

**Statement of the Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Mr. Ban Ki-moon**

**LAUNCHING OF THE CEB INTERAGENCY CLUSTER
ON TRADE AND PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY**

UNCTAD XII, Accra, 20 April 2008

Distinguished Delegates,
Distinguished Heads and Representatives of the agencies of the Cluster,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I welcome the launching of this interagency cluster on trade and productive capacity, and commend the efforts of the UN system organizations towards its establishment. I consider this an important contribution to system-wide coherence. It will add concrete and operational strength to the "development pillar" of the UN system.

Building competitive productive capacity is crucial to the use of trade as an engine of development, as well as to the success of the development process. UN must play its full role in this regard. Trade and productive capacity building should, therefore, constitute a pivotal component of the UN country assistance plans.

I am pleased that the cluster aims at translating into coherent field operations the linkages between trade, poverty reduction, and human development, with a view to helping countries achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs.

Trade-related assistance has played, until now, a marginal role within the UN country assistance plans. I encourage the cluster to play a pro-active role in coherently beefing up trade and trade-related technical cooperation activities for the benefit of developing countries, especially for Africa, least developed countries, and other countries with special developmental needs.

The operational flexibility of the cluster should allow all parts of the UN system to play their respective roles effectively. I am pleased that UNCTAD is coordinating this interagency mechanism, thanks to its central trade and development mandate within the UN system.

We will continue to rely on the member States, especially the donor countries, for the financial support to our development operations. I would also like to call for greater coherence in the financing of UN development operations. The One UN funds are a welcome step in this regard, but much more needs to be done.

There should also be greater coherence in aid, trade, debt, investment and technology policies to better support productive capacity building. In this regard, I would like to invite donors to work towards a more balanced sectoral allocation of development assistance.

I wish this cluster full success.