



European Union

Statement

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

65th Session of the Trade and Development Board

(4 to 12 June 2018)

Agenda Item – 3

General Debate

**Statement by the European Union Delegation to the UN and other
international organisations in Geneva**

Geneva, 6 June 2018

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

UNCTAD

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EU statement

Mr President, Secretary General, Excellencies, distinguished Delegates,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

First of all, the EU and its member states **commend UNCTAD for its valuable work** to advance prosperity for all. We appreciate the high quality of UNCTAD's substantive work; and we can pledge continued solid EU engagement, commitment, and support in this regard.

The overall agenda of this TDB tackles – in various facets in the High-level Segment and the traditional agenda items - the opportunities to **advance and sustain inclusive growth on the global and regional level**, and addresses the vulnerabilities faced by developing countries. In this respect, the EU is at the forefront of using sustainable trade and investment policy to promote inclusive growth and development of the poorest countries. One of the objectives of the EU Treaties is to ensure that economic growth brings social justice, respect for human rights, labour rights and environmental standards, as well as health and safety protection. Through the adoption of the new EU strategy "Trade for All", the EU affirms its leading role in the integration of sustainable development strategies into trade policy. This strategy is based on three principles: effectiveness, transparency and values.

We are committed to support and advance UNCTAD's important work, in particular in the field of **investment, trade policies, eCommerce and eTrade for All, micro-, small and medium enterprises, and the cross-cutting area of gender mainstreaming**. We welcome UNCTAD's innovative and practical work with trade and gender. The goals of the Agenda 2030 need to be pursued in cooperation, without duplication. Inter-agency cooperation is key.

Indeed, we are still far from reaching inclusive and sustainable economic growth for all. Tackling the global challenges of inequality and poverty are a key component for advancing sustained and inclusive economic growth as well as reaching the Sustainable Development Agenda by 2030.

Chair, distinguished delegates,

In order to deliver the best results, UNCTAD must tirelessly enhance its efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability. We repeatedly called for this, but it is also enshrined in the mandate, para 14(d) of the Maafikiano. Here, we see room for improvement. We welcome the ongoing assessment of the intergovernmental support service by OIOS.

A proper structure-wide **results-based management** system is an indispensable management tool to achieve even greater efficiency in delivering for those most in need. The EU in particular encourages continued, consistent and coherent engagement of the UNCTAD Secretariat in applying RBM across the organization, and appreciates that the results of these efforts be disseminated to and discussed by member states in all major governing bodies. For such discussions to bear fruit, and ensure the further strengthening of the organisation, the full, dedicated and active support and involvement of member states is essential.

In this regard, we note with regret that all background documents for this TDB arriving late, making it very difficult to analyse, address, and assess the urgent issues at stake. We would request that this issue be solved before the resumed session of the TDB later this year.. For an increased impact in the UN system, UNCTAD must abide by internal rules and mechanisms first.

Finally, Chair, allow me a word on the way forward. In a changing global context, **UNCTAD needs to continuously adapt to stay relevant.**

We – collectively – laid the groundwork for this endeavour with the Nairobi Maafikiano in 2016. Since then, the intergovernmental machinery progressed: We agreed on setting up two new IGEGs, on FfD and on eCommerce. We agreed to modify and update the ToR for the regular MYEMs. We have completed a state-led lessons-learnt exercise to improve preparations for the next UNCTAD Conference in early 2017. However, the Secretariat's **more elaborated vision** of

the way ahead for the organisation was only shared with us last December, 19 months after Nairobi.

A report, or rather a "comprehensive integrated action plan" on how the UNCTAD Secretariat intends to implement the Nairobi mandate in full, is expected for this fall's discussion of the Mid-Term Review. We expect the SG to lead these efforts, respond to Member State's expectations, and bring more executive direction. This will in effect also increase UNCTAD's relevance across the UN system.

Thank you