



Agenda item: 7

General Debate

Statement by:

Austria



National Statement by Austria
16th Ministerial Session of UNCTAD
Geneva, 20 October 2025

Mister President, Madam Secretary-General,
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Austria aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union and I am honoured to add a few remarks in our national capacity.

Allow me to begin by extending our gratitude to the leadership of UNCTAD and to the Government of Switzerland for hosting this very important event.

We are gathering this week at the same place, UNCTAD was founded 61 years ago.

The world we face today is profoundly different: marked by deep geopolitical divisions, ongoing armed conflicts, and escalating global risks.

This is not the time to walk away from multilateralism. On the contrary, it is the moment to reaffirm our collective commitment and to demonstrate that, even in times of multiple and overlapping crises, multilateralism can still deliver.

The UNCTAD 16 Conference offers a timely and unique opportunity to take stock of the progress made since the last conference four years ago and to reflect on where UNCTAD can add the greatest value in advancing inclusive and sustainable development for all.

Mister President,

At a time when multilateralism is under huge strain, Austria with Vienna as a hub of United Nations organizations that work towards the implementation of the SDGs believes in bridging divides.

We see ourselves as a nation that listens, builds trust, and seeks consensus. We continue place a high value on our active engagement in the United Nations system and our long-standing support for inclusive and participatory global governance.

In this context, I wish to take this opportunity to formally reiterate **Austria's candidature** for a non-permanent seat on the **United Nations Security Council for the term 2027–2028**.

Austria stands ready to work with all partners to strengthen rules-based multilateralism, restore trust in the international system, and to secure a sustainable future for generations to come.

We remain firmly convinced that the global economy must deliver tangible benefits to all countries, especially those still struggling to overcome structural inequalities. Austria therefore gives particular importance to the following topics:

First,

digitalization and innovation are key enablers of sustainable and inclusive development. If harnessed responsibly, they can drive progress across all areas. However, the rapid pace of technological change also risks widening inequalities. Ensuring that all can access, utilize and benefit from digital

transformation is therefore essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Austria places great importance on international cooperation in science, technology and innovation. We commend the work of the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) and its close cooperation with UNCTAD. Austria has been a member of the CSTD since its establishment and actively participates in its Working Group on Data Governance.

We support all efforts that promote practices that ensure digital and other emerging technologies, such as AI, quantum or immersive technologies, are human rights-based, inclusive, and serve the common good.

Second, it is crucial that developing countries are not merely participants but true beneficiaries of global trade. Particular attention must therefore be devoted to groups of countries whose economic development and access to world markets remain constrained by structural and geographic barriers – notably the Least Developed Countries, the Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States.

In this regard, Austria is proud to host the 2026 International Vienna Energy and Climate Forum, co-organized with UNIDO and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, from 9 to 10 April in Vienna. Under the motto “*Transforming Energy, Powering Prosperity, Peace and Security*”, the Forum will place special emphasis on the needs and opportunities of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.

Mister President,

UNCTAD with its unique mandate has a crucial role to play in implementing commitments, through policy advice, capacity-building, and analytical work and to help countries create stable, predictable, and enabling environments that support inclusive and sustainable development.

Key prerequisites for success include the rule of law, good governance, respect for human rights, promotion of gender equality, and the establishment of accountable and transparent institutions, all areas where UNCTAD's expertise can offer significant guidance.

Austria is fully committed to achieving a positive outcome at UNCTAD 16 one that promotes economic transformation for equitable, inclusive, and sustainable development. We look forward to working closely with all Member States and the UNCTAD Secretariat to advance this shared goal.

Thank you.