

September 17, 2015

Thank you Mr. President, and I thank the moderator and the panelists for their presentations.

The unilateral coercive measures are recognized as a major challenge in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, whereby, and I quote “states are strongly urged to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations...” (“*Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, para 30*”).

The coercive measures, as we know, have different manifestations and a wide range of negative implications.

The one that concerns us directly, is a situation when a neighboring country imposes a land blockade against a fellow UN member state. It is regrettable, to say the least, that the trade between two neighbors has to happen via the third countries. It certainly inflicts a heavy burden on the economic operators and businesses from both sides and multiplies the costs of basic products in the affected country with a negative impact on the living standards of the population, especially its vulnerable groups and on the exercise of their social and economic rights.

The adverse effects of unilateral coercive measures are visible on any affected country. But the situation aggravates furthermore when it concerns a landlocked developing country whose access to the sea is essentially blocked by a neighbor. What is strikingly deplorable is that such a policy not only does impede the establishment of good-neighborly relations, a provision that is enshrined in the UN Charter and other founding international documents, but it also severely hampers the transit communication routes. As a landlocked country facing closed borders we are fully committed to take steps in eliminating barriers to international development.

In light of a recent finalization of a major global process through the formulation of a new 2030 agenda, a question is raised: what mechanisms can be utilized for more consolidated efforts towards removing barriers to development, specifically those in the form of blockades and closed borders that some regions in the world continue to face?