



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 AT THE PLENARY OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE MAIN PART OF ITS 71ST SESSION (New York, 23 December 2016)

Mr. President, Excellencies, Colleagues and friends,

1. I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the Group of 77 and China for one last time this year. As Chair and proud member of this dynamic family of developing countries, I do so with gratitude in my heart and confidence in the future ahead.
2. To say this past year has been eventful, that it has been demanding, is an understatement. Throughout this seventy-first session, our resolve to address the interests and needs of developing countries has been repeatedly tested. Time and again, we have been challenged by the sheer difficulty of building global consensus on the critical issues we believe must move the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development forward. On our part, Thailand was intent to fulfill the promise of our chosen theme for our Chairmanship. We aimed to realise the 2030 Agenda by taking it from "Vision to Action".
3. Negotiations, particularly in the Second, Fifth and Third committees this year, have been taxing and complicated. But that was expected. We were transitioning this year into implementing the 2030 Agenda. At times this meant redefining our path in the context of a new Agenda.
4. In the Second Committee, our notable collective achievements included agreement on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda at the global level, the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, which successfully set the stage for Member States to provide strategic guidance to the UN development system, and the New Urban Agenda, negotiated only once every 20 years. It was also notable that the Group submitted a first ever resolution on "Promotion of International Cooperation to Combat Illicit Financial Flows to foster sustainable development".
5. In the Fifth Committee, we successfully worked to ensure adequate resources for the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA). Difficult and complex negotiations on issues related to Human resources management, construction and renovation of property of the United Nations, revised estimates and finally the Budget outline for the biennium 2018-2019 concluded in agreement, literally just hours ago.
6. In the Third and other Committees, the Group of 77 and China have much to be hopeful for and we express our confidence in partners to continue to engage constructively in the years to come. Where there is a will to find compromise, there is always a way.

Mr. President,

7. The United Nations is our United Nations. That means that for developing and developed countries alike, we only have ourselves to blame. We are responsible for enabling this organization to deliver to our people, on the interrelated pillars of development, human rights and peace and security. For the Group of 77 and China, we take this to heart and rely on all of us to ensure a strong multilateral system that is responsive to the critical needs of our people on the ground.

M. le Président,

8. Le Groupe des 77 et la Chine se félicitent du dénouement positif des longues et difficiles négociations menées tout au long de l'année par tous nos experts très compétents qui ont consacré plusieurs, sinon tous, de leurs jours et nuits à cet effort. Nous remercions aussi nos partenaires pour l'engagement constructif et le bon esprit tout au long de ces négociations. Nous exprimons également notre appréciation à tous les présidents des commissions respectives de cette année pour leur apte qualité de dirigeant.

9. Malgré la divergence de vues et les défis rencontrés sur le chemin vers un consensus, nous avons prouvé, encore une fois, cette année que nous pouvons le faire. C'est ainsi que nous exprimons notre confiance dans notre avenir partagé, l'avenir que nous voulons en tant que communauté des nations et l'avenir que nous laissons aux générations futures.

M. le Président,

10. Permettez-moi enfin d'exprimer, personnellement et au nom de tous les membres de mon équipe, ma plus profonde gratitude et ma sincère reconnaissance à tous les membres du Groupe des 77 et la Chine. Nous les remercions de leur appui sans faille tout au long de notre présidence. Cela a été un véritable honneur pour le Royaume de Thaïlande de servir les intérêts des pays du Sud.

11. En conclusion, M. le Président, je voudrais vous remercier, vous même et votre équipe, de votre apte qualité de dirigeant et votre soutien tout au long de ce processus. Il reste maintenant au Groupe des 77 et la Chine de souhaiter bonnes fêtes de fin d'années à tous. Nous reviendrons l'année prochaine, rechargés et revitalisés après un repos bien mérité, sous la direction avisée de l'Equateur, qui sera la barre du Groupe. Je souhaite à Son Excellence M. Horacio Sevilla Borja, Représentant permanent de l'Equateur auprès des Nations Unies et à son équipe, tous les succès et toute la détermination à continuer les fonctions de la Présidence du Groupe des 77 en 2017. Avec notre ferme engagement à soutenir votre Présidence l'année prochaine, Buena suerte, Ecuador.

12. Je vous remercie, M. le Président.

English translation for paras 8 - 12 :

Mr. President,

8. The Group of 77 and China welcome the successful conclusion of lengthy and difficult negotiations throughout the year by all of our very capable experts who have devoted much if not all of their days and nights to this effort. We also thank our partners for the constructive engagement and good spirit throughout those negotiations. Our appreciation is also extended to all of the Chairs of the respective committees this year, for their able leadership.

9. Despite the divergence of views and the challenges along the way in reaching consensus, we have proved this year, once again, that it can be done. So, we express our confidence in our shared future, the future we want as a global community of nations, and the future we leave to generations behind us.

Mr. President,

10. Allow me finally, to extend my deepest and very heartfelt appreciation, from myself and each and every member of my team, to all members of the Group of 77 and China. We thank them for their staunch support throughout our Chairmanship. It has been a true honour for the Kingdom of Thailand to serve the interests of the Global South.

11. In conclusion, Mr. President, I wish to thank you and your office for your able leadership and support throughout the process. It remains now for the Group of 77 and China to wish everyone a very happy holiday season. We will return next year, re-energized and re-invigorated after a well-deserved rest, under the able stewardship of Ecuador at the helm of the Group. I wish His Excellency, Horacio Sevilla Borja, Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations, and his team, every success and resolve in carrying on the duties of the Chair of the Group of 77 in 2017. With our strong pledge of support for your Chairmanship next year, Buena suerte, Ecuador.

I thank you, Mr. President.