



Agenda item: 7

General Debate

Statement by:

Malaysia on behalf of ASEAN





**ASEAN JOINT STATEMENT
16TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND
DEVELOPMENT**

GENERAL DEBATE

**THURSDAY, 23 OCTOBER 2025 | 1000-1300 HRS | *TURN #2*
ROOM III, PALAIS DES NATIONS**

Mr. President,

Madam Secretary-General,

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of ASEAN.

ASEAN reaffirms its strong support for the theme of UNCTAD 16, *“Shaping the Future: Driving Economic Transformation for Equitable, Inclusive and Sustainable Development”*. This is closely aligned with ASEAN’s theme for 2025, *“Inclusivity and Sustainability”*, reflecting our conviction that growth must be people-centred and environmentally sustainable.

As one of the world’s most dynamic regions, ASEAN has demonstrated resilience and continues to serve as a hub for trade and investment. Through the ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future, and regional frameworks such as the ASEAN Trade in Good Agreement (AITIGA), the ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement (ACIA) and the ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA), we are advancing efforts to attract quality investment, foster innovation, and enhance MSME participation, while supporting the twin transitions towards a greener and more digital economy. ASEAN emphasises its commitment to enhancing regional economic cooperation through frameworks such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which strengthens our collective efforts for sustainable growth and development.

We are mindful, however, of the challenges faced by developing countries, including financing gaps, supply chain vulnerabilities, climate risks, and the digital divide. These challenges are even more heightened for LDCs, which continue to face structural constraints, limited productive capacities, and narrow fiscal space. These realities highlight the need for a fair multilateral system that enables investment, technology transfer, and sustainable financing with special consideration for LDCs’ transition and graduation journey.

ASEAN also underscores the importance of inclusive approach to international trade and investment, where the needs and priorities of developing nations are fully addressed, ensuring that economic transformation can provide shared prosperity for all.

ASEAN deeply values its partnership with UNCTAD, notably through the ASEAN Investment Report and UNCTAD's policy expertise in areas such as investment facilitation, e-commerce, and sustainable finance. We especially appreciate UNCTAD's continued support for ASEAN's LDC members in areas such as productive capacity building, trade diversification, and preparation for smooth graduation.

In this regard, we look forward to not only further strengthening our cooperation with the UN and other international organisations and the Geneva ecosystem, to achieve development that is equitable, inclusive, and sustainable – amidst the geoeconomic challenges of our time.

In parallel with the substantive role UNCTAD as the UN focal point for trade and development, we value an ambitious, balanced, and forward-looking outcome for the UNCTAD XVI that reinforces multilateralism, addresses current challenges, and advances inclusivity and sustainability.

Lastly, we appreciate the Chair of the Prepcom of the UNCTAD16, Friends of the Chair, and all groups for their constructive efforts toward a consensus that strengthens UNCTAD's mandate.

Thank you.