

**Statement by Pakistan on behalf of the Asia Pacific Group
at the Eighty Third Session of the Working Party
Geneva, 7 February 2022**

General statement

Mr. Chairperson,
Secretary-General of UNCTAD,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen

The Asia Pacific Group congratulates Mr. Martin Zbinden (Switzerland) and Mr. Natee Vichitsorasatra (Thailand) on their respective elections as Chair and Vice-Chair cum Rapporteur of the 83rd session of the working party. The Group assures both office bearers of its complete support and looks forward to a productive outcome under their stewardship.

The Group also thanks the Secretary General for sharing her vision for UNCTAD's program in 2022 & 23. The Group is pleased to note that Secretary General's action plan outlines four transformations envisaged in the Bridgetown Covenant and expresses its support in catalyzing its implementation.

The Secretary General has proposed to establish a statistical branch under her office. The Group believes that research and analysis, underpinned by empirical evidence and data, is a prerequisite to generate meaningful policy recommendations by any organization. Accordingly, each Division of UNCTAD should maintain statistical capacity as it relates to its core areas of work. Reliable and timely data and statistics are also key to galvanize and track progress in the implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Group aligns itself with the statement delivered by Ambassador Blackman on behalf of the G-77 and China. In this regard, the Group wishes to further highlight the following priority areas for UNCTAD to administer its program plan 2023;

First, Continue to recommend durable solutions to the growing debt problems faced by developing countries, including through debt relief and debt restructuring, increased availability of capital for multilateral development banks; and green bond markets to help raise long-term financing.

Second, Continue its advocacy for enhanced development financing, particularly for developing countries to adapt to the worsening impacts of climate change and fulfilment of the \$100 billion a year pledge for the Green Climate Fund.

Third, Continue its evidence-based research and policy advice on investment promotion, business facilitation and in the preparation of a pipeline of bankable projects by establishing sustainable infrastructure investment facilities in interested countries.

Fourth, Continue to facilitate policy dialogue on the international investment agreement regime and support and design new international investment agreements that are better aligned with nationally and internationally agreed development objectives.

Fifth, Further foster international dialogue on science, technology and innovation for development leading to enhanced cooperation for harnessing technology to achieve SDGs.

Finally, Continue to provide timely analysis of global trade trends, varied impacts of COVID-19 on international economy, trade and development as well as implications of Global tax reforms on developing countries.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Group notes with appreciation UNCTAD's new technical cooperation strategy which aligns with Bridgetown Covenant and aims to enhance efficacy by improving coordination internally within Divisions, and externally with UN country offices.

The Group notes that successful implementation of new technical cooperation strategy depends upon predictable, stable and sufficient voluntary funding from Member States. As the bulk of funding to the Trust Funds is earmarked, UNCTAD is left with little room to tailor projects according to the priorities and needs of recipient countries. The Group calls for enhanced and unearmarked funding to UNCTAD.

It is heartening to note that the Secretary General has today announced establishment of a separate fundraising strategy to help bridge the funding gap, and request the Secretariat to provide more details on the fundraising strategy to facilitate Members States' engagement in this regard.

The Group encourages UNCTAD to also strengthen and increase joint activities with other UN Agencies particularly those providing technical assistance in the area of trade and investment i.e. UNDP, UNIDO, UNITAR, ITC, WIPO and WTO as well as the World Bank. This will maximize the impact of operations and increase the complementarities between institutions.

Lastly, on the important issue of evaluation, the Group welcomes the summary of evaluations conducted in 2021 and is pleased to note that previous evaluation work has guided the proposed program plan for 2023. The Group encourages UNCTAD to continue conducting evaluations of its technical cooperation activities in accordance with guiding principles and in conformity with the norms and standards for evaluation of the United Nations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.