



Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran
to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Statement

By

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Before

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Agenda Item 6: Leveraging international trade rules for development

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**Mr. Chairman,
Deputy Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,**

At the outset, allow me to express my sincere appreciation to the distinguished speakers for their insightful and thought-provoking presentations. I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the UNCTAD Secretariat for preparing the highly informative note entitled "*Leveraging Multilateral Trade Rules for the Sustainable Development Objectives of Developing Countries*", and for the excellent arrangements made for this timely and important meeting.

Aligning myself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, as well as the Asia-Pacific Group, I wish to offer the following remarks:

Mr. Chairman,

Placing development at the heart of the global trading system is not an option — it is an imperative. Trade must be harnessed as a catalyst for

inclusive growth, poverty eradication, and sustainable development. However, the alarming and sustained increase in trade-restrictive measures between 2010 and 2023 remains a matter of deep concern, particularly for developing countries. Driven by new industrial policies, security considerations, and environmental objectives, such measures have strained our economies, exacerbated fiscal pressures, constrained productive capacities, and complicated our ability to adapt to an increasingly complex global regulatory environment.

Although multilateral trade rules were originally designed to foster fairness and predictability, in practice, they can sometimes impose additional constraints on the growth prospects of developing nations. Nevertheless, we welcome the ongoing initiatives aimed at reforming these frameworks, particularly those focused on strengthening Special and Differential Treatment provisions. These efforts are critical to ensuring that trade remains a genuine driver of sustainable development for all.

Mr. Chairman,

In today's interconnected global economy, cooperation among all countries is not merely desirable—it is indispensable. Fragmentation, unilateralism, and protectionism can only lead to a lose-lose outcome, undermining collective efforts toward sustainable development and threatening global economic stability. True and inclusive cooperation remains the only path to unlocking the full potential of trade as a vehicle for shared and equitable prosperity.

Multilateralism must remain the foundation of our collective efforts. We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to a universal, rules-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, non-discriminatory, and equitable multilateral trading system, with development at its center. Such a system is crucial to ensuring that all countries, particularly developing economies, can participate meaningfully and benefit equitably from global trade and investment.

In this context, UNCTAD plays a pivotal and indispensable role. Through its unique mandate, expertise, and convening authority, UNCTAD serves as a vital platform for bridging ideas, facilitating dialogue, and building consensus among Member States. Its role in promoting development-centered trade policies and assisting developing countries in navigating the evolving complexities of the global trading environment cannot be overstated.

We call for urgent and enhanced technical capacity-building to

empower developing countries to effectively leverage existing international trade provisions—such as Special and Differential Treatment, industrial and procurement policy flexibilities, and emerging opportunities in services trade. Only by doing so can we foster structural economic transformation, advance productive diversification, and build sustainable, resilient economies.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, we urge all Member States to work together, in a spirit of solidarity, mutual respect, and genuine partnership, to ensure that international trade remains a force for development, inclusion, and prosperity. Let us seize this moment to recommit to a revitalized multilateral trading system that places the needs and aspirations of developing countries at its core, ensuring that no one is left behind.

Thank you.