



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. MR. VIRACHAI PLASAI, AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 27: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN, AT THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE 71ST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 10 October 2016)

Madam Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 27: Advancement of Women. Let me start by expressing our appreciation to the Secretary-General for reports submitted under this important agenda item. These reports are substantive and take stock of the persistent challenges in the advancement of women, whether in the area of violence against women and girls, human trafficking, female genital mutilation or obstetric fistula. They provide us with useful recommendations and identify potential cooperation to address them.

2. At the outset, the Group of 77 and China reaffirm our support and call for the accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly. These historic documents represent the guiding policy framework for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. We strive to address and call for further action to close the remaining gaps in the 12 critical areas as outlined in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Madame Chair,

3. Gender equality and women's empowerment are inextricably linked to sustainable development. The international community must now make collective efforts in translating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into tangible benefits on the ground. Gender equality and women's empowerment is a stand-alone Sustainable Development Goal and a cross-cutting issue in all of the SDGs. As such, it requires appropriate and effective implementation and follow-up at the national, regional and international levels.

Madam chair,

4. The Group of 77 and China recognise that the international community has made progress in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women. But we also recognise that much more needs to be done. Women and girls, especially in developing countries, face severe challenges to reaching their full potential, and those challenges are multifaceted. From discrimination to poverty to violence to climate change, these challenges must be addressed at their root. We must uncover effective ways of addressing disparities between men and women.

Madam Chair,

5. We realise the positive impact of creating an environment which supports women and girls to reach their full potential. It is with this basis in mind that we call for concrete actions in further mainstreaming a gender perspective into the design, implementation and evaluation of public policies. We wish to also underscore the importance of gender-responsive budgeting initiatives in

order to contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment. We voice our steadfast support for enhancing the political participation of women and their role in the promotion of peace and security. We need to fulfill our commitments to providing access to basic healthcare, quality education and training to empower women economically. We also need to engage men and boys in the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women.

6. Moreover, the Group of 77 and China agree with the UN Secretary-General on the interlinkages between violence against women and the achievement of gender equality and sustainable development. Therefore, the Group of 77 and China call for greater emphasis at all levels in addressing violence against women and girls. Further action must be taken to eliminate and prevent all forms of violence against women and girls through strengthening of institutional mechanisms, legal frameworks and financing.

Madam Chair,

7. The potential of women to engage in and contribute to sustainable development as leaders and agents of change has not been fully realized. Therefore, the Group of 77 and China will continue to promote economic opportunities essential for maintaining economic livelihood and to further empower women. But this is not enough. The international community has to take a closer and further look into enhancing international cooperation and global partnership for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women, which includes the fulfillment of commitments on official development assistance, debt relief, market access, financial and technical support and capacity building, in particular in education and training, healthcare, as well as access to science and technology for women and girls.

Madam Chair,

8. The Group of 77 and China also remain deeply concerned about the suffering of women and girls living under foreign occupation. In this regard, we wish to underline the urgency for collective actions to remove the obstacles to the full realization of their rights.

9. The Group of 77 and China also affirm that an environment that maintains world peace and promotes and protects human rights, democracy and the peaceful settlement of disputes, in accordance with the principles of non-threat or use of force against territorial integrity or political independence and of respect for sovereignty as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, is an important factor for the advancement of women.

10. The Group of 77 and China also reiterate the importance of doubling our efforts in addressing challenges encountered by women and girls who face multiple forms of discrimination. This includes women and girls with disabilities, older women, migrant women, rural and indigenous women and girls.

Madam Chair,

11. The Group of 77 and China extend our appreciation to the work of UN Women in supporting efforts of developing countries in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment, and reaffirm the importance of State Parties to comply with their international obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

12. Finally, the Group would like to pay tribute to H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, the UN Secretary-General for his consistent devotion and achievement to the cause of gender equality and women's empowerment particularly in developing countries throughout his two-term tenure. We hope that

the incoming Secretary-General will continue this good work, to ensure gender equality and women's empowerment at the United Nations as well.

I thank you.

