

**Trade and Development Board, Twenty-eighth
Special session**

Geneva, 17 June 2014

Opening Plenary

Speaker: Austria on behalf of the Group B

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*Not checked against delivery **

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UNCTAD 50th ANNIVERSARY TDB SPECIAL SESSION

17 June 2014

GROUP B STATEMENT

Delivered by H.E. Ambassador Thomas Hajnoczi (Austria)

Mr. President,
Ministers,
Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Fifty years ago, the States participating in the first U.N. Conference on Trade and Development expressed their determination “to seek a better and more effective system of international economic cooperation.” They called for the abolition of poverty everywhere and they saw it as essential “that the flows of world trade should help to eliminate the wide economic disparities among nations.”

Today UNCTAD remains a key tool for achieving these goals. Also UNCTAD’s mandate echoes a change which many of us are making in our development policy agendas from focusing on the “enabling environment” towards more support for “trade and private sector development” as a solid foundation for economic development and poverty reduction.

Trade policies make a major contribution to economic growth, development and jobs. Group B is fully committed to supporting the integration of developing countries most in need into the global economy and international trading system. We believe that UNCTAD, based on its mandate and universal membership, continues to represent a unique forum for a comprehensive development dialogue with specific and appropriate focus on trade and development issues.

Despite significant progress made on the Millennium Development Goals over the past fifteen years, there is still room for more to be accomplished. Our colleagues in New York continue to work intensively on building the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda and we welcome UNCTAD's efforts to contribute to this process on the basis of its specific competences, and in helping to define the role of trade in achieving sustainable development.

Mr. President,

In today's world every organization needs to reflect on its strengths and challenges. A 50 years anniversary is a natural point for reflection. We encourage UNCTAD to continue its activities within its mandate and to look for new approaches to continue carrying out research, providing technical assistance, and facilitating consensus-building, in the areas where it has comparative advantage and added value.

We look forward to productive discussions and collaboration among the member states on trade, development, and the future of the organization, over the years to come.

UN agencies are needed more than ever, but in today's climate, each UN agency must demonstrate its added value and ability to adjust to financial constraints through better governance, transparency, coordination, effectiveness and efficiency. In this context, we as Group B reiterate our support for the action promoted by Dr. Kituyi to continue improving the efficiency and effectiveness of UNCTAD's activities, in order to enhance the relevance and the impact of its work.

We congratulate to the 50th anniversary and thank the hard-working UNCTAD Secretariat and, in particular, the Secretary General of UNCTAD, Dr. Kituyi, for the commitment and dedication to the cause of global development.