



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA
to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva**

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**68th session of the
UNCTAD Trade and Development Board**

**Ms. Natasha Hroneska,
Counsellor**

Geneva, June 24, 2021

Thank you Chair.

It is my pleasure to address the 68th session of the Trade and Development Board and reflect on the experience of North Macedonia with the Policy Capacity Building Section/P166.

Since 2020 my country has been approved as the host of the multi-venue P166 regional course for Eastern Europe and the economies in transition.

However, last year was a challenging one for everybody, for the UN and for the member states. Even when we put our best efforts to pursue our agenda face to face, unfortunately due to the restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic we had to postpone the organization of the P166 course in North Macedonia until the situation becomes feasible vis a vis the global pandemic. This regional course enjoys an excellent format where the host country also offers national experience, and where policy makers from across the region gain expertise on national, regional and international level.

Since then we have been in close coordination with the UNCTAD Secretariat for organizing the course this year, and we are thankful for their assistance and support. With the improvement of the health situation and easing of restrictive measures the first regional course will be held in Skopje this year, from 16 to 27 August. The preparatory activities for the course are being finalized. We are expecting participants from 10 countries from our region (Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Montenegro, Russian Federation, Serbia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and North Macedonia) to travel to Skopje and engage in this high quality training. The selection process was very competitive and we are happy to have participants with diverse backgrounds. The host institution – the Faculty for Economics at the state University Ss Cyril and Methodius has been in close cooperation with other stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economy and the Customs Administration, in developing a quality curriculum for the course and we are looking forward to welcoming all participants in Skopje this summer.

Being a host country of the P166 is of tremendous significance for us, in particular in these challenging times related to the impact of the pandemic to the future of the development policies. It is important that the P166 continues to deliver in the various regions. In this regard we welcome the numerous courses and trainings for Geneva-based delegates organized in 2020 and 2021 up to now, despite the lockdowns and the restrictive measures in place. The various topics of these trainings, such as the role of diplomats in investing in SDGs, Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment in trade policies, Inclusive Sustainable Development, among others, have once again confirmed the importance of this programme for further advancing the trade and development agenda among the developing countries. Its experience should also be applied in capacity building activities for “building back better” aiming to address new challenges to development in the post-COVID recovery.

Mr. Chair,

When discussing different trainings, the role of the UNCTAD Secretariat is crucial, and here we commend the hard work by the Secretariat and its staff in organizing and delivering the courses. Despite the global pandemic, the Secretariat has managed to deliver seven short courses for Geneva-based delegates. We also thank the Secretariat for the invaluable

support to the host countries, including North Macedonia, in the follow-up on the regional courses and the timeframe of when they can be delivered, in light of the pandemic.

Furthermore, we congratulate the UNCTAD Secretariat for the newly established multi-venues for regional courses at the last meeting of the Advisory Body, and in this regard we welcome Argentina and Pakistan as the host countries for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Asia and Pacific regions.

Mr. Chair,

This programme is successful, as it was also reflected in the UNCTAD's survey, which showed that nearly all alumni participants have utilized the knowledge gained from previous P166 courses in response to the pandemic.

Considering the success of the P166 until now, we are pleased to hear what it has achieved and what the future plans are, and we call on all member states to continue supporting this important programme.

I thank you.