

**Statement delivered by H.E. Mr. Tahir Hussain Andrabi (Pakistan)
on behalf of the Asia Pacific Group
at the Seventieth Executive Session of the Trade and Development
Board Geneva, 3 February 2021**

General statement

Mr. President,
Secretary-General of UNCTAD,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

1. Asia Pacific Group thanks Secretary General for his remarks and valedictory speech.
2. The Group appreciates Dr. Kituyi dynamic leadership of UNCTAD since 2013. Indeed, he has performed the challenging task to head the biggest and the only organization of the developing countries within UN system in an admirable way. He will be remembered for for his resounding contribution to the conceptualization, development and launch of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and for his contribution to the historic ‘Nairobi Maafikiano’ document.
3. Dr. Kituyi’s work has set the global discourse on inclusive economic development, globalization and multilateralism in the last five years and will remain a blueprint for how our global society, economy and environment should look in 2030 and beyond. His passionate advocacy and untiring efforts in creating conditions, opportunities and support mechanisms for developing countries to leverage trade, finance and technology for sustainable development are well acknowledged by the members of the Asia Pacific Group.

Mr. President,

4. The Group corroborates the Secretary General remarks that the fifteenth session of the Conference will be an important moment for the international community to identify elements that will mark the decade of action and move forward.
5. This important session of the Trade and Development Board is being held at a time when we are preparing for UNCTAD XV and negotiating ‘Bridgetown Outcome Document’.

Mr. President,

6. COVID-19 should not be merely considered as a crisis, but as an event that demands new economic and intellectual beginnings. Learning from the crisis and trying to recover towards more sustainable social and economic conditions will require a debate as to whether issues regarding public health and the environment need to figure more prominently in the

rules and norms that govern globalization, and what this would imply for the economic sphere of globalization and especially its trade and development dimension.

7. The Group believes that it is moment for emphasizing the role that the multiple nexuses between trade and development can play in combating the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. President,

8. Historians may remember the remainder of the year 2021 as the time when the groundwork for new global economic relationships was laid. We should not miss the opportunity that a ministerial conference on trade and development provides to contribute its part to this process.

9. In so doing, the fifteenth session of the Conference must address the way in which a revived and more resilient multilateralism can manage the multiple and changing nexuses between trade and development to the benefit of all.

Mr. President,

10. We look forward to actively participate in the session's proceedings and assure you of our cooperation for a successful TDB. We would highlight other issues of importance under their respective agenda items.

11. I thank you, Mr. President
