

**African Group Statement to be delivered by H.E. Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail  
Permanent representative of Sudan. At the 65<sup>th</sup> Session of the Trade and  
Development Board part II**

**Geneva, 1-4 September 2018**

**Mr. President,**

**Director of the division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special  
programmes**

**Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is my honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group. The Group thanks Mr. Paul Akiwumi, Director of the division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special programmes, for his opening remarks. While the African Group aligns itself to the statement delivered by Pakistan on behalf of the G.77& China, allow me to make some additional remarks.

**Mr. President,**

The African Group welcomes the Report on Activities undertaken by UNCTAD in Support of Africa. The Group also takes note that UNCTAD activities, which cut across the three pillars of research and policy analysis, consensus-building and technical assistance, contribute directly to Africa's development in five major areas: supporting the economic transformation of African economies, building the resilience of African economies to vulnerabilities, improving their competitiveness, enhancing their abilities to benefit from the multilateral system, and empowering Africans and investing in their future. In this regard the Group calls upon UNCTAD to continue conducting these activities to support African countries in transforming their economies to accelerate sustainable development and facilitate the region's integration into the world economy.

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**Mr. President,**

The African Group commends UNCTAD for collaborating with the African Union Commission, the regional economic communities across the continent, other international organizations and partners to address a range of issues in the areas of trade and economic development more broadly. The Group also appreciates the role of the Regional Office in Africa and its ongoing support to the African Union Commission, regional economic communities, and to African Governments. In this regard the Group commends UNCTAD efforts in providing technical assistance the establishment of Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and request UNCTAD to continue its support in phase II negotiations.

**Mr. President,**

The African Group is concerned that the financial resources committed to Africa in 2017 have been declined by 7.4% compared to 2016. The Group encourages the development Partners to increase their support to UNCTAD activities. Furthermore, the Group also calls upon UNCTAD secretariat to allocate more financial and human resources to the Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special programmes.

**Mr. President,**

The African Group is of the view that to harness Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for development, African countries need to benefit from enhanced diffusion and transfer of available technologies and building local innovation and productive capacity. In this context, the Group highly commends UNCTAD's work programme on Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Reviews. These reviews help developing countries to identify the measures needed to integrate STI policies into their national development strategies. They also provide the elements with which to design action agendas to strengthen national efforts to build technological and innovation capabilities.

**Mr. President,**

The African Group requests UNCTAD to continue providing its technical assistances to African countries by its programmes in Debt Management and Financial Analysis System and ASYCUDA to maximize their impact on the region's ability to mobilize customs revenues, improve on customs efficiency and manage debt sustainably.

**Mr. President,**

The Group welcomes UNCTAD cooperation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa in defining, estimating and disseminating statistics on illicit financial flows in Africa, we call upon UNCTAD to continue this endeavour and provide pragmatic solutions at all levels on illicit financial flows. The Group furthermore, encourages UNCTAD as UN focal point for the integrated treatment of development topics, to continue its cooperation with UNODC to provide the statistics of the financial leakages from Africa and to develop means of curbing this phenomenon.

**Mr. President,**

Finally, The African Group would like to reiterate once again the importance of dedicating sufficient time to discuss this agenda item which reflects UNCTAD's wide range of activities in Africa undertaken at national, regional and continental levels. In this regard the Group is favouring discussion of this item should be in a dedicated TDB Executive Session as the previous practice.

**I thank Mr. President.**