

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY AMBASSADOR DAUDI N. MWAKAWAGO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, IN THE PLENARY OF THE 52ND SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY DURING THE ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE

New York, 18 December 1997

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, to express our appreciation to you, the Chairman of the Second Committee and his Bureau for the way you have been guiding the work of the Committee for the last eight weeks, and in particular in the resolution of this problem on which we have just taken action.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome Ambassador Betty King, the new US Ambassador to ECOSOC and assure her of our cooperation in furthering the work of ECOSOC and the Second Committee in particular.

Mr. President,

As you may recall the Second Committee failed to conclude its work on Friday, December 5, 1997, due to lack of agreement between the United States delegation and the Group of 77 and China on six draft resolutions which contained references to the concept of sustained economic growth and sustainable development. This was regrettable to all of us, forcing the Committee to take a decision by a vote. However, we are glad that through the diplomatic skills of Mr. Nikolai Tchoulkov, the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, we have been able to resolve the impasse leading to the adoption of the six plus one resolutions as well as the resolution on Desertification by consensus. In this context I would like, on behalf of the Group, to thank Mr. Tchoulkov for his efforts.

Mr. President,

In spite of the adoption of the six resolutions by consensus, the Group of 77 and China strongly maintains that for any development process to be meaningful, particularly in developing countries, economic growth which is sustainable over a period of time is crucial and critical. This requires the support of developed countries in terms of increased additional resources and transfer of appropriate technology. On the other hand, it is not always true that, sustainable development based on private sector initiatives should be the driving force towards attaining rapid social development and environmental protection in developing countries. In our view, sustainable development objectives are only attainable if economic growth is sustained in the medium and longer term.

To most developing countries, sustainable development approach as emphasized by most of our developed partners, is considered restrictive, limiting economic growth to social development and protection of the environment. It is in this context that the Group of 77 and China had a lot of difficulties in accepting the language as proposed by the United States delegation. However, in the spirit of compromise and following the tradition in our Committee, the Group of 77 and China has accepted the compromise package as proposed by the facilitator - so that all the resolutions in stalemate could be adopted by consensus. In this connection, the Group of 77 and China would like to strongly reiterate that the acceptance of the package at this juncture should in no way prejudice future use of the concept in our work.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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