



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA TO UNOG

**Statement by H.E. Sabine Böhlke-Möller Ambassador/ Permanent Representative of the Republic of Namibia, On behalf of the African Group
63rd Session of the Executive Session of the TDB, 27-29 September 2016,
Agenda item 3**

Amb. Alfredo Suescum, President of the TDB,

Mr. Joakim Reiter, Deputy Secretary General of UNCTAD,

Your Excellencies Ambassadors/Permanent Representatives,

Distinguished delegates,

Mr. President,

I have the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of the African Group. The African Group aligns itself with the statement by the representative of Argentina, on behalf of the G77 and China. However we would like to make additional remarks on Agenda Item 3 the **2016 Economic Development in Africa Report (2016 EDAR).**

We would like to thank you for convening this executive session, which traditionally, deals only with the report under item 2 of this session. We would also like to express our appreciation to UNCTAD Secretariat, for preparing the reports under consideration.

Mr. President,

The 2016 EDAR contains information on how Africa made some progress in debt management but still vulnerable when it comes to debt sustainability. African countries seem to have been left only with option to choose between two evils, either sustain their debt stock and reduce development financing or to borrow more in order finance their development goals, including the SDGs. In our view, none of the two options is sustainable since debt sustainability needs to go hand-in-hand with development financing.

We take note of the fact that African countries need to mobilise domestic resources and other innovative financing for their development. However, innovative financing for development is complementary to and not a substitute for ODA. Efforts should be geared towards mobilising and ensuring increased levels of ODA as it will continue to be a critical source of development finance as agreed in Agenda 2030. ODA can be better targeted than other sources to help ensure inclusive access to public services; leverage other sources of development finance or improve their targeting and put the world on the pathway to sustainability. Consequently, it is important to underscore that, progress on ODA quantity, transparency and accountability is essential to achieve the development goals. Similarly, diaspora savings and remittances cannot constitute sustainable ways of development finance, since these are individual funds.

Mr. President,

In its findings, the reports points to declining levels of ODA, raising debt levels in Africa, the dangers posed by domestic private sector borrowing and debt challenges faced by African countries graduating from LDC status to middle income status, falling into the middle income trap, since they will no longer get concessional loans and grants. We would however, appreciate further analysis and recommendations to remedy these vulnerabilities made in the report.

Likewise, most of the policy recommendations advanced in the report, places the debt burden and mobilisation of development finance solely on the shoulders of African countries themselves, contrary to the spirit of global partnership and international cooperation.

We believe that there is need to find a better, fair, transparent and more sustainable debt work-out mechanism to enable African countries finance their development. We hope better ways of finding tangible solutions will be discussed and reflected in the agreed conclusions on EDAR.

Mr. President,

We are aware of the challenges posed by the shifting of the dates and venues for UNCTAD 14 Ministerial Conference hence we hesitatingly agreed to the proposed inclusion of the 2016 EDAR in this Executive Session. However, it should also be noted that this is an exception not, a precedence. We therefore expect discussion on the 2017 EDAR to revert back to its traditional session, the regular session of the TDB

I thank you.