



Statement of H.E. Archbishop Ettore Balestrero, Apostolic Nuncio
Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations
and Other International Organizations in Geneva
at the 74th Executive Session of the UNCTAD Trade and Development Board

Item 4: *Economic development in Africa:*
The potential of Africa to capture technology-intensive global supply chains
Geneva, 20 November 2023

Mr. President,

My Delegation is grateful for the comprehensive and insightful report on "The Potential of Africa to Capture Technology-Intensive Global Supply Chains." The document confirms and encapsulates Africa's significant potential in the global supply chain dynamics.

The Holy See appreciates that the report underscores the urgent need to focus on promoting sustainable economic growth, creating decent work opportunities, and combatting poverty and inequality. Furthermore, we also share the aim and intention of this report to support human development and promote peace and prosperity throughout the continent. We commend the strategies highlighted for the equitable utilization of Africa's rich resources and their use for the promotion of regional growth and development.

Moreover, the Holy See supports initiatives aimed at ensuring the fair integration of all nations into global supply chains. As Pope Francis has stated, no person "can remain excluded because of his or her place of birth, much less because of privileges enjoyed by others who were born in lands of greater opportunity."¹

The emphasis on a diversified and resilient approach to sourcing raw materials and intermediate goods from Africa could make a significant contribution to the continent's economic progress. Furthermore, encouraging the implementation of policies that address the challenges of human capital, infrastructure development, and technology is of paramount importance and resonates deeply with our shared aspirations for a prosperous Africa for all.

¹ Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter "*Fratelli tutti*", n. 121

Mr. President,

This report is a call to action for the international community. It is evident that significant efforts are still required, and the great potential of African economies calls for a collective commitment to effectively implement the proposed strategies.

In this regard, my Delegation is concerned that, as presented by the Secretary-General's report,² the "relative weight of UNCTAD project expenditure in Africa in its total project expenditure has continued to fall," from 44% in 2016 to 32% in 2022.

We call on UNCTAD, member states, and relevant stakeholders to intensify their cooperation, support and commitments to strengthen the African economies and promote inclusive economic development.

The Holy See will continue to play its part in promoting sustainable development throughout the world, and especially in Africa, and will continue to work with UNCTAD and other international organizations to this end.

Thank you, Mr. President

² TD/B/70/2.