



HELLENIC REPUBLIC

STATEMENT

BY

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UNCTAD XII

GENERAL DEBATE

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**MR. PRESIDENT,
MR SECRETARY GENERAL OF UNCTAD,
EXCELLENCIES
DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

It is an honour and privilege for me to address this Conference, and would like to begin by extending on behalf of the Government of Greece congratulations to You, Mr. President on being elected to preside over the conference of UNCTAD XII. May I also take this opportunity to thank the Government of the Republic of Ghana for hosting this Conference in the beautiful city of Accra and wish all the best to the people of this country.

Slovenia, as the EU Presidency has already made a comprehensive intervention on matters under discussion here with which Greece is associating herself. I would like therefore to make a few additional points highlighting the position of my country.

MR. PRESIDENT,

Globalization, as a dominant phenomenon of today's world, flying on four wings: finance, trade, technology and investment which are all steered by market forces, is a demanding process with benefits and challenges for all. It is an unavoidable reality that globalization offers opportunities and implies risks for countries which are not yet ready to be integrated into the world economy and to compete successfully in international markets.

To reap the benefits of globalization, political will is required as well as an enabling environment on the national and international levels. Globalisation promotes trade, FDIs, capital flows and can be a force for sustainable, gender-sensitive and people-centered development. UNCTAD has the expertise to support developing countries and economies in transition while taking advantage of the positive economic and social impact of globalization. At the same time UNCTAD has the capacity to tackle the disparities in distribution of benefits and risks of globalization, both within and among nations.

In the past five years, the world has enjoyed significant economic development. Developing countries in particular, have achieved major economic and export growth. Furthermore, impressive performances by some of the emerging economies have contributed to significantly increase the share of South-South trade into the global trade.

However, despite the efforts of the international community income gaps remain wide. The UN Secretary General asked that 2008 be the year of the “bottom billion” left behind by global growth. Africa and the LDCs, in particular, lag behind in attaining the MDGs.

The place and time of the present Conference are symbolic: UNCTAD is hosted in Africa midway to the achievement of the MDGs. It is an opportunity for the member-states to address the special needs of the weakest countries and encourage UNCTAD to further support the development of their productive and trading capacities and help them increase their competitiveness.

MR. PRESIDENT,

It is a fact that some countries depend on low value added products, while several others have difficulties in accessing the world markets. Trade combined with national institutional and economic reforms, is a key aspect for regional cooperation and integration. As a complement to the multilateral trading system, the increasing number of Regional Trade Agreement responds to the needs of all developing countries. Furthermore, appropriate national policies are necessary in order to increase the quality and the flow of FDIs. In this respect, UNCTAD's activities on Investment Policy Reviews and on International Investment Agreements provide meaningful tools for helping developing countries define their national strategies and adopt adequate measures.

Sustainable development requires efficient national development policies, good governance, social justice, gender equality and decent work, taking as well into account the specificities and different levels of development of each country. However, the concept of “policy space”, though understandable, does not signify applying different sets of rules to developed and developing countries. The common objective is the better integration of developing countries into the world economy and the internationally agreed multilateral regulatory context.

MR. PRESIDENT,

Since the role of trade as an engine for development and economic growth has been widely recognized in major multilateral political settings, UNCTAD, as the UN focal point for the integrated treatment of trade and development and interrelated issues, should undertake greater responsibilities and play a catalytic role in that regard.

UNCTAD has already accomplished valuable work as the UN system's coordination centre addressing questions not only for trade but also for finance, technology, investment and sustainable development. There is a need to reinforce its three major functions, define the future of its work, make use of its comparative advantages and strengthen its work at the international, regional and national levels in order to take positive steps to ensure the sustainable and beneficial participation of the developing countries in the international trade by delivering effective and demand-driven assistance to them. In doing so, UNCTAD has a challenging objective: make trade work for development.

UNCTAD has also a role to play in contributing to the implementation of other international conferences (Monterrey Consensus, Doha Development Agenda, World Summit on the Information Society), as well as in addressing emerging issues within the scope of its mandate, resources and comparative advantages.

MR. PRESIDENT,

Greece is committed to the Monterrey Consensus on financing for Development as well as to the internationally agreed development Goals, including the MDGs, and makes all efforts to effectively contribute to their attainment.

Since 1999, Greece under the "HELLENIC AID PLAN" has implemented a bilateral and multilateral aid programme making all reasonable efforts to respond to undertaken commitments.

In 2007 the amount of ODA granted by Greece reached 500,82 million \$, a significant increase compared to the 424 million \$ ODA granted in 2006.

The geographical priorities of Greek development assistance encompass regions such as the Balkans, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, the Middle East and North Africa as well as Sub-Saharan Africa. According to our development cooperation policy, our ODA to Sub-Saharan Africa will be substantially increased in the next five-year period.

Additionally, the Aid for Trade is expected to be annually increased within the framework of the Greek Development Cooperation Policy.

As far as aid effectiveness is concerned, Greece is committed to the five principles contained in the Paris Declaration and looks forward to the upcoming Accra High Level Forum as a great opportunity to deliver key political messages and to be specific action-oriented.

MR. PRESIDENT,

We all are gathered here in the beautiful city of Accra to deliberate on UNCTAD's Quadrennial Work Programme on which we are committed to strengthen UNCTAD's development role and impact as well as its institutional effectiveness.

UNCTAD has the capabilities to provide input with value-added and effective support to developing countries.

In the context of the UN initiative for coherence, an institutional reform is needed. In this respect, the initiative of UNCTAD's Secretary-General to establish the Eminent Persons Panel has been an important step forward and its recommendations are very significant.

Greece considers the following as important issues in UNCTAD's role:

- A better balance among its three pillars: research and analysis, consensus building and technical cooperation.
- More coherence between research/analysis and technical cooperation.
- Prioritization of its activities and work programme, based on its comparative advantages.
- Closer cooperation with other international organisations and the private sector.

MR. PRESIDENT,

Before closing my statement, I feel obliged to pay tribute to the Secretary-General of UNCTAD **DR. SUPATCHAI** for his untired efforts to make this Organization a stronger and effective institution.

Thank you **MR. PRESIDENT.**