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General Debate

Statement by Zimbabwe

Wednesday, 20 July 2016

Speaker: H.E. T. Mushayavanhu

*Not checked against delivery**

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**STATEMENT BY THE ZIMBABWE HEAD OF DELEGATION
H.E. T. MUSHAYAVANHU IN THE GENERAL DEBATE AT
UNCTAD XIV, NAIROBI, KENYA: 20 JULY 2016:
16:30 HRS**

Thank you Madam President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, let me congratulate and thank the Government of the Republic of Kenya for the gracious offer to host UNCTAD14. I also wish to express my delegation's profound gratitude for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to us since our arrival in this beautiful city of Nairobi.

I wish to also associate my delegation with the statements made by Tanzania on behalf of the G77 and China and by Namibia on behalf of the African Group.

Madam President,

As has been said by others before me, this is not the first time that Kenya is hosting an UNCTAD conference. The fact that our predecessors were here in 1976 for the fourth session is, indeed, ample demonstration of Kenya's commitment to multilateralism and international development cooperation.

Madam President,

2015 was a particularly remarkable year for multilateralism, culminating in the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, our global blueprint for the next fifteen years. With UNCTAD14 being the first major conference after the World Summit last year, this conference carries the hopes of many people in our countries. We therefore shoulder enormous

responsibilities of translating into reality the vision of our leaders and making an UNCTAD contribution to the development dividend promised in the 2030 Agenda.

Madam President,

Against this background, the views of our partners in the negotiations for a new UNCTAD mandate beyond Nairobi has been a source of anxiety for my delegation and many others. As the first major conference after the World Summit, we are concerned at what appears to be a repudiation of the recently agreed global agenda, even before the ink has dried on the agreement reached in New York last year. Our own sense has been and continues to be that the Nairobi outcome should have an enduring legacy and a demonstration effect on the wider implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the broader 2030 Agenda. We should therefore take great care and make sure that, we do not lose, here in Nairobi, the gains that were achieved in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda. In fact, I dare say, we need to come out with a stronger mandate than Doha to match the high ambitions and expectations from the 2030 Agenda. However, where agreement is difficult to reach, we should not hesitate to revert to those stronger mandates from the past which are still valid and relevant for the challenges that we continue to face today.

In the last few years, a number of African countries were identified as shining examples of high economic growth on the back of a commodities boom. However, international prices have since plummeted, and the consequences are all too evident across Africa and other parts of the developing world. What is clear is that the much vaunted economic growth rates failed to make a significant dent on high unemployment and levels of poverty because commodity-driven growth is not sustainable. What the "Africa Rising" narrative missed at the time, was the absence of economic diversification. Hence, what we require are policies that promote our

effective and equitable integration into the global economy through meaningful participation in the manufacturing value chains at all levels.

Madam President,

Most of us are back here in Nairobi after MC10 last December. As developing countries, we made a clarion call during MC10 for the restoration of development to the centre of the Doha Development Agenda. Now, only half a year after MC10, the development dimension is not only being crowded out by the so-called twenty-first century new issues, but we are also witnessing a sustained campaign to scuttle even the Doha Development Round itself. When these good initiatives are under threat elsewhere, as in this case, UNCTAD should speak in defence of the economic development pillar of the DDA. In this regard, I wish to reiterate our call for the completion of the Doha Development Round, with development at its centre.

Madam President,

Nairobi should reaffirm the principle of policy space which guarantees each and every nation the right to chart its own development path and destiny. The unique challenges of individual countries are not susceptible to universal, one size-fits-all solution, but call for a chemistry of policy instruments and measures, appropriate and relevant to individual national circumstances. Consequently, every nation should be allowed to leverage its resources and explore the best combination of policy instruments and policies that are both adequate and effective to deal with its challenges.

Madam President,

The revitalized Global Partnership referred to in the 2030 Agenda must be a genuine partnership in which the rich and powerful among us truly partner the poor and vulnerable. It is therefore wrong, illegal and immoral for the powerful among us to impose unilateral coercive measures against selected developing countries, and then blame and condemn them for the

misery, poverty and suffering caused by those same sanctions. We need to move away from the language of sanctions to a new development paradigm that calls for concerted global action in addressing the special needs and challenges facing developing countries. If there are any disagreements, the United Nations has adequate instruments at its disposal for the peaceful settlement of disputes between and among States.

Finally, I wish to conclude by noting that, since its birth in 1964, UNCTAD has served us well as the incubator and market place of many great ideas and initiatives whose fruition we have celebrated across the broad spectrum of multilateral agencies. It is in this regard that Zimbabwe calls for the strengthening of UNCTAD's broad mandate as 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. Nairobi should, therefore, not be a reference point for a weakened UNCTAD, but a shining beacon for a revitalized organization, which is so dear to many of our countries.

I thank you Mr President