

**India's intervention at Global Systems for Trade Preferences (GSTP) Ministerial Meeting on the sidelines of the 16th Session of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD16) (20-23 October 2025),
22 October 2025, Geneva**

- Thank you Chair for giving us the floor. We would also like to thank the Secretary General for her remarks highlighting the role played by GSTP in fostering the South-South economic cooperation. It is imperative that in the current geopolitical uncertainties including the multilateral trading system that have impacted trade, the developing countries need to use forums like the GSTP to forge closer alliances.
- India has been an active Member and played a pivotal role in the negotiations from the 1st Round in 1986-88 onwards. For us the developing economies are the backbone of the global economic growth and it is important to sustain it. We continue to see the importance of the GSTP grouping and would make every effort to strengthen it.
- Our role is well documented in the fact that we were one of the three Members who ratified their schedules in the Sao Paulo Round within the agreed thresholds. However, it has been more than a decade since we ratified our schedule and given our engagements with trading partners, there has been a number of developments on the product profile of exports. Markets have become lot more complementary and perhaps technology and trade is vastly different from where it was when this was adopted.
- Hence, India would like to retain the option of recalibrating its Sao Paulo Round offer within the agreed thresholds namely 20% margin of preference (MOP) on 70 dutiable lines generally and 25% MOP on 77% dutiable lines for LDCs. We are also in the process of transposing our schedules into HS2022 nomenclature. In this context, we would like to thank the efforts of the GSTP Secretariat for the initial work.
- It is also important for GSTP Members to look at specific areas of cooperation as we move ahead. The services sector is an important area that could attract investments and generate employment among developing countries. We could explore some form of cooperation starting with an understanding on regulatory cooperation. Another area could be of services data which has been one of the gaps that needs to be bridged for a meaningful analysis.
- Secondly the role of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) is a crucial aspect of the negotiations. They may not have the economic muscle but they contribute significantly to the direct and indirect employment generation and establish robust supply chains. They are also a crucial tool in poverty

alleviation. We can look at cooperation among the MSMEs in GSTP Member States.

- India stands ready to play its constructive role in furthering the objectives of the GSTP namely fostering South South trade flows and economic cooperation in the region.