a potential labour force if strategically skilled. The problem is that much of these resources are barely harnessed, but we are optimistic that we shall attain the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 because of the enormous economic opportunities.

We can achieve all this by creating conducive policy environment to support our Private Sector, vocational skilling of our youth and empowering our women. Skills are not rocket science! Why do we run around looking for investors when we can empower our own youth? We need markets and partnerships with organizations like UNCTAD to be able to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

As LDCs, we must add value to the commodities in which we have comparative advantage so that we do not lose revenue through trading in unprocessed goods. For example, Uganda has coffee, Kenya has horticultural products and tea, Bangladesh has jute and Botswana has beef.

Let us consolidate our multilateral trade by promoting technology transfer and industrialization in order to trade in processed goods. We must increase considerably our investments in value addition to upgrade our trade from merely raw materials to manufactured products.

We are convinced that as LDCs we have the potential to help transform ourselves into middle income countries

within the foreseeable future. It is embarrassing that forty four (44) years since the United Nations classified certain countries as LDCs; only four (4) countries have graduated from this category.

We must improve our intra LDC trade. In Africa, our total intra-Africa trade is only about 11% of our global trade compared to 50% intra-regional trade in developing Asia and as much as 70% in Europe. In addressing this low level of intra trade amongst LDCs, we must focus on the need and urgency to improve the infrastructural interconnectivity amongst ourselves.

Chairperson,

Uganda has programmed to become a middle income country by 2020 through its vision 2040 under the theme: **“A transformed Ugandan Society from a Peasant to a Modern and Prosperous country within 30 years”**. It is conceptualized around strengthening the fundamentals of the economy to harness the abundant opportunities in the country.

Uganda's Vision 2040 lays out strategies to address: a weak Private Sector and underdeveloped human resources; inadequate infrastructure; small market; lack of industrialization, underdeveloped services sector and underdeveloped agriculture among others.

We have invested heavily in Universal Primary Education (UPE) which has raised the Country's literary rate to 71%. We have adopted affirmative action to empower women in all spheres including education and governance. We have established a dedicated Youth Fund to enhance the capacity and potential of the youth. The development of science and technology has been accorded high status within the National Development Plan.

We have embarked on aggressive investment and development of our infrastructure especially roads, energy, ICT and railway. Within the East African Community, there is great momentum to upgrade our rail interconnectivity from the Colonial narrow gauge railway to the Standard Gauge Railway. We are promoting a coordinated regional grain trade through Warehouse Receipt System and Commodity Exchange.

We know that the realization of our Vision 2040 is an uphill journey, but not insurmountable. We seek global strategic partnerships in this endeavor.

Chairperson,

For UNCTAD to make tangible contribution towards Agenda 2030, I propose ten areas that it should focus on:

- 1) Enhancing skills development;
- 2) Promoting industrialization;
- 3) Value addition;
- 4) Promoting Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) development;
- 5) Mobilizing women and youth into SDGs activities;
- 6) Mobilizing domestic resources for investment;
- 7) Embracing functional and effective regional integration in our respective continents;
- 8) Promoting and expanding intra LDC trade;
- 9) Strong support to the Private Sector;
- 10) Promoting trade in services;

What we expect from the multilateral system: WTO, UN and its Agencies, Civil Society etc. is the formation of synergies so that we work together to achieve the goals that we set



for ourselves as LDCs. We must adopt the ***Harambe*** spirit as alluded to by H.E the President of Namibia.

As I conclude, UNCTAD should now focus on partnering with LDCs in supporting them with research and development, technical assistance in skills development, value addition and industrialization in order to have a leveled playing field.

Do we believe in the goals of the SDGs? If yes, then we believe we can achieve them.

Chairperson,

It is my conviction that all the valuable contributions made by the speakers on achieving the SDGs by 2030 should be translated into practical actions so that our theme “From decision to action” becomes a reality.

I thank you for listening to me.