

**STATEMENT BY UGANDA DELEGATION ON ITEM 2A  
AT THE SIXTY-EIGHT SESSION OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD,  
21 JUNE – 2 JULY 2021**

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**President of the Trade and Development Board**, Ambassador Maimuna Kibenga TARISHI

**Acting Secretary-General of UNCTAD**, Madam Isabelle DURANT

**Excellences,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am delivering this statement in my national capacity.

At the outset, I wish to congratulate you, Excellency, upon your election as President of the Trade and Development Board together with your fellow officers of the Board.

I also wish to thank the panelists for their insightful presentation.

Uganda aligns itself with the statements made by the distinguished Ambassador of Afghanistan on behalf of the G77 and China and her Excellency the Ambassador of Botswana on behalf of the Africa Group.

**Madam President,**

My delegation commends the UNCTAD for the elaborative report on the impact of covid 19 on Trade and Development, transitioning to a new Normal.

We would however, like to speak to two issues:

**1. Vaccine equity and non-discriminatory covid-19 related certification**

Europe and the developed World is preparing to return to normal. In spite of this the, surge in the virus and shortage in vaccine is on the rise in the other parts of the World especially the low income countries. Children and students alike have been kept out of school for longer periods with inadequate national broadband ICT infrastructure to adopt to E-learning. To take Africa as an example less than 1% of the population is fully vaccinated and this is against the WHO global target of addressing 10% in each country by September 2021, 40% by end of 2021 and 70% by June 2022.

Although my home country, Uganda was able to withstand the consequences of the first wave of the pandemic, its second wave, is unfolding and the available tools in place to curb the spread of the virus such as introducing travel/movement restrictions and shutting down of non-essential places including MSME's, have huge setbacks on the economy as already highlighted in the report, most especially where its predominantly, informal.

We therefore, call for strengthening of international cooperation and solidarity mechanisms to address this public health threat by ensuring timely, equitable,

affordable and global access to quality, safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines, treatments and preventive measures, such as health technologies, diagnostics, therapeutics, and other COVID-19 health products, with fair distribution across all levels of society, which is critical to safety and health, to curbing the growing inequality within and between countries, and to restarting economies and building forward better.

In a related development, my delegation welcomes the commitment by the G7 to provide 870million doses through the existing frameworks and appeal to the developed and other countries able to do so, to donate surplus vaccines to this cause.

## **2. Social protection floors and informality of the economy.**

The report underscores the importance of social protection in rebounding/rebuilding of the economy. It further reveals that MSMEs Microenterprises and SMEs constitute the backbone of the global economy, accounting for over 2/3 of employment globally and for 80 to 90 % employment in low-income countries (ILO, 2020a). The implication of this to Africa still grappling with the issue of transforming its predominantly informal to formal economy, is that the biggest percentage of the employed population does not have social protection. Therefore, the characterised shut down inclusive of MSMEs is adversely sending a great deal of people down the poverty ladder as a result of loss of business income and job loss. The survey carried out by ECA and International Economic Consulting, on the continent puts this gloomy picture in context.

To this end, UNCTAD may consider joining efforts with the ILO owing to the interrelated mandates under SDG 8 to “explore options for mobilizing international financing for social protection, including increased official development assistance, to complement the individual efforts of countries with limited domestic fiscal capacities to invest in social protection or facing increased needs due to crises, natural disasters or climate change, based on international solidarity, and initiate and engage in discussions on concrete proposals for a new international financing mechanism, such as a Global Social Protection Fund, which could complement and support domestic resource mobilization efforts in order to achieve universal social protection” adopted through its resolution on recurrent discussion on social security at the 109 ILC session last Saturday. This is one of the ways we can better prepare for the next eventuality.

**I thank you Madam President.**

*Check against delivery*