



**GROUP OF 77 & CHINA  
G E N E V A**

*Draft as of 9 February 2022*

**Statement by His Excellency Mr. Chad Blackman  
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Barbados on behalf of the  
Group of 77 and China at the 71<sup>st</sup> Executive Session of the Trade and Development Board**

*10 February 2022*

President of the Trade and Development Board Ambassador Maimuna Tarishi of Tanzania,  
Secretary-General of UNCTAD, Ms. Rebeca Grynspan,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

1. At the outset, the Group of 77 and China would like to acknowledge the in-depth dialogue that has taken place this week, earlier during the Working Party session and now during this Trade and Development Board session. We would therefore wish to extend our gratitude to the UNCTAD Secretary General for her active participation in both of these meetings and positively contributing to this dialogue through her two insightful presentations of her vision for the implementation of the Bridgetown Covenant and her strategic orientation of the work of UNCTAD.

2. We have positively engaged on the vision presented by Secretary-General Grynspan, and welcome the efforts for a stronger and revitalized UNCTAD. We would once again wish to express our appreciation for the consultative manner which was embraced by the Secretary General which has only served to enrich the dialogue has taken place.

Madame President,

3. While some of our comments might sound repetitive as compared to our comments made on Monday, we believe it is important to put them on the record of this meeting, in particular given that the Trade and Development Board is the highest entity of UNCTAD when the Conference is not in session.

4. To begin, our Group would like to refer to the elements raised by the Secretary-General on the new gaps that have emerged and those that have been exacerbated in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, most notably vaccine equity, fiscal packages, fiscal space the digital divide and debt stability. Our Group would like to echo the need for these gaps to be recognised and addressed through international cooperation and support measures. It is only through our collective efforts that we will all be in a position to recover, and grow in a post-COVID era.

5. Indeed, addressing these gaps in an integrated manner, is a must if we are to avoid another lost decade for developing countries, and to ensure that there is no further derailment of progress toward our achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The plethora of supply-side constraints faced developing countries which have in effect hampered the ability most from matching the level of recovery achieved by advanced economies and the inability of most developing countries to utilise domestic resource mobilization as a way of getting back to a trajectory of growth and sustained development has meant that these countries have been impacted more disproportionately than others by the pandemic.

6. In this respect, we welcome the comments by the Secretary-General about a renewed role for the State through ambitious, far-reaching, and innovative industrial and productive policies, as well as through the pursuit of resilience alongside sustainability. This renewed emphasis on development action is key, yet it needs to be accompanied by relevant international measures. It is therefore crucial that UNCTAD continues to be a voice for developing countries in international fora and institutions, It is also paramount that UNCTAD continues to advocate and raise awareness about the need for increased support for the most vulnerable.

7. Our Group would also like to once again welcome the initiative to mainstream the development perspective relative to the issues of the environment and climate change at UNCTAD. We would like to reaffirm our view that UNCTAD is not the forum for the environment and climate change to be discussed in isolation, but rather a forum to engage meaningfully on the nexus between these issues, and trade and development.

8. We would also like to comment on the 10 transformational decisions that have been conveyed by the Secretary-General and welcomes her decisive action taken - to ensure there is a stronger, more resilient UNCTAD. We would therefore wish to take this opportunity to openly express its willingness to engage with the Secretariat as these decisions are implemented.

9. Our Group would like to reiterate our call for the core expertise devoted to the strategic areas of UNCTAD to be preserved. As we mentioned earlier this week, this applies particularly to each Division's work on statistics. For us, underpinning research and analysis with relevant empirical evidence and data is a necessary condition to generate meaningful policy recommendations and coherence in the organisation's work. We are therefore pleased to hear that each division will maintain statistical capacity as it relates to its core areas of work, thereby reconciling the issue of specific core capacity with the need for an independent statistical quality assurance function.

10. Before we conclude, we would like to reiterate our call for the need to develop the elements presented by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD into a more formal implementation plan that provides a solid basis for assessing the implementation of the Bridgetown Covenant.

11. The Group of 77 and China reiterates its support to Secretary-General Grynspan and our commitment to a stronger more resilient UNCTAD, which can effectively serve the interests of developing countries.

I thank you, Madame President.