



UNCTAD 15
BARBADOS
3–7 October 2021

Agenda item: 7

General debate

Statement by:

Turkey



UNITED NATIONS
UNCTAD

UNCTAD 15th Ministerial Conference
“From Inequality and Vulnerability to Prosperity for All”
Talking Points

Distinguished Participants,

- I would like to start by thanking the UNCTAD Secretariat for organizing this event on a significant topic for the global agenda.
- COVID-19 pandemic was the biggest challenge of the year we left behind, causing an unprecedented public health crisis.
- Unfortunately, the world was off track to eradicate poverty even before the pandemic, and as a result of COVID-19, global poverty increased for the first time in decades.
- It is estimated that more than 120 million people are pushed into extreme poverty in 2020.
- The pandemic has not only increased poverty and deepened inequality across the world, it has also had a severe impact on the world economy.
- According to the figures, in 2020, real world GDP fell by 3.4%, the volume of world merchandise trade declined by 5.3%, and foreign direct investment (FDI) flows dropped by 42%.
- We can only reverse this picture by working together as all countries.
- COVID-19 crisis once again reminded us of the importance of global action in our interlinked world and awakened us to develop recovery plans that build a more sustainable future.
- These plans must be green, resilient, digital, just and inclusive.
- To this end, important steps should be taken at the international level to eradicate poverty and raise prosperity globally.
- We believe that international trade is a critical feature in promoting recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In this respect, we believe that the reinforcement of the multilateral dialogue is the sole remedy to succeed in the growth of international trade.
- Within this context, Turkey plays an active role at the global level by contributing to the voice of developing countries in international decision-making mechanisms, including in prominent international organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), G20 and the United Nations, which have significant potential for facilitating constructive solutions to issues of interest on the global trade agenda.
- For example, there are vital initiatives on trade and health at the WTO level, which Turkey follows very closely.

- We co-sponsored a Communique calling to enhance the WTO's role in the global effort toward the production and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and other medical products.
- We also think that there is a deep link between trade and environmental issues from a sustainability perspective.
- Climate change is the most global of problems, and thus, the global community needs to come together.
- International trade regime can support accelerated climate action through liberalizing trade in environmentally sound and protective goods, establishing common environmental standards, enabling technology transfer and fostering multilateral action.
- In parallel, practices that harm the environment should be transformed into green implementations or banned altogether.
- On the other hand, we also believe that digital trade plays an increasingly important role in global trade and requires multilateral disciplines.
- The pandemic has accelerated trends in digital trade advancement and digital technologies, which has demonstrated the potential to increase economic growth.
- Therefore, cooperation in digital trade will also help us provide favorable conditions for the development of digital inclusion.
- This is also a key for integrating micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), underdeveloped regions and women into the global economy.
- All these efforts at the global level can bring us closer to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Of course, principles like "Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities" and considering development needs of the developing countries should be an integral part of our efforts, since we are pursuing sustainable "development".
- In this respect, it is a must that international rules and disciplines should be flexible enough to allow countries to take necessary actions in line with their developmental goals and sensitivities without disrupting international trade.
- We believe that renewing our commitment to the rules-based multilateral trading system whose guarantor is the WTO and finding collective solutions to our problems are the key steps towards increasing global prosperity.
- Thank you.