



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY
AMBASSADOR JORGE ARGENTINO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
ARGENTINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP
OF 77, AFTER THE ADOPTION OF THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION OF
THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE 2011 SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF THE
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (Geneva, Switzerland, 8 July 2011)**

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

I would like to start by thanking you for your leadership and guidance in conducting the informal negotiations. Thanks also to your capable team. At the same time, the Group would like to welcome the adoption of this Ministerial Declaration on the implementation of the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education. By adopting this Declaration, we Member States have collectively pronounced ourselves in a very positive manner, recognizing the need to stay on track to meet internationally agreed education goals and highlighting the links between education and other internationally agreed goals, including the MDGs.

Mr. President,

The right to education imposes an obligation upon states to ensure that all citizens have opportunities to meet their basic learning needs. Education is key to sustainable development, peace and stability within and among countries, and thus an indispensable means for effective participation in the societies and economies of the twenty-first century, which are affected by fast globalization. In that regard, we believe that greater equity in education can help to fuel a virtuous cycle of increased growth and accelerated poverty reduction, with a beneficial spill-over effect for society as a whole. We would like to reiterate once more, that the G77 and China considers that education is a powerful tool to promote social inclusion. Moreover, we emphasize that education and development are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, and underline the importance of social protection measures to remove barriers to access to education for all.

Mr. President,

While there has been significant progress in achieving universal primary education, it has to be noted that it is still needed to ensure access to quality education for all and to expand access to secondary education. In conclusion, recognizing that education is a fundamental human right and essential to achieve the full enjoyment of human rights and development for all, after the adoption of this Ministerial Declaration we would like to call the international community to translate commitments into action and to redouble our efforts to accelerate progress towards realizing the implementation of the agreed goals and commitments on education.

Thank you, Mr. President.