

**Trade and Development Board,
Fifty-seventh executive session
Geneva, 26–28 June 2013**

Opening Plenary

**Speaker: Ethiopia
On behalf of African Group**

Wednesday, 26 June 2013
*Not checked against delivery **

* This statement is made available in the language and form in which it was received. The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNCTAD.

**UNCTAD - Trade and Development Board,
57th Executive Session
African Group Statement
by
Ethiopia on behalf of the African Group**

26 June 2013

Geneva

Ambassador Muktar Tileuberdi, Chair of the Trade and Development Board,
Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD,

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honor to make this statement on behalf of the African Group.

I would like to associate myself with the statement made by Ecuador on behalf of the the Group of 77 and China.

I thank Dr. Supachai for his introductory remark and the African Group is very grateful for his leadership of UNCTAD.

Mr. President,

Africa has been growing since the beginning of the last decade. Growth is bringing poverty reduction and jobs are created. The continent is recognized as one of the growth poles of the global economy. This is good news for the global economy which still is not fully recovered from the effects of the global financial and economic crisis.

At the same time, despite the remarkable achievements that Africa continues to demonstrate, there are real development challenges. Poverty and underdevelopment are the major challenges that most African countries continue to face. Eradicating poverty through structural transformation is the top priority of African governments. Though it is the Africans and African governments that should continue to set and pursue their development agenda, given the complexity of challenges, demand-driven cooperation is required to accelerate the development process of the African continent.

It is in this positive spirit that we would like to express our appreciation for the support of the UNCTAD secretariat to the development endeavors of the African governments. The African Group is pleased that the work of the UNCTAD Secretariat has been demand-driven and aimed towards addressing real development challenges by, inter alia, closely working with national

governments, sub-regional and regional organizations with the purpose of enhancing the capacity of policy makers.

The UNCTAD secretariat report, entitled " UNCTAD activities in support of to Africa" provides an overview of UNCTAD's activities across its three main pillars of work namely: research and analysis, consensus-building and technical cooperation. In the area of research and analysis, UNCTAD continues to contribute to effective policy design, formulation and implementation in Africa through practical and relevant policy recommendations articulated in its flagship reports, including the Economic Development in Africa Report and the Least Developed Countries Report, Trade and Development Report, World Investment Report, and its national policy reviews. The expert meetings organized by UNCTAD continue to offer a platform of dialogue, learning and consultation for African stakeholders on a range of economic development issues relevant to the continent. Through technical cooperation projects such as ASYCUDA and DMFAS, UNCTAD continues to assist its African national member states in formulating and applying custom-built solutions to a range of development bottlenecks.

UNCTAD's research and policy analysis contributes to more effective design, formulation and implementation of policies in Africa in four major ways: by helping countries in tracking their economic performance and progress, by stimulating and shaping debates on policy issues affecting Africa's development, by advising African governments on policy reform through national policy reviews, and by supporting African governments in making appropriate decisions through analytical tools that inform technical decision-making.

During the reporting period, UNCTAD's technical cooperation activities, encompassing advisory services and capacity development, contributed to strengthening human, technical, technological, regulatory and institutional capacities in African countries in the following areas: trade and regional integration, competition, agriculture and commodities, debt management, investment, finance, enterprise development, and science and technology.

Thought it still remains difficult to separately assess the impact of these activities, it is important to focus on areas which could have more developmental impact.

We would like to request UNCTAD to continue its support activities for the members of the Group and takes this opportunity to express gratitude for our development partners that support UNCTAD's assistance to the Group.

Mr. President,

In the year 2014, we all will celebrate the 50th anniversary of UNCTAD. This is an important occasion that could bring all the development community together. It is a hallmark event and it gives us an opportunity to look back and forward to reflect upon the joint journey that we all have taken to bring about inclusive and sustainable development. In this regard, the African Group expresses its appreciation for the manner in which you have led our discussion to the 50th UNCTAD anniversary. The Group joins the Group of 77 and China in supporting the proposal of modalities, jointly with the explanatory note, developed by you.

Finally, we look forward to this afternoon panel discussion which focuses on the role of FDI to African development.