



**Permanent Mission of India
Geneva**

Statement by India at the 64th Annual Session of the Trade and Development Board, UNCTAD, Geneva, 11-22 September 2017

(Delivered by Dr. Sadre Alam, First Secretary)

Mr. President,

At the outset, the delegation of India wishes to thank the outgoing President for the work accomplished during his tenure in Phase I and congratulates you and other new office bearers on their election. We also thank the Secretariat for the preparation of this meeting.

2. India would like to align itself with the statements delivered by G-77 and the Asia-Pacific group.

3. The challenge confronting us is to find ways to effectively implement the strong mandates for UNCTAD contained in the Accra Accord and the Nairobi Maafikiano, in accordance with UNCTAD's raison de etre.

4. Whether the world is integrating or disintegrating, it certainly needs to integrate. Multilateralism is the way forward. While this may often result in compromises and a second-best world, it would be wise to settle for the good rather than chase the elusive best.

5. This approach in trade is at the risk of being undermined by the rising tide of protectionism. Ironically, this is more evident in countries that have benefitted most from the global economic order. Those who once clamored for free trade, no longer see it as fair.

Mr. President,

6. The objectives contained in the preamble to the Marrakesh Agreement make it clear that WTO's concern should not merely be trade but also development.

7. On E-Commerce, a narrative is being created that binding rules on e-commerce would be beneficial to SMEs. It must not be allowed to become a back door for securing market access. We welcome the operationalization of the new IGE on E-Commerce and the digital economy.

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8. Investment and its facilitation, another new issue, should not result in restricting the choice of developing countries to direct investment to their priority sectors.

9. To counter protectionism,

Misuse of non-tariff measures for protectionist intent must be curtailed;

Existing bound non *ad-valorem* tariffs should be converted into *ad valorem* equivalents (AVE);

Anti-dumping duties and countervailing duties must be phased out;

Trade in services must be recognised as an equal pillar of the WTO mandate like goods and trade in services must likewise be liberalised, along with a balanced and comprehensive facilitative framework.

10. While trade and development are inter-twined, trade by itself will not result in development. For this,

Legitimate food security related concerns of developing countries must not be seen as a deviation from the primary objective of agricultural trade liberalization;

The commitment made in WTO to provide duty-free and quota-free market access for at least 97 per cent of products originating from LDCs must be fulfilled;

ODA commitments must be genuinely honoured;

The linkage between the TRIPS Agreement and the Convention on Bio-Diversity is important as it seeks to address bio-piracy.

Mr. President,

11. India recognizes UNCTAD's central and crucial role in the integrated treatment of trade and development through its three pillars. Advancing the unfinished Doha development agenda at the eleventh WTO Ministerial Conference is critically important. For UNCTAD, this may entail strengthening its partnership with WTO in the spirit of the joint declaration of 2015. In this regard, we would request the Secretariat to submit a strategic plan of action.

12. We hope that the deliberations in this session will help arrive at specific, actionable, measurable and time-bound policy recommendations, giving a shot to the UNCTAD inter-Governmental arm in phase II. We look forward to Secretary General's vision on this. The mid-term review process will also be vital in this regard.

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13. India would like to reiterate its full support to UNCTAD that needs to continuously reorient, reinvent and revitalize itself to remain relevant and express its readiness to work with other member states for achieving the desired outcomes.

14. Finally, I would like to end with a quote by Mahatma Gandhi –

“Recall the face of the poorest and weakest man you may have seen, and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him”

15. With these words and thoughts, I thank you, **Mr. President.**

14 September 2017