



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY HIS EXCELLENCY MR. ADUL SANGSINGKEO, MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN SECURITY OF THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND, AT THE SIXTIETH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN ON AGENDA ITEM 3: FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN AND TO THE TWENTY-THIRD SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ENTITLED "WOMEN 2000: GENDER EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY" (New York, 14 March 2016)**

Mr. Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. At the outset, allow me to extend our warm congratulations to you, as Chair of the 60th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, and through you, to the members of your Bureau. The Group assures you of our active participation and steadfast cooperation during our deliberations in the next two weeks. We express our full confidence in your successful stewardship of this session.

The Group would also like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his efforts in submitting the report under the priority theme identified for this session, namely: "Women's Empowerment and the Link to Sustainable Development." The report is timely, substantive and thought-provoking and will surely serve to focus and activate rich discussions during the entire session and in particular, for the Ministerial roundtables. The Group also expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for the submission of his report under the review theme on "The Elimination and Prevention of All Forms of Violence against Women and Girls", under which the Commission will hear voluntary presentations by Member States.

Mr. Chair,

The momentum and political will that culminated in 2015 in the adoption of many important documents, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, must continue unabated. This political will must continue to bear on our efforts this year to establish the appropriate follow-up and review of a process at national, regional and international level that must ensure gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda as well as the tangible fulfillment of specific commitments on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The 2030 Agenda has not only expanded the goals and targets for gender equality and the empowerment of women, but deepened and linked them with other goals and targets in an inextricable and unprecedented manner. The Group of 77 and China takes serious note of the impact of the 2030 Agenda on our collective commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women and their undeniable influence and connection to the Agenda's ultimate goal to "leave no one behind".

Mr. Chair,

In our view, women's empowerment is fundamentally linked to sustainable development. Eradicating poverty, addressing persisting inequalities in income and wealth while ensuring access to opportunities and economic outcomes aiming at equitable and inclusive growth for a healthy,

environmentally sustainable, peaceful and prosperous planet as set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a tall order. But more importantly, it is simply not possible when half of the world's population continues to endure discrimination and persisting inequalities. It is simply not possible when half of the world's population continues to lack access to basic services, opportunities and economic and other resources.

Many countries have attained substantial progress in reaching gender equality and the empowerment of women as defined by the Millennium Development Goals. But the Group of 77 and China remains deeply concerned that overall progress for women and girls has been slow and uneven. We are deeply concerned that in this day and age, the eradication of poverty remains the greatest global challenge facing developing countries. In the current state of global security, and in particular for women who experience multiple forms of discrimination based on their migrant status, ethnicity and disability as well as women and girls living with HIV and AIDS, progress is simply not self-evident. This is also painfully clear for women and girls living in countries affected by conflict and living under foreign occupation or unilateral and coercive measures contrary to international law. In this regard, we express our appreciation also for the submission of the Secretary-General's report on "The situation of, and assistance to, Palestinian Women".

Women continue to be vulnerable in terms of access to basic healthcare and education and lack social protection and other services essential for maintaining economic livelihood and self-sufficiency and supporting their ability to generate income and to thrive. In this connection, women in rural areas in particular, who have a unique role in rural development, must be supported. Human trafficking continues to target women and girls in disproportionate numbers. All forms of violence and discrimination against women, including female genital mutilation and femicide must be addressed as serious obstacles to the achievement of gender equality, the empowerment of women and development. In this respect, legal frameworks must be strengthened where they can be in order to provide the protection necessary and ensure justice for the victims and accountability.

Mr. Chair,

This 60th Session of the CSW presents a unique opportunity to address all of these issues and more, in as comprehensive and coherent a manner as possible, with the unique aim of setting in place a path that will catalyze progress on gender equality and the empowerment of women within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In this respect, the Group of 77 and China agrees with the Secretary-General that "a transformation is necessary" We underline the importance, therefore, of demonstrating political will, making policies where equitable and inclusive growth are compatible with increasing equality and promoting gender-responsive budgeting. We stress the importance of mobilizing resources that support building women's leadership capacity to ensure that inclusive and effective participation of women and girls in society, the economy and the political arena is a reality. We underline that gender equality and the empowerment of women is not only a matter for women, but also a matter for men and boys and therefore underline the importance of engaging men and boys alike. Women and girls are agents of change and must be supported to realize their potential, especially if we are to reach the aspirations placed before us by the 2030 Agenda.

Mr. Chair,

A transformation is necessary because the 2030 Agenda has set the bar higher than before. And the higher the goal, the more meaningful the benefits. Against this backdrop, the Group of 77 and China underlines the paramount importance of enhancing international cooperation and global

partnership which will be key to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women, including the fulfillment of commitments on official development assistance, debt relief, market access, financial and technical support and capacity building in all areas contributing to elimination of gender inequalities and disparities.

For its part, the Group of 77 and China will continue to seek out such partnership and to share our experiences and views on how to move the agenda forward in lasting and substantive ways.

In closing, Mr. Chair, allow me to reaffirm the Group's commitment to the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, in particular the remaining implementation gaps in all 12 critical areas and the outcome of the twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly. The Group reaffirms additionally, the importance of States Parties complying fully with their international obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and its optional protocol.

Let us use the opportunity in front of us to work together toward a productive and successful session.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.

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