

STATEMENT BY
H.E. DR ATHALIAH LESIBA MOLOKOMME
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP
AT THE SIXTY-EIGHT SESSION OF THE TRADE AND
DEVELOPMENT BOARD

AGENDA ITEM: 8- Report of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Financing for Development.

The African Group wishes to add its voice to the acknowledgement of the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the economies of developing countries making the redoubling of efforts aimed at advancing development initiatives in order to build back better and to strengthen our volatile economies, an added imperative.

While the pandemic has affected whole world, its impact in Africa has exacerbated the vulnerability and weak performance prevalent in most of the economies in the region. The economic and financial shocks such as disruptions to industrial production, falling commodity prices, financial market volatility, and rising insecurity are derailing the already tepid economic growth and compounding heightened risks from other factors, which undermine the ability to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

In the same vein, the African Group acknowledges the work undertaken by collaborative efforts between UNCTAD, the Africa Union and the Economic Commission for Africa on trade liberalisation and integration issues under the African Continental Free Trade Area. We also commend the work done on gender equity and empowerment, including capacity building initiatives in these areas.

Examples include training on the risks that women entrepreneurs might face in the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, in particular during and in the aftermath of the pandemic, which drew participation from over 100 young women entrepreneurs.

Madam President

In conclusion, the African Group concurs that collaborative efforts are needed between UNCTAD, other United Nations entities, international organizations and relevant stakeholders in delivering technical assistance to recover from the Pandemic and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

I thank you Madame President.