

Statement by the Chargé d’Affaires a.i of the Permanent Mission of Zimbabwe, Mr P. T. Chigiji, at the 70th Executive Session of the UNCTAD Trade and Development Board, 3 February 2021

Thank you Chair,
Excellencies and Colleagues,

The Zimbabwe delegation associates itself with the statements delivered by Botswana, on behalf of the Africa Group, and by Afghanistan, on behalf of the G77 and China. We also wish to thank the Secretary General of UNCTAD, Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, for his remarks, and I would like to join colleagues who have spoken before me, to express our appreciation to Dr. Kituyi for his professionalism and dedication to international service, and to wish him well in his future endeavours.

Chairperson,

The COVID-19 triggered global crisis, the most devastating in modern history, could not have come at a worse time for countries like my own, and indeed for Africa and the rest of the developing world. This has put a major dent on our efforts to progress towards the achievement of the SDGs. The situation has been much worse for those of us who have long been

under unilateral coercive measures, which, are a violation of international law, and against the principles and purposes enshrined under the Charter of the United Nations.

Our predicament has been compounded by the unco-ordinated responses to the current global health situation, a situation where the wealthier countries have cushioned themselves with huge stimulus packages to help their economies deal with the impact of the pandemic. The richer nations are also deploying vaccines to protect their populations. The Global South has been left behind.

Chair,

Even at this late stage, we believe that the best response to the pandemic is to mobilise and harness global public goods for inclusive and sustainable health for all, and not to leave developing countries to their own devices, given their limited fiscal capacities. We believe that building back better, should entail recovery which takes into account structural reform and transformation that address the present inequalities within regions and among countries.

The current dynamics call upon the global community to strengthen multilateralism, put differences aside, and confront the common challenges as a collective. Not only do we need global cooperation to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic and to foster equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, but we also need the same to arrest economic decline, bring about stability, as well as recovery, through well planned and internationally coordinated intervention measures.

The challenges at hand certainly make it imperative that we further strengthen UNCTAD's development pillar, if we are to maximize our capacity for investment and trade, and assist developing countries in our efforts to integrate into the world economy, on an equitable basis. As we go towards the 15th Quadrennial Conference, we call upon UNCTAD to continue its efforts, in collaboration with other partners, to render increased support towards advancing the structural transformation of developing economies, in a manner that leaves no one behind.

Chair,
I thank you