

**STATEMENT BY NIGERIA AT THE 68TH EXECUTIVE
SESSION OF THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT
BOARD OF UNCTAD, GENEVA, 30TH SEPTEMBER,
2019**

**AGENDA ITEM 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF
AFRICA: MADE IN AFRICA, RULES OF ORIGIN FOR
ENHANCED INTRA-AFRICAN TRADE**

**Mr. President,
Secretary General of UNCTAD,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,**

It is my honour to present this statement on behalf of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. At the onset, permit me to associate with the statements delivered by the Distinguished Ambassador of Ecuador on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and that of the Representative of Togo on behalf of the African Group.

Mr. President,

2. May I also express our profound appreciation to the President of the TDB, His Excellency, Michael Gaffey, the Permanent Representative of Ireland for his hands on approach and extensive consultations with regional groups and member states. We assure you of the full support of the Nigerian delegation during your

presidency, especially on the preparation for UNCTAD XV.

Mr. President,

3. Allow me also to **sincerely** thank the Secretary General of UNCTAD, Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi for his incisive statement and his commitment to the principle of multilateralism.

4. My delegation also extend our appreciation to the Secretariat of UNCTAD and in particular, the Division of Africa and LDC and its Director, Mr. Paul Akiwumi, for the Economic Development in Africa Report 2019 entitled “**Made in Africa, Rules of Origin for enhanced intra-African Trade**”. The report is very comprehensive, detailed, well researched and from the report we are receiving, it is serving as a reference document to our Trade Negotiators who are at this period trying to put together a workable Rules of Origin for the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Mr. President,

5. The creation of the largest free trade area in the world, the AfCFTA, is one of the top priorities of the Agenda 2063 of the African Union. African leaders, in signing and ratifying the AcFTA have shown their commitment towards the economic emancipation and development of the continent. The political will to

surmount all obstacles in this regard has been demonstrated and what is now required is the support of the international development community to support Africa toward achieving the desired integration of their economies, increase production capacity, export diversification, industrialisation and achievement of the 2030 SDGs. The publication of this EDA 2019 by UNCTAD and indeed all other support of UNCTAD towards the realisation of the AcFTA is commendable and welcome.

6. One of the main recommendations of the report is that rules of origin to be effective, should be simple, flexible and transparent. Flexibility on the part of national negotiators is very important so that decisions can be easily reached on the basis of consensus.

7. Going forward, we are sure that UNCTAD and other partners will equally avail the AcFTA their expertise in the process of implementation of phase two of the negotiation of AcFTA that will include tariff offers and other equally important issues.

8. In conclusion, the Nigeria delegation wishes to welcome the EurAsia Group.

9. I thank you for your attention.