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**Statement by H.E. Dr. A K Abdul Momen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of  
Bangladesh at Second Committee on agenda items 17(a): Trade and Development  
22 October 2014**

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving me the floor.

1. Bangladesh aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Group of 77 and China, as well as the Least Developed Countries.
2. We thank the Secretary General for the report on this very important topic. Bangladesh also acknowledges the hard work and substantive contribution of our colleagues in Geneva for mainstreaming trade into the global development agenda.
3. The role of trade as an engine for development has been highlighted again and again over the years. Any major conference that covered the macro-economic policy issues during the last one decade and even before, invariably stressed on the importance of international trade as a catalyst for development. Trade is a mechanism that creates link among sectors, among economies, among nations, among cultures. The impact of trade cannot be narrowed down to only enhanced export and imports. Its link with infrastructure development, emergence of skilled labor force and entrepreneurs, creating new jobs, its innovativeness, and overall contribution towards eradication of poverty is simply significant.
4. Trade is a vehicle to lift an economy and particularly a LDC from their marginal position. Unfortunately, this is an area where LDCs are the most vulnerable. During the last four decades, the total share of LDCs in global trade has been hovering around the dismal figure of 1%. In fact, in 1971, there were only 25 LDCs and their share to global trade was around 1% and after 43 years and although varieties of programs, tall talks and advocacy have been dedicated to LDCs, and its number has nearly doubled to 48 countries, surprisingly, its share to global trade still hovering around 1%. This shows that 'business-as-usual' is not going to help improve the situation.

Mr. Chair,

5. It is not that the global community is ignorant about the plight of LDCs. The WTO Ministerial meetings duly covered the issues of LDCs, and there have been specific decisions from these meetings to give appropriate priorities to LDCs. It is important that all LDCs get duty-free quota-free market access for all their products in all developed countries – a decision by WTO Member

States. We acknowledge that most of the developed countries have fulfilled their commitments made by them at the WTO Ministerial Meeting in Hong Kong and several developing countries have also provided duty-free quota-free market access to the LDCs, and we are deeply appreciative of their initiatives. May I draw the attention of the developed country yet to fulfill the commitments in this regard, and may I ask them to meet their commitments immediately?

6. Duty-free and quota-free market access must be accompanied by preferential Rules of Origin that are simple, transparent and predictable and contribute to facilitating market access. It is important that countries abide by the decisions of the Bali WTO Ministerial Meeting in this regard.

Mr. Chair,

7. It is important to try to find out that, with more countries providing duty-free and quota-free market access to the LDCs, why the trade from these poorest countries is still not on the rise. The obstacles, in addition to the stringent Rules of Origin regimes, are the various non-tariff barriers that are cropping-up. The NTBs and the Technical Barriers to Trade, or TBTs are hindering the LDCs from exploiting any duty-free access offered by these trade partners. The various certification issues, including the sanitary and standards requirements, many of these even being in the non-government sector, are severely hampering the fledgling export sectors of the least developed countries. As flagged in the Secretary General's report, trade restrictiveness arising from non-tariff measures is about twice as high as the restrictiveness arising from tariffs. This information in SG's report, Mr. Chair, is for global trade. When we will filter it down for exports only from LDCs, we will have a picture that is far worse and bleaker.

Mr. Chair,

8. Without mainstreaming LDCs into global development discourse, international community, I am sure, cannot expect to ensure the "Future we want" with sustainable development at its core. Without eradicating poverty, no development is sustainable. In this context, the Open Working Group on SDGs, with participation of the Member States, appropriately captured the importance that trade can play in helping the LDCs. The global community has to collectively work to ensure that trade is incorporated as a major component of international cooperation for LDCs in the post 2015 development agenda. Without international and bilateral trade regimes that are LDC-friendly, we can never expect to have an agenda that will mean inclusive development for all.

Thank you.

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