

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

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Geneva, 16–27 September 2013

Opening Plenary

Speaker: His Excellency

Dr. Hamad al-Kuwari

Minister of Arts, Culture, and Heritage of the state of Qatar

President of UNCTAD XIII

Monday, 16 September 2013

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**Statement of His Excellency
Dr. Hamad al-Kuwari
Minister of Arts, Culture, and Heritage of the state of Qatar
President of UNCTAD XIII
Opening of the 60th Session of the Trade and Development Board
Geneva, 16 September 2013**

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Mr. President.

1. It is my pleasure to be in Geneva once again for the opening of the regular session of the Trade and Development Board. I have been with you at various sessions of the TDB, and have borne witness to the gradual and steady implementation of the Doha outcomes. For myself, and for my country, this is important not just as the host of UNCTAD XIII. For Qatar and for myself, this institution represents the very aspirations of the developing world for a brighter future.
2. At this 60th session of the Board, we have once again the opportunity for those dreams to be articulated, as well as for the development agenda to be advanced. While it is true that UNCTAD's mandate is not all encompassing, by its very holistic nature it means that all aspects of the global development discourse somehow find their niche in UNCTAD.
3. This holistic mandate, and the broad vision that it engenders, is especially important given the unique opportunities that we have before us. In the very few years ahead, we have a unique opportunity to deliver on the contemporary global development agenda, and to fundamentally transform the global approach to development. If we embrace the opportunity entrusted to us, we can ensure the brighter future that humanity should deserve. In this, the magnitude of the task is eclipsed only by the magnitude of the opportunities before us. History has given us a responsibility that we should not, that we cannot, ignore.
4. This should inspire a degree of ambition not seen since the earliest days of the United Nations, when the world aspired for a new beginning. Since then, we have accomplished much. We have changed much. But so much more remains to be done.
5. As we near the landmark year of 2015, when the Millennium Development Goals are to have been achieved, and when we rethink the global development agenda, we must have as our ambition the transformation of the global development agenda into something more: something more effective; something more sustainable; something more positive.
6. Such an approach will require the global community to have a frank and candid evaluation of what has worked, and what has not. It will force us to truly listen and respect the differences between us, including different values

and priorities. And it will force us to make commitments: to action, and of resources.

7. In the years ahead, we must therefore strive to ensure that the global economic system delivers on its development promises. We must ensure that the efforts of individual states are supported and enabled by a global economic system that has development at its heart. And we must transform the nature and spirit of the global partnership for development to ensure that at its core, sovereign states support each other and enable each other to play their rightful and necessary role as the enablers of prosperity and progress. We must transform the spirit of partnership into one that is truly based on mutual respect and responsibility. And we must ensure that States embrace their responsibilities and roles, enlisting other stakeholders in development as necessary partners, without diluting the role of the Developmental State.
8. But most importantly, we must ensure that we embrace a new and transformed global development agenda based on the principles of sustainable development as the concept was originally coined and defined, anchored on the importance of ensuring that all aspects of the development processes are addressed and incorporated into a single, effective, and adequately resourced global development agenda.
9. These may sound like exhortations more appropriate at the UN General Assembly. Yet when we speak in UNCTAD in Geneva, we also resonate in the hallowed halls of New York. We have an obligation therefore, based on our existing mandates in UNCTAD, as well as on our responsibilities to future generations, to contribute actively to ongoing development-related processes in the UN and beyond. This includes making intellectual contributions to the articulation of the post-2015 development agenda.
10. The task facing Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, the new Secretary-General of UNCTAD, is therefore daunting. He must harness the full potential of the secretariat; strengthen the bond between UNCTAD and its member states. And he must bring UNCTAD back to the core of the development discourse. We are fortunate that he is a man of vision and a man of action. We have high expectations of Dr. Kituyi. But at the same time, we must also be true to the high expectations that he has of us.
11. I therefore wish to express to him our full support as he assumes the leadership of UNCTAD, bringing his personal vision and leadership in implementing the Doha Mandate and the Doha Manar. Equally important is his work in ensuring that UNCTAD will play its rightful contribution to the broader development discourse including the articulation of the post-2015 development agenda.
12. We also look forward to 2016 when we will gather in Peru for UNCTAD XIV. Coming immediately after the global event of 2015, some may think of the next quadrennial conference as an anti-climax. But the conference's proximity to 2015 gives us the unique privilege of being the first major global event to implement the new global development agenda, one with an

unprecedented scope and breadth. Indeed those who are exceptionally ambitious could make the case that UNCTAD XIV should be the last United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, and the first United Nations Conference on Development.

13. For that, we need to have courage. For that, we need to have the transformative agenda called for in the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on the post-2015 development agenda. I think that Dr. Kituyi is a man of courage and wisdom who can help us to accomplish great things.
14. I would like to close my remarks by drawing on a point that I made at the Conference in Doha. We need to change the very way we do things. Contemporary conditions and events have shown us that we need a new culture of development – indeed perhaps a new culture of diplomacy. UNCTAD is a good place for such a new beginning, and I think we could all be proud of being part of such a momentous undertaking, and of such a monumental achievement. I hope that we are all up to the task, and I look forward to great things from UNCTAD under the leadership of Dr. Kituyi.

Thank you