

**GRULAC UNCTAD
GENEVA**

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Álvaro Cedeño Molinari
Ambassador Permanent Representative of Costa Rica
On behalf of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC)
At the 76th Session of the Working Party on the Strategic Framework
and the Programme Budget**

Geneva 3-5 September 2018

Item 3 - Review of the technical cooperation activities of UNCTAD and their financing

Madam Chairperson, Ms. Charline van der Beek (Austria)
Ms. Isabelle Durant, Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD,
Mr. Raul Javaloyes, Chief, Technical Cooperation Service, UNCTAD
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement of behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC). On first stance, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Chairperson of the Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget.
2. On the occasion of the 76th Session of the Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the Programme Budget, the members of GRULAC would like to express their appreciation to UNCTAD for the support received in terms of technical cooperation.
3. The three pillars on which UNCTAD's work is traced maintain the same strategic importance to the organization, as reaffirmed in the Nairobi Maafikiano. As such, GRULAC acknowledges technical cooperation as a fundamental element for the creation of capacities and empowerment of LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS and SWVEs.
4. In 2017, expenditures on country and regional projects in Latin America and the Caribbean increased significantly, to reach \$5.7 million, 39% higher than in 2016. This funding has been directed to important projects for the Group in areas like trade facilitation through the ASYCUDA programme; investment promotion by means of the work programme on International Investment Agreements; SME support to strengthen the skillset of local entrepreneurs thanks to the Empretec development programme; corporate reporting offered by the Accounting Development Tool; and assessments of vulnerabilities to climate and transport infrastructures in Caribbean SIDS.
5. Country and regional projects within GRULAC coming from technical cooperation rose from 11% in 2016 to 14% in 2017. These expenditures have helped to implement 22 country-level projects and 8 regional projects in Latin America and the Caribbean. The support that GRULAC has received through these projects has contributed to our efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Climate Agreement. Even more so with the update of UNCTAD's Toolbox, which provides better synergies among technical cooperation topics and the Sustainable Development Goals, facilitating the identification of activities appropriately tailored to the demands.

6. Likewise, the Group supports UNCTAD's interinstitutional cooperation efforts to promote collaboration among divisions and other UN agencies and partners with the purpose of integrating trade and development issues. Also, GRULAC continues supporting the delivery of specific activities for the effective implementation of the mandate of paragraph 38 r), on the impact of non-tariff barriers and development, as outlined in the Nairobi Maafikiano.

7. Notwithstanding, the Group would like to express its concern regarding the decrease in voluntary funding for Technical Cooperation experienced in 2017. Trust fund resources experienced an important drop of 12% from the reduction in contributions coming from developed and developing members. This decline in resources compromises UNCTAD's capability to assist developing countries in the fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda.

8. In this regard, the Group calls upon donors to recognize the importance of technical assistance and capacity building for developing countries, LDCs, LLDCs; SIDS and SWVEs, and respectfully request for their continuous support for programme-based activities. The strengthening of projects through cooperation remains pivotal in enhancing productive capacities and promoting sustainable development, particularly in response to the challenges that the 21st century places upon us.

Madam Chairperson,

9. The Group reiterates its commitment on being accountable of the technical cooperation it receives to strengthen the role of its members in the global economy. In that sense, the members of GRULAC who are part of the Group of 77 and China associate ourselves with the statement made by the distinguished Chair of the G77 and China.

I thank you.