

UNCTAD
70th Executive Session of the Trade and Development Board

3 – 5 February 2021

EU opening intervention (SG Kituyi departure)
- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

Thank you Chair.

And thank you for your words, dear Secretary General.

We would like to express our appreciation for your efforts since chosen to lead UNCTAD. Your two mandates were marked by some ground-breaking developments on the global scene, with central relevance for UNCTAD's work. In 2015 we celebrated the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, followed by the Paris Agreement the year after, just to mention a few of the important milestones. But we also had to, and continue have to, face the enormous challenges of the ongoing crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

During these times, UNCTAD helped deliver on many important and shared objectives of the multilateral community, with concrete and highly visible value for developing countries. For instance, ASYCUDA and DMFAS programmes, continued to deliver effective assistance to beneficiary countries to better manage their trade and debt. Numerous policy analyses in areas of trade and investment, e-commerce, science and innovation, consumer protection and competition laws and policies, and gender, resulted in useful policy recommendations that are highly appreciated. UNCTAD's Statistics and data collection work acts as a significant contribution for painting the picture of the global state of affairs.

UNCTAD XIV Conference in Nairobi, the Conference that took place under your lead, also managed to agree on orientations for improving the intergovernmental machinery – an important objective given its long-identified shortcomings and its

central role for Secretariat-membership interaction. While advances have been achieved since, much remains to be done to ensure that UNCTAD as a whole, and not just individual initiatives, can play the legitimate and effective consensus-building role in the multilateral system.

I would like to reiterate the EU and its Member States' commitment to continue working constructively and with dedication, jointly with the rest of the UNCTAD membership, in pursuing our shared development objectives for which UNCTAD has been established 56 years ago.

We trust that in your future roles, dear Secretary General, whatever these may be, you will remain committed to improving UNCTAD's work and its contribution to the multilateral development agenda.

Thank you.