



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

Mr. Sadegh Ghorbani

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

before

73rd session of Trade and Development Board of UNCTAD

Agenda item: General Debate

Geneva, 14 September 2026

Madam President,

The Islamic Republic of Iran aligns itself with the statements delivered by the Group of 77 and China, the Asia-Pacific Group and the Group of Friends in Defence of the Charter of the United Nations.

This general debate comes at an important moment for UNCTAD. With the Geneva Consensus now setting the direction for the years ahead, the focus should be on translating agreed commitments into meaningful results for developing countries. This task is becoming more difficult as high financing costs, weak investment, technological divides, growing fragmentation and increasing barriers to markets, finance and technology continue to constrain development.

These conditions show that development outcomes cannot be assessed solely on the basis of domestic policies. They are also shaped by the

international environment in which countries pursue their national objectives. Developing countries must therefore retain sufficient freedom to design strategies suited to their own circumstances, strengthen productive capacities, diversify their economies and promote domestic value addition.

This is particularly relevant to investment. Domestic reforms and investment facilitation can contribute, but they cannot substitute for affordable finance, market access and technology. Productive investment should strengthen domestic linkages, support technology acquisition and help developing countries move towards higher-value activities rather than reinforce patterns of dependency.

More broadly, national efforts cannot reach their full potential where access to finance, banking and payment channels, technology, transport, logistics or insurance is restricted by factors beyond national control.

External constraints therefore deserve greater attention in the development debate. The Islamic Republic of Iran reiterates its firm opposition to unilateral coercive measures, which are contrary to international law and the Charter of the United Nations. These measures deter investment, disrupt payments and transport, restrict access to markets, finance, technology and essential inputs, and weaken productive capacities. Their extraterritorial effects and resulting over-compliance make these impacts even more severe.

International insecurity and unlawful military action likewise create serious obstacles to development. The recent unlawful military aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran has demonstrated how such actions can disrupt trade, investment, transport and broader economic activity, with repercussions extending beyond the immediate target. More broadly, military aggressions and blockades, wherever they occur, undermine the stability and predictability necessary for economic activity, welfare and sustainable development.

Therefore, UNCTAD should give more systematic attention to such external factors and appropriately reflect their impact in its analytical work and policy recommendations.

This broader understanding should also guide our approach to resilience. Developing countries cannot be expected simply to absorb repeated external shocks with limited resources. Resilience requires reliable supply chains, functioning transport and payment channels, access to technology and adequate development finance. It should not create new forms of exclusion or shift disproportionate costs onto developing economies. South-South cooperation and regional integration can support these efforts while complementing broader international cooperation.

Madam President,

We take note of the Secretary-General's annual report, which reflects the breadth of UNCTAD's activities. Going forward, its analytical work should capture both domestic capacity gaps and external constraints. Its intergovernmental machinery should remain inclusive and member-driven, while technical cooperation should be demand-driven, adequately resourced and equitably accessible. Strong performance across these three pillars will also strengthen UNCTAD's contribution to the wider development work of the United Nations.

The practical test of the Geneva Consensus will be whether developing countries are better able to finance development, build productive capacities, acquire technology, attract productive investment and pursue their national priorities in a more enabling international environment.

The outcomes of this Board should contribute to that objective and strengthen, rather than narrow, UNCTAD's development mandate.

I thank you.