

STATEMENT MADE BY AMBASSADOR C CHIPAZIWA, HEAD
OF THE ZIMBABWE DELEGATION AT UNCTAD XII :
ACCRA , 22 APRIL 2008

The Chairman of the Conference, The Honourable Joe Baidoe-Ansah, MP, Ghana 's Minister of Trade and Industry,

The UNCTAD Secretary-General, Dr Supachai Panitchpakdi,

Honourable Ministers,

Distinguished Delegates and Guests, and

Ladies and Gentlemen.

We wish to congratulate our esteemed hosts, the Government and people of the Republic of Ghana , for successfully holding this important conference in their beautiful capital, Accra . They have exceeded their legendary hospitality which we have all enjoyed since our arrival here. Well done!

Our debt of gratitude is also singularly directed at our effective and warm Chairman, the Honourable Minister of Industry and Trade and his esteemed team of officials!

Mr Chairman,

Many of us here expect UNCTAD XII to signal a revival of UNCTAD the organisation as an institution which provides many services to its constituency, the developing countries. We therefore are at one with those members who reject any diminution of UNCTAD's mandate within the three pillars of research and analysis, consensus building and technical cooperation. Neither is there room for a censorial prescription on what areas can and cannot be examined by this redoubtable institution. UNCTAD should be left alone to shed light on the many challenges which constrain developing countries in their pursuit of

development. It will therefore be clear that we do not subscribe to any notion of the so-called "mandate-creep" on the part of UNCTAD.

Mr Chairman,

There are new and emerging issues on which greater understanding is required if developing countries are successfully to chart their way forward in their pursuit of development. The rise in energy prices has a crippling effect on development. So too does unplanned migration which devastates many members' skills needs. Climate change has left in its wake not only horrendous losses of lives and property but, tragically, has also erased many physical manifestations of development which will take decades to rebuild. Why, the very physical existence of some members is itself at stake from rising sea-levels. These issues must all be understood in their total perspective and UNCTAD has the unique expertise to bring coherence to the appreciation of all this.

Yet, there cannot be any debate over the primacy of food security over alternative fuel sources. Africa in particular must be assisted to revive its agricultural sector. It is with tremendous difficulties that many members can contain the social destabilisation brought about by food scarcity and unaffordable prices! Collective effort is required to bring about the so-called "green revolution" in Africa. We call upon the development partners to provide such resources as are required without discrimination.

Lastly, we call upon UNCTAD to be appropriately resourced to study efforts for the diversification and value-addition of Africa's commodities. Most African countries are dependent on income from commodities whose export features have not altered for decades. The market is not dependable for resources to finance sustainable development. UNCTAD therefore needs to also unlock the nature and causes of the current international financial and credit crises so that these do not hamstring our development efforts.

We look forward to the approval of a development-friendly programme for UNCTAD for the next four years.

Thank you.