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Speaker: Asian Group

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Statement
by H.E. Ambassador Abbas Bagherpour, Deputy Permanent
Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran,
on behalf of the Asian Group
At the 4th Session of the Trade and Development
Commission
Geneva, 12 November 2012

Mr. Mr. Chairman,
Secretary General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Asian Group. The Group aligns itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the G77 and China.

At the outset allow me to congratulate you on your election as the chairman of this Commission. We are confident that under your leadership the Commission will lead to a successful outcome.

Mr. Chairman,

Although for this session of the Commission, we have no substantive agenda item, however this has given us the opportunity to discuss more deeply the content of the expert meetings reports which provide us sufficient substantive inputs on issues related to trade and development. Now let me address some of the important issues related to international trade and development.

Mr. Chairman,

The world economy continues to suffer from the fallout of the financial crisis. It has not yet recovered and downside risks are growing again and a problem of contagion remains serious.

Further to the impacts of the global economic crisis, persisting and emerging challenges such as high levels of inequality, poverty and unemployment and climate change suffer developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

We are all aware that trade and international trading system is the engine of development; however it should be underlined that the global trade is interlinked to the global financial and monetary systems and cannot be addressed in isolation. As long as unreformed and unrepentant financial sector and macroeconomic policies continue, developing countries will not be able to gain from the global trade, to sustain their growth and to move towards sustainable development.

The other key issue is the role of the international trading system for development. There is no doubt that a fair and balanced international trading system would contribute to the global development agenda. In this context the development mandate of the Round is very important and must be reflected in any outcome. However it is regrettable that the WTO's Doha Round is still at impasse. In fact we need a real political will and commitment to overcome such a deadlock.

The other important issue is to integrate all developing countries to the global trade. In this regard there is a need to facilitate the accession process of developing countries to WTO. We thank UNCTAD for its activities to this end and call UNCTAD to continue and intensify its analytical work as well as technical cooperation and capacity building support to acceding countries.

Mr. Chairman,

In order for trade to contribute to more inclusive development paths, UNCTAD should also continue its work based on its three pillars on the interface between trade and inclusive growth and sustainable development against the backdrop of current and emerging challenges and opportunities

such as non-tariff measures, trade policy, multilateral and regional trade, services, trade financing, and job creation. UNCTAD should work on policies, and strategies to enhance the participation of developing countries in international trade and the trading system in a manner that also results in development gains and the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). UNCTAD should also contribute to raising awareness of successful strategies and trade policies to address the impact of the global financial and economic crisis on international trade, poverty alleviation, employment creation and economic recovery.

Coming back to the reports of the expert meetings allow me also to highlight some of the important issues highlighted by the experts. With regard to the trade logistics, UNCTAD should assist developing countries through its three pillars on improving transit corridors, promoting investment in infrastructure such as roads, rails and ports and support regional transport. On Commodities, from the supply side, the limitations stemmed from a lack of infrastructure, insufficient access to technology and financing for producers the need for actions that would ensure long-term sustainability for the production, distribution and use of commodities, and the need to seek new ways of overcoming market volatility. With regard to the Services, we need to highlight the importance of this sector, especially infrastructure services, and its untapped potential for generating growth, employment and developmental benefits. UNCTAD could work on all these field through its analytical and technical cooperation activities.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, since we will soon engage in a process to prepare the 50th Anniversary of UNCTAD, and to contribute to the review of MDGs as well as the formulation of the post-2015 development agenda, we hope that our deliberations in this Commission and successful conclusion of this session could contribute to this processes and lead to more gains for developing countries.