

FROM DECISIONS **TO ACTIONS**

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF UNCTAD TO UNCTAD XIV



UNITED NATIONS



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UNITED NATIONS
New York and Geneva, 2015

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UNCTAD (XIV)/1 Rev.1

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*Recall the face
of the poorest and
the weakest man or woman
whom you may have seen,
and ask yourself
if the step you contemplate
is going to be of any use
to him or her.*

”

Mahatma Gandhi, 1948



FOREWORD

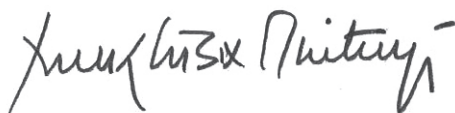
The fourteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XIV) will mark a critical moment not only for economic and social progress in the developing world, but also for the common future of all countries and communities. As the first United Nations ministerial conference of the post-2015 era, it will represent a starting point to translate the heightened ambitions and commitments of the international community into concrete plans of action. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the sustainable development goals and the expected call for action at Conference of the Parties on climate change in Paris together embody an immensely challenging and interrelated programme: we must mobilize all available financial, human and entrepreneurial resources to foster inclusive growth and eradicate poverty while decarbonizing the global economy – all within the next 15 years.

In the previous two decades, trade expanded with unprecedented speed, new technologies transformed patterns of interaction and finance became a pervasive feature of everyday economic life. Governments have found the space and instruments to harness these forces in productive ways, and nearly 1 billion people have been lifted out of poverty. Yet for all our progress, we have

a long way to go. Inequalities persist or have widened further, oftentimes linked to the same forces that have helped raise our capacity to generate wealth, and the gains from globalization have been unevenly distributed. Islands of prosperity surrounded by poverty are incompatible with the world that we strive for. New vulnerabilities and risks have emerged, linked in particular to the rise of “casino capitalism” and an unhealthy dependence on debt. Financial shocks and crises have become more frequent, setting back development prospects by years and, in some extreme cases, by decades.

UNCTAD – initiated by the developing world, on behalf of the developing world, with a vision of prosperity for all – is equipped to address the challenges that jeopardize human dignity, economic growth and the health of our planet. This report underscores four action lines needed to fulfil the ambitions of the post-2015 development agenda: building productive capacity to transform economies; more effective States and more efficient markets; tackling vulnerabilities, building resilience; and strengthening multilateralism, finding common solutions.

Concerted efforts by Governments, international institutions, non-governmental organizations and the corporate sector have the potential to make a world that is more prosperous, more equitable and more sustainable. UNCTAD stands ready to play its role in the task ahead.



Mukhisa Kituyi,
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

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