



**STATEMENT BY NIGERIA AT THE SIXTY-SIX SESSION OF THE  
TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD (TDB), 24-28 JUNE, 2019,  
PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA**

**Ambassador Michael Gaffey, President of the TDB  
Secretary-General of UNCTAD, Dr. Mukisha Kituyi  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Mr. President,**

From the onset, the Nigerian delegation wishes to align itself with the statements delivered by the Distinguished Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ecuador on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and that of Togo on behalf of the African Group.

2. We wish to join other colleagues in congratulating Mr. Michael Gaffey, Permanent Representative of Ireland as the Chair of the 66<sup>th</sup> Session of the Trade and Development Board. Your Chairmanship, during the preparation year for the coming UNCTAD XV, will very pivotal to the success of the XV Conference. We wish to assure you of the unwavering support of the Nigerian Delegation.

3. Nigeria also wishes to commend the work of UNCTAD Secretary General, the Deputy Secretary General and the entire Secretariat of UNCTAD, not only for the impeccable organization of this Session of the TDB, but also for the support they have been rendering to the developing countries, Nigeria included.

**Mr. President,**

4. Nigeria wishes to, once again, draw the attention of the Trade and Development Board to the nexus between development and the financial hemorrhage occurring in developing countries through illicit financial flows (IFFs). IFFs is hindering, in very significant ways, ability of developing countries to mobilise resources for development. UNCTAD , through the work of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Financing for Development should advance further the intent and purpose of the UN resolution 73/22 of on“Promotion of International Cooperation to Combat Illicit Financial Flows in order to foster sustainable development”.

**Mr. President,**

5. Fifty-five years after the formation of UNCTAD as the United Nations body for the integrated treatment of Trade and Development and related areas like Investment, Debt Management etc, more so, as we are approaching the next UNCTAD Conference (XV) it may be appropriate to be retrospective and review the UNCTAD journey so far. While we may generally conclude that UNCTAD has achieved a lot since its inception, we should be bold to say that there is still a lot of grounds to be covered. The number of LDCs has not been reduced to any significant level and even the mid-income developing countries are not making much progress , many are still commodity dependent, structurally weak and in some cases, the level of poverty and economic degradation is on the rise, especially in Africa.

6. One important area my delegation would like to call attention to is in the area of digital development and the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution. The recognition that most of the developing world missed out of the first three industrial revolutions was one of the reasons that UNCTAD was set up in the first place. UNCTAD should therefore see assistance to the countries of the south in achieving development through the 4<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution as one of its primary objectives. Paragraph 55 (U,V) of the Nairobi Maafikiano renewed this important mandate.

7. This should not be seen as merely creating or enhancing the capacities of 200 million Nigerians to buy from Amazon or eBay. It should actually be seen as enhancing their capacities to create value, to break into the international value chains. That is to participate in the digital economy not only as consumers but as producers of value.

**Mr. President,**

8. My delegation at this junction wishes to commend UNCTAD, once again, for the valuable work it has been doing on digital economy, the E-Commerce Week, the IGE on Digital Economy, E-Readiness Assessment, ICT Policy Reviews etc. The question to ask however is, are these the best UNCTAD can offer? Will these ensure digital development in developing countries? These are critical questions we should be asking as we go forward to UNCTAD XV.

9. In conclusion, Mr. President, the Nigeria delegation is of the view that UNCTAD can no longer seat on the fence or be “neutral” as far as development, especially digital development, is concerned. It should not be neutral and fail to come out with concrete policy options on the burning issues like data management (data protection, data localization and data ownership). Data Management policy has the potential to actually determine the future of the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial revolution as far as developing countries are concerned. UNCTAD should therefore energies its research and policy section to bring out concrete actionable policy options for developing countries.

10. UNCTAD needs to re-discover itself and assume its rightful mandate. UNCATAD should not allow the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution slip by without being able to say, yes, we are instrumental in bringing digital development to the global south.

11. I thank you.