



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. MR. LUKE DAUNIVALU, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 23: ERADICATION OF POVERTY AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT ISSUES, IN THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE SIXTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 17 October 2013)

Madam Chair,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

2. At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his reports on this agenda item. These reports examined the progress and challenges of poverty eradication; women in development; and human resource development. The reports' conclusions and recommendations in those reports provide a good reference point for our debate today.

Madam Chair,

3. Even though the world has undergone far-reaching changes in the past two decades and significant progress has been made in many important fields of development, including success in the global reduction of extreme poverty, we are cognizant that such progress is uneven and that the number of people still living in poverty in some countries continue to increase, with women and children constituting the majority of the most affected groups. We note with concern that in 2012, 1.2 billion people were still living on less than \$1.25 a day, most of them in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. The challenge to eradicate poverty in many developing countries is compounded by the recent economic and financial crisis, which poses severe risks of reversing the growth prospects of these countries.

4. The Group underscores that poverty eradication remains the over-riding priority for all developing countries. In this regard, for the first time ever, there was an explicit mandate given by the QCPD Resolution to "assign the highest priority to poverty eradication". The Resolution requested the United Nations development system to focus all its development programmes and projects to address this greatest global challenge as their underlying objective. The true test for us Member States lies in ensuring that the UN Development system remains focussed on delivering this mandate.

5. As we reaffirm our efforts to accelerate the achievement of the MDGs and look toward a post-2015 development agenda, the Group holds the strong view that the eradication of poverty should remain at the core of the future development agenda beyond 2015. We must draw on the lessons learned from the implementation of the MDGs and the continued impacts of the global economic and financial crisis. We must ensure that policies and development efforts targeted at poverty eradication are responsive to the challenges as well as to the opportunities of sustainable development at both the international and national levels. The post-2015 development agenda should reinforce the international community's commitment to poverty eradication and sustainable development.

6. In this regard, the Group calls for a supportive, enabling, fair financial architecture and international trading system as well as a genuine strengthened global partnership for sustainable

development that includes clear cut goals and means of implementation to complement the efforts of national governments in developing countries. The scaling up of international cooperation efforts include the fulfilment of commitments of internationally agreed official development assistance, debt relief, market access, capacity building and technical support, including technology transfer.

Madam Chair,

7. We concur with the finding of the Secretary-General's report that employment and decent work are key drivers of poverty reduction. We note with great concern that global unemployment has increased by 28 million people since the financial crisis, reaching a total of 200 million people in 2012. While unemployment has also risen in the euro area, developing countries continue to face many structural labour market challenges that are different from developed countries. These challenges include low participation rate in the labour market, particularly among women; high youth unemployment; large informal sectors; low quality of jobs and slow productive growth. Moreover, being employed does not reflect the predicament of the majority of workers in developing countries who remain trapped in jobs with low incomes and lack of basic social protection. As pointed out by the report, 56 per cent of all workers in the developing world, or 1.49 billion people, were in vulnerable employment in 2012.

8. Since women constitute an increasing proportion of the working poor, the Group recognises the importance of addressing the issue of women in development within the framework of the General Assembly's work on economic and financial matters. Gender equality is of fundamental importance for achieving sustained economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development. Investment in women and girls, including quality education, has multiplier effects in society, in particular on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth, in all sectors of the economy. However, the advancement of women worldwide, particularly in developing countries, continues to be impeded by widening economic inequalities; unemployment; discriminatory wage practices; exploitation; violence and sexual harassment; high level of poverty; intensification of globalisation and other transformations in the world economy. To enhance employment and income opportunities for all, especially women living in poverty, the Group believes that governments should promote decent work for all segments of society and strengthen labour market regulations and social provisions to create a more level playing field. In this regard, the Group believes in the need to properly integrate gender in the post-2015 development agenda.

Madam Chair,

9. The Group also holds the view that comprehensive approaches to human resources development that address poverty eradication and the creation of a skilled workforce are critical in reducing unemployment, brain drain and in promoting greater social inclusion. The benefits of human resources development are best realised in national and international environments that support equal opportunity, access to education, non-discrimination and maintain an enabling environment for job creation. While governments have the primary responsibility for defining and implementing appropriate policies for human resources development, it is imperative that the international community, including the UN system, continues to support the national efforts of developing countries.

10. We believe that investment in human resources development should be an integral part of national development policies and strategies. In this regard, we call for the adoption of policies to facilitate investment focused on physical and social infrastructure. Investment priorities should focus on education, in particular skills upgrading and vocational training in areas such as science and technology, information and communications technology, as well as in capacity development,

health and sustainable development. In this regard, the Group calls upon the international community, including UN funds and programmes, private sector and relevant civil society actors, to assist developing countries in the implementation of national human resources development strategies. It is important to mobilise financial resources, capacity-building, technical assistance, transfer of technology and supply of expertise from all sources towards this endeavour.

11. Finally, Madam Chair, the Group of 77 and China looks forward to constructive engagement in the consultations and negotiations with our developed partners on the Group of 77 and China's sponsored resolutions under this agenda item. We believe that collectively and cooperating in good faith, we can create a world free of poverty - an ideal world we aspire to. A world that promotes equal opportunity for all and one that has social justice grounded in the voice of the people.

Thank you!

