



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. DR. GHADA WALY, MINISTER OF SOCIAL SOLIDARITY OF THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT, AT THE FIFTY- SIXTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (New York, 29 January 2018)**

Mr. Chair,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The Group would like to congratulate you on assuming the Chairmanship of the Commission for Social Development. We wish you and your Bureau a successful session and we assure you of our full support and cooperation.
2. The Group of 77 and China thank the Secretary General for his reports which will contribute in informing our deliberations and discussions.

Mr. Chair,

3. Building on the past work of the Commission for Social Development on eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, we are resuming this year our discussions over the strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all.
4. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda is one of the most relevant issues for developing countries. Goal 1 of the 2030 Agenda aims at ending poverty in all its forms and dimensions everywhere. This Goal should not be considered as an individual goal but with its interlinkages with the other goals in order to ensure the comprehensive implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Poverty eradication needs to be an integral objective of all policies and be addressed as a multidimensional phenomenon.
5. Eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, remains the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, particularly in Africa and in the least developed countries, in small island developing states, landlocked developing countries, and in middle income countries many of which still face specific challenges and are home to most of the world's population living in poverty.
6. The Secretary General's report provides us with alarming statistics about the incidence of poverty, revealing that "despite tremendous progress in reducing global poverty, significant disparities remain across regions and within countries". It shows also that women, children and older persons are the most affected by poverty; hunger has gone up; and inequality within and among countries has increased in many parts of the world , slowing or even halting the pace of poverty reduction.

Mr. Chair,

7. The Group of 77 and China reaffirms that the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development and the further initiatives for social development adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty fourth special session, as well as a continued global dialogue on social development issues, including the work of the Commission for Social Development, constitute the basic framework for the promotion of social development for all at the national, regional and international levels.

8. We are deeply concerned about the uneven progress achieved in fulfilling all of the interrelated commitments made at the World Summit for Social Development and by the lack of progress in the field of social development. Conflicts, slowing global economic growth, inequality, volatile financial markets, high rates of youth unemployment, global health threats, humanitarian emergencies, corruption, the challenges posed by climate change and other related challenges, increase the difficulty to advance and impede progress in the fulfillment of social objectives. It is crucial to meet these challenges in order to achieve and sustain progress in social development.

9. The Group of 77 and China recognize that full and productive employment and decent work for all, which encompass social protection, fundamental principles and rights at work, ensure equal pay for equal work or work for equal value, tripartism and social dialogue, are key elements of sustainable development for all countries and are therefore an important objective of international cooperation, and supports the promotion of innovative approaches in the design and implementation of employment policies and programmes for all, including the long-term unemployed;

10. The Group of 77 and China stress the importance of strengthening social policies, as appropriate, paying particular attention to the specific needs of disadvantaged social groups to ensure that these groups, inter alia, children, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, indigenous peoples, migrants, refugees, internally displaced persons and other people who are vulnerable or in vulnerable situations, are not left behind. This can be achieved through the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, the achievement of full employment and decent work for all, including the creation of full and productive employment, social inclusion, and universal access to social services such as quality education, health-care services and social protection.

Mr. Chair,

11. We must also be reminded of our commitments to fulfill our obligations in conformity with international law to remove obstacles to the full realization of the rights of peoples to self-determination in all cases where it is applicable, in particular those living under colonial and foreign occupation and other forms of alien domination, which continue to adversely affect their socio-economic development, with full respect to national sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States.

12. While we are reviewing for the third time the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, the Group of 77 and China recognizes the essential contribution that older persons make to the development of our societies. When adequate guarantees are in place, older persons are empowered as agents and beneficiaries of change, and offer an undeniable support to collective development programs and projects, including the implementation of the 2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development goals.

13. In the same context, the Group of 77 and China welcomes the results of the third review and appraisal cycle of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing conducted through the different Regional Commissions and stresses the need to address the shortcomings identified with regards to the implementation of the Plan of Action on an urgent basis, in order to fully promote the social development of older persons.

14. Since its adoption in 2001, the New Partnership for Africa's Development has provided a vision and policy framework for the development and integration of Africa into the world economy. The

African Union's transformative Agenda 2063: "The Africa We Want" and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are giving further impetus to the global aspiration for an inclusive, prosperous and peaceful world where no one is left behind, particularly in Africa.

15. The Group of 77 and China while welcoming the progress achieved towards the achievement of the goals contained in Agenda 2063 and NEPAD, emphasizes that progress in their implementation depends also on a favourable national and international environment for Africa's growth and development.

16. The Group of 77 and China continue to underscore the crucial role of international cooperation, including north-south cooperation, south-south cooperation as a complement not a substitute to north-south cooperation and triangular cooperation, in realizing the internationally agreed development goals, and most importantly, in promoting the Programme of Action of the Copenhagen Summit. The international community and development partners have a pivotal role to play in collaborating with and supporting developing countries in implementing their social development agenda.

17. The Group believes that our deliberations in the Commission for Social Development can feed into the HLPF discussions on "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies". We cannot have sustainable and resilient societies without eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, eliminating inequalities within and among countries and providing social protection to all. Social policies should ensure that innovation, interconnectivity and inclusion interact effectively and that current and future technological advances serve to create inclusive and resilient societies.

18. Finally, the Group of 77 and China stay committed to strengthen the work of the Commission for Social Development.

Thank you.