

# ACP Secretary General addresses UNCTAD XIV meeting in Nairobi

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*Statement by the ACP Secretary General H.E. Dr. Patrick I. Gomes delivered on behalf of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, at the 14th session of the Conference of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XIV), 21 July 2016, Nairobi, KENYA*

### **Madame Chairperson; Excellencies; Ladies and gentlemen,**

I am honoured for this opportunity to address the Conference on behalf of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group. At the outset permit me to warmly congratulate you, Madam Chair, and members of the Bureau and express confidence that your guidance will give the conference a successful outcome.

Allow me to commend the Republic of Kenya, for hosting the conference and we applaud UNCTAD for organizing its 2nd in Africa. The ACP Group also associates itself with the statement delivered by Tanzania on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

### **Madame Chairperson,**

The ACP Group reaffirms the Doha Development Agenda and strongly believes the new 4-year mandate will empower UNCTAD to continue to pay particular attention to the special needs of LDCs, SIDS, SVEs and LLDCs. They face particular challenges, characterized by, inter alia, commodity dependence; market concentration; low growth; macroeconomic and financial difficulties, trade deficits, debt burdens-among others. UNCTAD XIV should make a significant contribution to address this non exhaustive list of issue related to the promotion of sustainable and equitable development of the poorest and most vulnerable.

Since its establishment in 1964, UNCTAD has been the appropriate forum to ensure a comprehensive dialogue between developed and developing countries on trade and development and interrelated issues.

The ACP Group expresses satisfaction with the work of UNCTAD and calls for its further strengthening. We recognize UNCTAD's role as a major institutional stakeholder of financing for development in supporting the follow-up to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other recent international agreements.

The UNCTAD XIV agenda before us must adopt ways and means to move in line with the main theme of the Conference: "From decision to action: Moving towards an inclusive and equitable global economic environment for trade and development."

We recognize that UNCTAD XIV comes at a watershed moment in international relations following the adoption of the UN Summit on Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development Goals, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Tenth Ministerial Conference of WTO here in Nairobi and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The ACP Group is of the view that these agreements collectively, and combined with the core mandate of UNCTAD, provide the context and set the parameters for UNCTAD work for the next four years. We agree with the strong appeal to use trade in implementing the Agenda 2030. The momentum, from the international agreements has reinforced the critical role of trade and development and interrelated issues of finance, technology and investment for inclusive and sustainable development.

We call therefore for the enhancement of UNCTAD's capacity to address the 2030 Agenda in support of all developing countries and economies in transition. UNCTAD should further enhance its work on the special problems of the African continent; and as appropriate, accelerate its work on the special needs and problems of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and other structurally weak, vulnerable and small economies.

**Madame Chairperson,**

The ACP Group urges that those efforts be concerted, coherent and results-oriented. ACP supports actions for integrated global solutions to global challenges dealing with imbalances and inequalities due to uneven gains from globalization. We reiterate the significance of a fair, open, transparent, rules-based and development-oriented international trading system ensuring market access, and enhancing participation of developing countries, in particular LDCs, in global economic governance.

The ACP Group attaches considerable importance to the functions of the multilateral trade system and the need to ensure effective participation and integration of ACP countries. In this context, we reaffirm our full commitment to conclude the negotiations of the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) and fulfil its mandate in order to address the needs of developing countries and facilitate their effective participation in the international economy. Moreover, we are concerned at the negative consequences of mega-trade deals outside the WTO being negotiated as this can result in countering intra-ACP trade aimed at addressing preferences erosion.

In the face of stagnating traditional engines of growth, it is imperative that new sources of growth be found. For instance, ways should be formulated to tap economic growth avenues in South-South cooperation such as through the strengthening of domestic markets of developing countries and the building of sub-regional trading and economic co-operation as Africa's CFTA. In this context, programs should be identified that enhance new growth opportunities and value addition as well as generate income opportunities for poor and low-income groups in developing countries. In this regard, UNCTAD can play a critical role.

The ACP Group shares the view that structural economic transformation through diversification into more modern and technologically-advanced activities and production of higher value products is a key condition for resilience-building and sustainable long-term growth. Therefore, we recognise that the significance of developing productive capacities is an essential element for such transformation. The ACP Group firmly believes that UNCTAD deserves to be better equipped to deal with its role in the structural transformation of developing economies.

**Madame Chairperson,**

The ACP Group considers South-South and Triangular cooperation as fundamental avenues for enhancing the trade and development of developing countries in this critical time of multiple challenges. The Group considers that these cooperation mechanisms should complement North-South cooperation.

In our quest, as a Group and at the individual country level, to enable specific policies to deal with these challenges, we have received significant international support from UNCTAD. Their technical cooperation activities have acted as powerful tools for tackling the challenges that the ACP countries and other developing countries face. UNCTAD has played an important role in the implementation of the Istanbul Program of Action; the Vienna Program of Action and the Samoa Pathway. It should be strengthened in order to continue to play this effective role. We therefore underline the need for UNCTAD to be accorded its rightful place in the outcomes of this Conference.

As we move from decision to action in terms of the recent goals of international fora, data will be critical in order to inform sound policies and specific interventions. We are confident that UNCTAD will be able to deliver on these requirements.

In conclusion, the ACP Group urges the Conference to adopt concrete measures which would enable UNCTAD to further boost its programs on policy issues and challenges faced by developing countries in areas such as debt restructuring, new technologies, inclusive finance and sustainable exploitation of marine and natural resources. It is in this way that no one will be left behind!

I thank for your attention.

**Dr. Patrick I. Gomes**  
**ACP Secretary General**

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