

**Statement by
the delegation of the Russian Federation
at the 68th Session of the Trade and Development Board
Item 9 – Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in support of Africa**

Geneva, 21 June – 2 July 2021

Madam President,

Madam Acting Secretary-General,

Excellencies, dear colleagues!

The Russian delegation is grateful to the Secretariat for the progress report on activities undertaken by UNCTAD in support of Africa. We note the consistently high-quality expertise of this document.

We attach great importance to the work of UNCTAD on building stable financial system of African States and stabilization of their incomes. In particular, we support efforts to combat illegal financial flows in Africa, strengthen trade and industrial competitiveness, and facilitate investment in the context of the pandemic.

In our opinion, the online platform of UNCTAD, which enables beneficiary countries to report on the implementation of the recommendations provided in investment policy reviews, has valuable practical effect. This tool allows, on the one hand, to assess in more detail medium and long-term results of UNCTAD's work, and on the other hand, to provide additional advisory support to the interested States. We believe that extension of the online platform to other areas of UNCTAD's expertise in Africa would be in demand both in donor and recipient countries.

We are pleased to note that UNCTAD continues to focus on strengthening productive capacities and promoting structural transformation of African States. In this regard, we consider it practically important the launch of the UNCTAD Productive Capacities Index that allows to thoroughly assess the readiness for

industrialization and, upon results, formulate national development strategies, including those of African countries.

We welcome the work of UNCTAD in the sphere of regional integration. The Eurasian Economic Union is ready to develop comprehensive trade and economic cooperation with the African Continental Free Trade Area, exchange experience in implementing Sustainable Development Goals, as well as countering consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. UNCTAD with a high level of competence and expertise could become a valuable dialogue platform between our integration associations.

Strengthening partnership with African countries is one of Russia's foreign policy priorities. We support efforts to assist African States in their sustainable development on the basis of the Agenda 2063. We are ready to share our experience with African partners in both traditional and new high-tech industries in order to help bridge the technological gap.

In recent years, cooperation between Russia and Africa has intensified significantly. Trade relations are being structurally diversified. Despite a slight reduction in trade turnover against the background of epidemiological restrictions, an increasing number of national economic operators are seeking to enter African markets. More than 27,000 students from Africa are studying at Russian universities.

We have already launched the preparation for the second Russia-Africa Summit, which will be held in 2022 in one of the African countries. The Secretariat of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum, as well as Coordinating, Public and Scientific Councils have been created. The Association for Economic Cooperation with African Countries was established. Elaboration of the new roadmaps of Russian-African cooperation in the economic, scientific and humanitarian spheres is well under way.

Russia has consistently supported strengthening the role of UNCTAD in promoting trade and economic development of African States. We hope that this priority area will be reflected in the updated mandate of UNCTAD.

Thank you for attention.