

**STATEMENT BY ZIMBABWE AT THE SIXTY-EIGHTH SESSION  
OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD, 21 JUNE – 2 JULY,  
2021**

Item 9 – Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in support of Africa (TD/B/68/2)

President of the Trade and Development Board, Ambassador Maimuna Tarishi  
of the United Republic of Tanzania,  
Acting Secretary-General of UNCTAD, Madame Isabelle Durant,  
Director of the Division on Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special  
Programmes, Mr. Paul Akiwumi,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Madam President,

Allow me to associate my delegation with the statement delivered by  
Afghanistan on behalf of the G77 and China, and by Botswana, on behalf of  
the African Group. At the outset, let me thank the Director of the Division on  
Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes, Mr Paul  
Akiwumi, for his insightful presentation. I also wish to express my delegation's  
appreciation to the UNCTAD Secretariat for all the initiatives being  
undertaken to address the development plight of my country, in particular, and  
of Africa in general, as explained in the report.

Madam President, my delegation welcomes that transforming economies and  
building productive capacities, as well as capacity building and technical  
cooperation support in investment for development are key components of  
UNCTAD's activities in Africa. We strongly believe that it is through

structural transformation and the enhancement of the productive capacities, as well as, trade facilitation, that Africa can meaningfully integrate into the global economy and positively impact on the lives of its people. We therefore call for the further broadening of these noble initiatives to ensure that the impact is wider and deeper.

It is also noteworthy that UNCTAD continues its work in the field of E-Commerce and undertook assessments to determine the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on e-commerce related activities. We welcome the completion of eTrade Readiness Assessments in 8 countries in Africa, and hope that the scope would be expanded to other developing countries, including Zimbabwe.

We appreciate the continued dialogue on illicit financial flows and hope that, in cooperation with other partners, UNCTAD will be able to assist Africa to develop capacities and capabilities to curb illicit trade, and to track, stop and repatriate funds illegally transferred.

Africa continues to face daunting developmental challenges and lags behind in efforts to meet the 2030 Development Agenda. Undoubtedly, this has been compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic with the scale and magnitude of vulnerabilities ballooning, and core economic drivers being weakened. This has resulted in shrinking tax bases, at a time when debt distress is also increasing, thus seriously constraining capacities to finance national

development plans. While we appreciate UNCTAD's role in mitigating these challenges and supporting our developmental efforts through various activities under its broad mandate, we are, however, deeply concerned that the budget devoted to Africa in 2020 was the lowest since 2015. We call upon our partners, and the broader international community to do more to reverse this negative trend, in order to ensure that Africa does not continue to lag behind.

Thank you, Madam President