



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY SECOND SECRETARY NAJLA ABDELRAHMAN, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 62: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN, IN THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 12 October 2009)

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 62: Advancement of Women. We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his various reports submitted under this important agenda item of the Third Committee. The Group of 77 and China would like to reaffirm its support for the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly as the guiding policy frameworks for gender equality and the empowerment of women. The international community further committed to promote gender equality and empower women at the Millennium Summit as one of eight goals to achieve sustainable people-centered development. We should spare no efforts to fulfill the commitments that we have undertaken to promote gender equality and empowerment of women, including by ending all forms of violence against them, guaranteeing the well-being for women and their development, and expanding the quality of affordable public health-care services, enhancing their capacities, increasing their access to full employment and decent work, as well as access to water and other indispensable resources.

The current global financial and economic crisis has increased the burden placed on the countries of the south and undermined their efforts to achieve the internationally-agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, which puts at risk, in particular, women and children from the full achievement of economic and social development. The lack of resources and the increase in the demand for support over available funds have created more obstacles to fulfill the aspiration of the international community for the empowerment of women, ending violence against women, and ensuring the full enjoyment of all human rights for women and girls.

Despite the significant progress that has been made to achieve the goal of ending all forms of violence and discrimination against women, great challenges are still looming ahead. The international community must give its full support to the Secretary - General's campaign's framework for action to end violence against women 2008 - 2015.

Mr. Chairman,

Peace is crucial for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the MDGs, particularly in the area of the advancement of women. In this regard The Group of 77 and China would like to draw the attention of the international community to the rights of women living under foreign occupation, to ensure that their inalienable rights are guaranteed and to prosecute and punish the perpetrators of any violations against them.

The participation of women is critical to the economic and social development of all societies, as they supply a large proportion of the agricultural labor and produce up to 80 percent of food crops in many parts of the world. However, the current financial and economic crises, the challenges of

climate change, and the food and energy crisis are likely to deepen the gap between the international community and donor governments' commitments for development and their application on the ground. This gap will increase inequality, threaten the well-being of women, and further impoverish women, especially women, in war-torn areas, find themselves unexpectedly cast as sole manager of household and sole parent. In this regard, G77 and China stresses the importance of implementing the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus 2008, including its strong commitments on gender equality, so as to allow progress in incorporating gender perspectives in areas such as water, sanitation, human settlements and good governance, and to enhance the access of poor rural women and men to productive assets.

The Group of 77 and China believes that education for women and girls is central to the elimination of poverty, as it contributes to improving the health of the family, allows women access to decent work, and believes that educated women are empowered women. In this regard, The G77 and China recognizes the positive results of South-South Cooperation initiatives to eliminate illiteracy, as one of the ways to support the efforts of developing countries to achieve the goal of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Group further stresses the importance of international cooperation in strengthening the economic empowerment of rural women, through mobilization of resources and capacity-building on project development and management. This will then promote the participation of rural women in decision-making, expand their contribution in the global economy and thereby improve the welfare of the family.

The G77 and China continues to appreciate the valuable contribution of the International Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), which as a central focal point for research and training on the advancement of women within the United Nations system, is a positive example of successful de-centralization of the UN work. In this regard, the Group wishes to express its deep concern about the persisting delay in the appointment of a new Director to provide continued and indispensable leadership to its current work.

Mr. Chairman,

According to WHO and UNFPA estimates, less than two thirds of women in developing countries receive assistance from skilled health-workers when giving birth. Maternal mortality remains high in poor and rural areas, with the highest rates in sub-Saharan Africa. The absence of health-care facilities at community level, lack of skilled staff at the primary-care level and the high cost of transportation and care are some of the main barriers that prevent rural women from enjoying good health, especially in developing countries. In this regard the G77 and China stresses the importance of implementing the ministerial declaration of the 2009 high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, entitled, "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health", and commends the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and its partners for their ongoing efforts in this area. The Group of 77 and China would like also to commend the role of UNIFEM and its partners in ending violence against women and contributing to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS among women and girls.

Despite the progress made in the field of advancement of women, the current global environment seriously affects the efforts to empower women to contribute effectively in public life, and their development as a whole. The Group of 77 and China acknowledges the importance of adopting appropriate measures to identify and address the negative impacts of the current global crises (food and energy, climate change and financial and economic crises) on women and girls, and to design stimulus packages in response to the financial and economic crisis, taking into account the needs, priorities and contributions of women, as well as greater awareness of the need for gender-

responsive budgeting initiatives that are designed to determine resource needs and financing gaps at the national level. At the same time, the assistance of the international community to help build the capacity of developing countries in this regard is crucial. The Group of 77 and China also calls for an increased gender balance in the UN system as well as balanced geographic representation.

Finally, Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China is committed and actively working towards the achievement of the MDGs. In this regard, the G77 and China calls on the international community to honor its commitments to Official Development Assistance, as well as to promote international cooperation in the field of technology transfer, information and data-sharing and technical assistance. It must also commit to debt relief, opening up markets to developing countries, particularly to women entrepreneurs, and to remove obstacles to exports from least developed countries. Increased development assistance in the areas of education, health and employment is equally crucial to eliminating gender inequality and achieving our shared goal to empower women all around the world.

With regard to the process of system wide coherence, including, inter alia, the definition of a new gender architecture, the G 77 and China together with the Non Aligned Movement in the Joint Coordinating Committee, will continue actively and constructively to participate in the debates and negotiations for the universal advancement of women.

Thank you.

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