

Statement by H.E. Dr. ZHANG Xiangchen  
Ambassador & Permanent Representative of China to the WTO  
at Ambassadors' Roundtable on Investing in the SDGs  
(26 October 2018, 14:00 – 17:00, Room XX)

Thank you, Chair for giving me the floor.

Firstly, I want to congratulate UNCTAD, Secretary-General KITUYI and Director ZHAN for a successful forum this year.

As many speakers have mentioned, investment is a key driver for sustainable development, and will play a critical role in the pursuit of the SDGs.

As Ambassadors to the WTO, many of us have been engaging in negotiations on trade rules for a very long time. However, in today's world, trade in merchandise is the outcome of a complex process, requiring multi-party flows of goods, services, people, and investments. The increasing interlinkage between trade and investment has prompted governments around the world to coordinate policies to facilitate both trade and investment, and motivated us, the WTO Ambassadors, to start thinking about what we can do to contribute in this process. And that is where the WTO effort on Investment Facilitation for Development comes in. The 2030 SDGs provides extra momentum for the discussion on Investment Facilitation.

Early in 2017, a number of developing countries including China, established the “Friends of Investment Facilitation for Development” group (FIFD) and launched the discussions on

Investment Facilitation for Development in the WTO, with the aim of developing a multilateral framework on investment facilitation. Since then, structured discussions and regional outreach activities have been carried out, growing support came from countries at different levels of development, and regions across Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe and Middle-east.

We shared the same vision, that creating a transparent, efficient, and predictable environment for facilitating cross-border investment will contribute to the realization of development and implementation of the SDGs. Although domestic and regional efforts are ongoing, multilateral framework is indispensable. With over 3300 existing bilateral or regional Investment Treaties, and numerous economies negotiating new ones, international cooperation and policy coherence is very much needed at the multilateral level.

As a matter of fact, the dedicated session on *facilitating greater developing and least-developed Members' participation in global investment flows* is taking place in the WTO as we speak. This is the most important session for us, as development is at the core of our efforts.

In this regard, I would like to thank UNCTAD in its generous support for our efforts and encourage more of the Geneva representatives to join the discussions, to enhance our role in the pursuit of the SDGs.

Thank you Chair.