

STATEMENT BY
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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:9- Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in support of Africa

The African Group takes this opportunity to thank the Secretariat for the comprehensive report that highlights UNCTAD`s activities undertaken from May 2020 to March 2020, which covers cross - cutting issues under research and policy analysis, intergovernmental consensus building and technical assistance pillars.

Despite the debilitating impact of COVID-19, we acknowledge the tools that UNCTAD continues to avail to African countries that facilitate our countries to measure their developmental performance. These include the UNCTAD Productive Capacities Index which allowed members to access their productive capacities index, with a score calculated for all African Countries.

UNCTAD supported the formulation of policies on diversification and building productive capacities aimed at fostering structural transformation and enhancing investment opportunities in the region.

Other activities included development of integrated programmes, articulating constraints to trade, transport and to identify sectors with the potential for accelerated growth and transformation. Some key outcomes of projects in the region included the adoption of policy measures needed to promote regional value chains and fostering industrial policy coordination in the region.

We also welcome UNCTAD initiatives aimed at equipping policymakers, academics and civil society in developing countries as a whole with analytical tools to analyze the two-way relationship between trade and

gender and to produce gender-aware policy, research and advocacy. With more than 50% participants from Africa, this UNCTAD delivered training has proven to have immeasurable benefits. We are optimistic that this training especially when it targets capacity-building activities with regard to women small-scale and informal cross-border could contribute immensely to strengthening the resilience of such enterprises in mitigating the social and economic impacts of the pandemic.

Furthermore, African members states received the much-needed technical assistance in many developmental areas including in the area of Trade Facilitation.

Madame President,

One of the critical issues that hinders development in Africa despite all the assistance we receive is the impact of illicit financial flows which greatly affect our economic stability and the broader financial system. Resolving illicit financial flows requires responding to the underlying development challenges and tackling all parts of the problem at source.

The African Group is grateful to the Secretariat for the ongoing work undertaken towards solutions to curb activities associated with illicit financial flows, specifically UNCTAD's research work and capacity - building activities on the matter, which calls for more intensified efforts towards recovery from the Pandemic.

More work lies ahead to the recovery path. Of utmost importance, Africa needs more support to realise her continental integration agenda by way of implementing the African Continental Free Trade Area agreement.

Madame President,

As I conclude, I would like to reiterate our gratitude for the continued support from UNCTAD and to further indicate that Africa still needs assistance to take advantage of multilateralism in order to realize economic resilience against economic, financial as well as commodity price shocks, as we map our recovery from the current pandemic and prepare for future ones.

I thank you Madame President.