



Agenda item: 7

General Debate

Statement by:

Italy



UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

XVI SESSION

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NATIONAL STATEMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ITALY

- I would like to begin by expressing my gratitude to the Government of Switzerland and UNCTAD for hosting and organizing the 16th session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.
- This session takes place at a highly challenging time for the international community, which faces multiple crises: geopolitical and economic tensions, subdued growth, increasing trade frictions, global imbalances generated, *inter alia*, by overcapacity as a result of non-market policies and practices, disruptions in supply chains, setbacks in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and widening inequalities within and between nations.
- This troubling scenario requires collective and coordinated action, calling for stronger and more tangible multilateral cooperation that prioritizes sustainability in its economic, social and environmental dimensions.
- In this context, UNCTAD remains a key instrument to translate development into lasting and inclusive prosperity, with particular emphasis on the least developed and most vulnerable countries. At a time of fragile global growth and slow progress towards the 2030 Agenda, it is more crucial than ever that UNCTAD continues to serve as an engine of policy-making based on reliable data, practical cooperation, and open dialogue among all actors.
- Italy stands ready to actively contribute to strengthening UNCTAD's role and action in support of developing and least developed countries, through the implementation of the four transformation processes identified by the Bridgetown Covenant at UNCTAD 15: transforming economies through diversification; promoting a more sustainable and resilient economy; improving development financing; and revitalising multilateralism.
- UNCTAD 16 is a decisive milestone in this endeavour.
- It should provide a clear four-year mandate that empowers UNCTAD to advance sustainable development through trade by supporting a rules-based multilateral trading system, promoting greater coherence between trade, investment and development strategies, boosting investment in SDG-related sectors and enhancing and diversifying global supply chains.

- Italy believes that the new mandate should set realistic and measurable objectives. The current limitation of resources imposes clear choices: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound objectives should be defined for inclusive growth. UNCTAD can play a central role by providing monitoring methodologies, standardized indicators, and a framework for technical cooperation that maximizes the impact of available resources.
- The work of UNCTAD should be guided by its comparative advantage, differentiation and complementarity of its work with other organizations, avoiding duplication, and through intergovernmental consensus.
- Achieving these goals requires transparent and constructive engagement among governments. Italy hopes that UNCTAD 16 will reinvigorate the intergovernmental machinery, promoting more effective cooperation between Member States, to ensure it is fit for successfully addressing the evolving challenges and priorities of developing countries.
- Italy fully shares UNCTAD's vision of fostering sustainable and inclusive growth through integration into the international trading system. In this context, the “Mattei Plan” stands as a tangible demonstration of our commitment to promoting equitable partnerships and shared growth strategies.
- Launched in 2024 by the Italian Government, the “Mattei Plan” is an initiative focused on fostering equitable partnerships with African countries.
- Inspired by the vision of fair, mutually beneficial international cooperation, it promotes collaboration in six areas: education and training, health, water, agriculture, energy, physical and digital infrastructure, and has trade and investment as central tools to foster inclusive economic growth.
- The “Mattei Plan” therefore integrates UNCTAD’s own goals: inclusive economic development, growth driven by trade and investment, and governance capable of reducing inequalities.
- To conclude, we hope that UNCTAD 16 will effectively reaffirm trade as a key engine of global and inclusive growth, helping to restore the necessary confidence in multilateral cooperation and giving new impetus to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
- Italy remains firmly committed to collaborating with Members States and the UNCTAD Secretariat to harness trade and development as drivers of inclusive and sustainable growth.