



**GROUP OF 77 & CHINA
G E N E V A**

**Statement by Afghanistan on behalf of the
Group of 77 and China at the 12th Session of the
Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission**

**Item 5 – Progress report on promoting and
strengthening synergies among the three pillars
Presentation by the Division on Technology and Logistics**

15 February 2021

Chair of the twelfth Session of the Investment, Enterprise and Development Commission Ambassador Omar Zniber of Morocco,
Director Shamika Sirimanne of the Division on Technology and Logistics,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Mr. Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to thank Director Shamika Sirimanne for her presentation. We would also like to reiterate our previous remarks about the importance of the interdependence and mutual reinforcement of the three pillars.
2. Digitalization is fundamentally transforming our economies and societies, with significant implications for Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. This process has been further accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has shown the value of digital solutions for maintaining economic activities as well as reminding us of the wide divides that exist.
3. UNCTAD has shown leadership by providing new forums to discuss the development dimension of e-commerce and the digital economy. Its new research explains how the growing reliance on digital platforms and data creates both opportunities and challenges for developing countries, which has been a very useful contribution. In addition, the latest support initiatives such as eTrade for all, eTrade for Women, eTrade Readiness Assessments, eCommerce Strategies, and Measuring e-commerce, are supporting countries that are trailing the furthest behind in terms of digital readiness.
4. Despite inspiring examples of international cooperation in the response to the pandemic, COVID-19 has highlighted the intolerable inequalities that exist in the ability of countries to use science, technology and innovation to respond to long-standing problems of development. Unequal access to treatments, vaccines, and health-related technologies represents a catastrophic moral failure.
5. The international community must ensure that all countries enjoy equal access to the benefits of technology to deliver life-saving vaccines and treatments for the pandemic, and beyond that, to ensure that the effects of COVID-19 do not result in many lost years in progress towards the achievement of the SDGs. Strengthening international cooperation and a commitment to global solidarity are critical enablers for ensuring that all countries have the technological capabilities and productive capacities needed to locally produce the health supplies required to tackle current and future health emergencies.

6. In this regard, our Group welcomes the technical assistance and capacity building programmes developed by UNCTAD under the Commission on Science and Technology for Development in partnership with Brazil, China and Japan. Our Group invites other member States in a position to do so to support UNCTAD's technical assistance and capacity building to boost developing countries efforts to deploy science, technology and innovation for sustainable development.

7. Finally, the Group of 77 and China would like to see strengthening of UNCTAD work on science, technology and innovation for development, in the three pillars of its work, and therefore looks forward to the treatment of such issues in the fifteenth session of the UNCTAD Conference in a manner that is commensurate with their critical role.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.