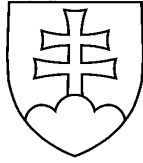


**UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE  
ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT  
Twelfth Session**

**Accra, Ghana  
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**STATEMENT BY THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC**



**SLOVAK REPUBLIC**

**12<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development  
(UNCTAD XII)**

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**S T A T E M E N T**

**by**

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**General Debate**

**Accra, April 23, 2008**

**Check against delivery**

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellences,  
Ladies and Gentleman,

Let me start with the words of thanks to the Government of Ghana and the people of this beautiful country for hosting this conference and great hospitality extended to us during our deliberation.

Mr. Chairman,

Slovakia as a member of EU endorses the statement delivered by Mr. Ziga Turk, Minister of Development of Slovenia in capacity of Presidency of EU. Nevertheless, allow me to share with you some additional thoughts and comments on issues under our scrutiny here.

*Addressing the opportunities and challenges of globalization for development*

While discussing globalization it reminds me situation my country was facing not so long ago. Transition process of our society and economy had posed in front of us very similar challenges to those countries of Africa are facing today. Thanks to the stamina and perseverance of our people we have succeeded. Though one has to be careful while judging globalization due to the absence of social dimension in it, I have to admit, the success of my country transition process is in great deal result of positive effect of this phenomenon. Without FDI flow we would not be able to shift the level of our economy and untie productive potential of our people. Of course besides the implementation of economic reforms important aspects in investor's decision process were infrastructural investments, educational level and working skills of our people. This is in any case valid for all countries willing to improve the living standards of their people and the level of their economies. Thus automotive industry, the backbone of our economy today, could have grown.

Nevertheless the game is not over or better said it will never be. Dynamism as one of the characteristics of globalization requires constant attention of those with driving wheel. For us it means we have at our disposal roughly 10 – 15 years to build up cluster of local manufacturers, locally based research and development units and logistic centers, prior to possibility of relocation of manufacturing part of automotive industry in its search for more favourable conditions in other countries. This must be kept in mind too when speaking about effects of globalization.

There are many more features we should not omit, vulnerabilities of the global financial system at the front. Any debate on development ultimately ends up in finances. Unless we are able to introduce necessary regulation to behavior

of hedge or sovereign funds, we can not escape inconvenience of being surprised by facing another crisis on financial market with grave consequences.

*Enhancing an enabling environment at all levels to strengthen productive capacity, trade and investment: mobilizing resources and harnessing knowledge for development*

Mr. Chairman,

To materialize the idea of mutual support by various pillars of the global economic architecture requires, among others, open mind and understanding for those in need. This is furthermore underlined by the fact, before fulfilling our previous tasks, we are facing number of the new ones. Migration, climate change, very soon limited access to drinking water, are only few of them. My country tries by its humble effort, due to its limited size and possibilities, to help where we can. Recently for example we have written off the debt of Afganistan, previously of Irak and number of other countries. But on this account, let me say a small observation. I am bit surprised that during this conference I did not meet single word on expences we are every day losing in military spending. Did we forget the amount of money spent in a single year is capable to solve such issue like hunger in the world?

*Key trade and development issues and the new realities in the geography of the world economy*

Mr. Chairman,

Since we have started the process of transition we have substantially liberalized our trade and opened our economy. Slovakia's trade openness today reaches 172 % level of GDP with both export and import at the level of over 85 %. Of course our accession to the EU has also reflected to the relocation of our trade – EU counts for almost 90 % and 70 % share on Slovakian export and import respectively. By this I would like to stress that our integration can become an example for developing countries. Therefore the south-south trade and integration really mean a substantial potential for their future growth.

*Strengthening UNCTAD: enhancing its development role, impact, and institutional effectiveness*

The issue of reform of UNCTAD is often discussed. We think the organization and its mission should reflect new realities in the world and we should strive to make it more efficient, transparent and actionable. We are convinced that this debate should not be understood as a criticism but rather as a

duly oriented struggle to have a better and more functional organization which is simply looking into the future.

Mr. Chairman,

As a member of the OECD and EU the Slovak Republic has also an obligation to provide resources within the frame of the *Official Development Assistance* (ODA) to the countries in need. This is of course a new agenda for my country and we are learning to provide the development aid effectively and only to the countries that really need it. Until recently we received ODA from other donor countries which also helped us to implement reforms, to increase our standard of living and to integrate our economy into the European Union as well as to increase Slovak competitiveness among the developed economies. Today I am glad we make a switch from a beneficiary to a donor. On the other hand this bears automatically a substantial level of responsibility.

We started to provide ODA for the first time in 2002. It amounted for USD 5,68 mil. Last year it reached the level of USD 66,85 mil. which counts for 0,093 % of our GNI. For the year 2015 we targeted 0,33 % of GNI to be donated in the frame of ODA. In its medium term ODA strategy Slovakia decided to provide resources for countries – of Western Balkan, central Asia and Africa.

We focus on three areas where we want to help and provide our experience from the transition process:

- Developing democratic institutions and market environment
- Infrastructure (including the social infrastructure)
- Landscaping, protection of the environment, agriculture, food safety and use of raw materials.

These are the projects provided on bilateral basis but we also provide development aid via multilateral channels mainly by contributing to European Development Fund. I believe that our donations within the ODA help to solve problems in beneficiary countries and to create a better environment and living standards for their people.

To conclude I would like to express our readiness to contribute constructively to the effort to adopt a balanced declaration. We are convinced that the respective Committee will be able to bridge differences on a few open issues and consequently the text submitted for adoption will duly reflect the needs and interests of all UNCTAD member States and provide a good basis for a strengthened co-operation in the future.

Thank you for your attention.