



Agenda item: 7

General Debate

Statement by:

Montenegro



THE 16TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

GENERAL DEBATE: Shaping the Future- Driving Economic Transformation for Equitable, Inclusive and Sustainable Development

Statement by MONTENEGRO

as delivered by Ambassador Slavica Milačić, Permanent Representative of Montenegro to the UN and other IOs in Geneva

Geneva, 20-23 October 2025

Mr. President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

We meet at a time of profound complexity and growing uncertainty — a world marked by rising geopolitical tensions, deepening economic fragmentation, widening inequalities, and the accelerating impacts of climate change and digital transformation.

These dynamics challenge not only our prospects for sustainable development — they test the very foundations of international peace and security.

Yet within these challenges lie great opportunities.

Opportunities to rethink our development pathways.

To build more resilient and inclusive economies.

And to ensure that progress truly leaves no one behind.

In this endeavor, **effective multilateralism** — with a **reformed and revitalized United Nations** at its core — is not a choice; it is a necessity. Equally vital are **open, inclusive dialogue** and a spirit of **genuine cooperation** to guide us through this defining era of transition.

This is why Montenegro believes that a **United Nations system, capable of responding to both current and future challenges**, is indispensable — for fostering constructive global cooperation, bridging divides, building trust, and creating partnerships that deliver tangible results for people and planet alike.

Montenegro therefore strongly supports the **UN80 initiative** and welcomes reforms that strengthen the UN's capacity to deliver, including efforts to enhance coherence among trade, investment, and technology in support of inclusive and sustainable growth.

In this spirit, we commend **Secretary-General Rebeca Grynspan's leadership** in realigning **UNCTAD's focus** on its core strengths — consensus-building, research and

analysis, technical cooperation, and capacity development — while promoting stronger interagency collaboration across the UN system.

Mr. President,

The theme of this Conference — *“Shaping the Future: Driving Economic Transformation for Equitable, Inclusive and Sustainable Development”* — captures the very essence of what our collective efforts must strive for.

It reminds us that **true progress is shared** — that sustainable growth must be both **environmentally responsible and socially inclusive**, ensuring opportunities and dignity for all.

Montenegro fully aligns with this vision. We believe that **economic transformation** is about empowering people and communities, reducing inequalities, and safeguarding our planet for future generations.

To achieve this, we must harness **trade, investment, and technology** as engines of inclusive development — ensuring that innovation and opportunity are benefits shared by all.

While global frameworks — including the **2030 Agenda**, the **Paris Agreement**, the **Summit of the Future**, the **Financing for Development Conference**, and the **World Social Summit** — remain key pillars for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, we also reaffirm our strong commitment to an **open, fair, and rules-based multilateral trading system**, essential to ensuring that trade and investment truly serve development.

Mr. President,

As a **future member of the European Union**, Montenegro has made significant progress in aligning its policies, laws, and institutions with EU standards. Our focus is clear: **building a competitive, green, and resilient economy** that can thrive within both European and global markets.

As a **small and open economy**, Montenegro is deeply aware of today’s vulnerabilities — from climate change and energy insecurity to external shocks — but also of the opportunities they bring.

We see the **green and digital transitions** as powerful drivers of modernization, innovation, and resilience. We are deepening reforms, strengthening public finance governance, and improving the business environment to foster long-term stability and growth.

We are advancing **renewable energy and energy efficiency**, embedding the **circular economy**, investing in **transport and connectivity**, and promoting **sustainable tourism, agriculture, and digital infrastructure** that empower our citizens.

Montenegro is committed to **growth that is inclusive, knowledge-based, and environmentally responsible**. We place **human rights, gender equality, and the empowerment of women and youth** at the heart of our development agenda.

Innovation and entrepreneurship are central to our transformation — supported by a dynamic business environment, targeted support for start-ups, and the promotion of green and digital entrepreneurship.

At the same time, Montenegro remains deeply committed to **partnership and cooperation** — within our region and globally. No nation can transform alone. We need partnerships among governments, the private sector, academia, and civil society to unleash knowledge, capital, and technology.

This resolve is exemplified through the expansions of **Montenegro's European Partnership Programs**. But also **global ones**, including our new **Country Partnership Framework with the World Bank**, focused on **climate resilience, competitiveness, and inclusive growth**.

Montenegro stands firmly with the international community in reaffirming our unwavering support for **rules-based multilateralism, solidarity, and global cooperation**.

We believe that **UNCTAD's mission — to help make trade and development work for all — has never been more vital**.

By working together — large and small nations, North and South, South and South, developed and developing — we can drive an economic transformation that uplifts people, protects our planet, and builds lasting peace.

Let us shape a future where **growth is inclusive, prosperity is shared, and development is truly sustainable**.

Thank you.