

**Statement by H.E. Dr. Hamad bin Abdelaziz Al-Kawari
President of UNCTAD XIII to the
Trade and Development Board at its fifty-ninth session**

Draft as of 9 September 2012

Mr. President.

1. Allow me at the outset to thank you Mr. President for your kind invitation to address the opening of the first regular session of the Trade and Development Board since we celebrated UNCTAD XIII in Doha a few short months ago.
2. I would also like to express my admiration for Ambassador Maruping's leadership at a very trying time. His true wisdom, patience, and above all else firm principles, brought out the best in all of us, and made it possible for the seemingly impossible to become reality. He truly leaves very big shoes for his successor to fill, and I wish his successor all the best as he lives up to the very high standards set by Ambassador Maruping.
3. Allow me also to thank Dr. Supachai for his stewardship and leadership of the secretariat. I extend to him my congratulations for the good work he has done, and for the excellent efforts of the secretariat to ensure that UNCTAD continues to deliver for development and for developing countries.
4. His excellent stewardship of the secretariat through two conferences contributed to the difficult consensus building process, and his leadership and vision of a global economic system in which all of humanity benefits, and in which no one is left out, reflects what UNCTAD is about, and what our work in the field of development should be in the pursuit of.

Mr. President.

5. In Doha, we addressed a fitting theme: *"Development Centered Globalization: Towards Inclusive and Sustainable Growth."* At this session, we are inspired by that theme, and our interactions and consensus building at this session launch, in effect, the work we have all agreed to pursue under the Doha Mandate in the spirit of the Doha Manar.
6. Translating our intergovernmental consensus into action will be challenging yet rewarding. I recall that arriving at a consensus on the negotiated outcome document was not an easy task. Indeed, given the magnitude of the global challenges of our time, any outcome would have been major task –and a good outcome a minor miracle. Perhaps we were blessed because the outcome of the conference was a good agreement.
7. A good agreement can be defined in many ways. It can be good because it brings parties together in dialogue. It can be better if in bringing them together, this results in a clearer common understanding of shared interests. It can be the best agreement if it results in an agreed course of action to realize the common good. The Doha Mandate

– the conference's negotiated outcome - and the Doha Manar – the political declaration – are the best kinds of agreement.

8. It is therefore with great satisfaction that Qatar greeted the intergovernmental agreement reached, as it demonstrated clearly that the international community understood our resolve as the host country to strengthen UNCTAD, and to continue our strong and focused engagement. The personal attention of H.H. the Emir of Qatar, who addressed the Conference and visited the venue twice, set the tone for the successful conclusion for UNCTAD XIII.
9. Through intense and at times difficult negotiations and discussions, including a particularly challenging preparatory process, it became clear that the only chance at a good agreement was for the member states to make the ultimate sacrifice in diplomacy – to embrace the bigger picture no matter how challenging the circumstances may be, and no matter how strong the temptation to resort to parochialism.
10. I am proud to say that I was part of a process where this is precisely what happened. Despite the lack of faith of some, and despite the worst fears of others, you – we - the member states - embraced the courage to do the right thing. We bridged our differences. We addressed the difficult issues. We embraced the spirit of consensus and compromised for the sake of each other. I hope that this will continue.
11. What is even more earthshaking is the clear manifestation of the will of member states to take their ownership of UNCTAD more vigorously, to strengthen the consensus-building pillar. This is especially encouraging given the need for alternative venues to discuss ideas that have a cross-cutting nature and impact, so that they may be then brought into the relevant negotiating forums, be they the WTO, IMF, and beyond.
12. UNCTAD can, and should, serve as a unique venue where consensus can be built, and captured. Convergence can be reached and captured without necessarily being negotiated. This has been the case, for example, at some key sessions of the TDB on key issues of the day. The outcomes of those meetings may not have been negotiated documents, but the intellectual convergence they captured served as important inputs to negotiations elsewhere. UNCTAD therefore is a place to exchange ideas to be brought forth to the relevant negotiating bodies, thus bringing greater coherence to the global discourse on development.

Mr. President,

13. As we look forward to the work of the next four years, I reiterate what I said in Qatar, and what I declared in New York shortly after the Conference: ours will be an active presidency. I will continue to give UNCTAD my personal attention.
14. We will help to make UNCTAD more effective in contributing to the broader global discourse on development. We will closely monitor the implementation of our collective achievement. And we will spare no effort to be available to help build consensus among member states on the key development issues of our day.
15. Our commitment to inclusive and sustainable development, fostered by a new culture of international economic relations, has been forged in Doha, and will help guide our

presidency over the next four years. In this we have as our priority ensuring that UNCTAD will contribute meaningfully to the major development-related processes ahead.

16. For example, we expect that UNCTAD will contribute proactively to the substantive preparations and review of the Millennium Development Goals in 2015. One possible contribution would be the definition and articulation of new global goals on inclusiveness of the multilateral trading system and the building of the fundamental economic capacities essential for national development and meaningful participation in the global economic system.
17. We also expect that UNCTAD will continue to contribute its ideas on overcoming the global financial crisis, especially from the perspective of the trade and financial implications of developing countries. We also expect UNCTAD to contribute to the implementation of the Rio plus 20 outcomes, and the process to define sustainable development goals.
18. Central to all of this, and an event meriting great anticipation and contemplation is the forthcoming 50th anniversary of UNCTAD in 2014, which also coincides with the mid-term review of UNCTAD XIII. We expect that 2014 will be a landmark year for development, and preparations for that singularly important year should begin in earnest.
19. We expect nothing less than a major forward-looking contribution from UNCTAD, building on its half century of excellence. I am proud that those events will take place during the Qatari presidency of the Conference, and we will remain fully seized and focused in our contributions to make those landmark events meaningful, and memorable.

Thank you Mr. President.

