



REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

**THE EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA TO THE SWISS CONFEDERATION AND
THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE, WTO AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN GENEVA**

**STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY H. E. Prof. Ambassador Muhammadou M. O.
Kah at THE SEVENTY-FIRST EXECUTIVE SESSION OF THE TRADE AND
DEVELOPMENT BOARD,**

10 FEBRUARY 2022

President of the Trade and Development Board, Ambassador Maimuna Tarishi

Ms. Rebeca Grynspan, Secretary General of UNCTAD

Ms. Isabelle Durant, Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD

Mr. Paul Akiwumi, Director of the Division on Africa, LDCs and special programmes,

Excellencies

Distinguished delegates

Ladies and gentlemen,

Madame President

We are happy to deliver a statement in our national capacity at the 71st Executive Session of the Trade and Development Board under item 4 of the agenda, the LDCs report for the year 2021 titled “*The Least Developed Countries in the Post-Covid World: learning from 50 Years of Experience*”.

Madame President

My delegation aligned itself to the statements delivered by **H.E Mr. Robert Salama**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Malawi on behalf of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and **H. E. Mr. Chad Blackman**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Barbados on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We would like to add our voice to others in commending the Secretary General of UNCTAD, the UNCTAD Secretariat and other stakeholders involved in the development of the LDC report 2021. We believe that the report has given us the opportunity as LDCs and our partners to reflect on the different options adopted in the journey of the 50 years achievements.

Madame President

The report has highlighted some development strides made by the LDCs 50 years on. Although the LDCs have attained development in some specific areas including trade and graduation since LDCs category was established by a United Nations General Assembly resolution. Yet the challenges that the LDCs are facing, remains complex and increasingly becoming hard to be accomplished in today's World.

My delegation welcomes the recommendations in the report to us as LDCs and our developments partners, broadly on investment facilitation and the attainment of the global development frameworks, meant to ensure a smooth ride on the road to our development and economic recovery as LDCS.

We thank our partners for the technical and capacity building supports in favour of the LDCs to adjust from the disruptions of Covid-19 and long-term recovery to achieve their goals and priorities. The aspirations of the LDCs continue to be in these areas; economic diversification, productive capacity building to address supply side constraints, building of their services sector, digital transformation, and sustainable structural transformation.

Madame President

We could not agree more to the point as captured in the report, that the outlook for LDCs is grim. Certainly, the growth and resilience in the economy of the LDCs were already highly volatile to shocks and with Covid – 19 factored, the road to recovery in the LDCs economies as forecast will be long and steep, as the LDCs are struggling hard to contain the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in their health and social sectors. The LDCs situation to an extent, will continued to be challenged with weak economic situation, structural, climate change

vulnerabilities, low job creation, poverty and decline in investment flows- during and after the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Madame President, Distinguished delegates

We want to take this opportunity to reiterate our appreciation for the support in both financial and technical assistance by the various development partners and International Organizations put at the disposal of the LDCs, and to help them take positions in the global trade towards their economic growth.

We believe that over the years, the call to provide support to the trade initiatives of the LDCs is a global solidarity with the LDCs and we will continue to call for such support and commitment towards our sustainable economic growth and smooth graduation.

Madame President, Excellencies

To conclude, even though most of the LDCs have used to their comparative advantages, the special and differential treatments, such as the duty free quota free market access for LDCs goods, the aid for trade initiatives like the EIF amongst others, nonetheless there are still a good number of LDCs, which need to be accompanied in the application of these support measures to their advantage with the view to increase investment flows, attain the SDGs in the long term and including the after math of Covid-19 Pandemic.

My delegation wishes to express our appreciation to the UNCTAD Secretary General for assuring us her unconditional commitment to the implementation of the Bridge Town Covenant and we look forward to the implementation of the LDC 5 outcomes with the aim of leaving no one behind. In our national capacity we assure her of our support.

Thank you, Madame President.

