



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ABDULLAH M. ALSAIDI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE FIRST SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE FOURTH UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES (New York, 10 January 2011)

Mr. Chairman,
H.E. Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra the High Representative and Secretary-General of the Conference,
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

1. I have the distinct honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. Let me at the outset extend to you and your Bureau members our sincere congratulations on your elections. We are confident that you and your distinguished Bureau members will bring to this process the diversity and collective vision needed to enable you to steer the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, in the run-up to the Istanbul Conference in May 2011, to a very successful and fruitful conclusion.
3. The Group of 77 and China would like to assure you, Mr. Chairman, of our full support in your endeavors to reach a new global compact for the least developed countries - the poorest and most marginalized countries in the world economy today. As group of developing countries, we are, indeed, the first line of defense in the cause of the LDCs and will make whatever contribution we can towards their economic progress and prosperity. This we undertake, Mr. Chairman, as a matter of duty, solidarity and enlightened self-interest.
4. The Group also recognizes and appreciates the diligent work and continued support of the Office of the High Representative (UN-OHRLS) in the preparation of the Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The Group of 77 and China is of the view that the overarching goal of the new Programme of Action, needed to be forged in Istanbul in May 2011, should be to increase and sustain a high level of economic growth, promote sustainable development and address the impacts of the multiple crises and challenges, faced by the LDCs, through structural transformation. This will eventually lead to substantial progress in poverty eradication in the LDCs and enable them to reach the stage of graduation.
6. Moreover, Mr. Chairman, we must bear in mind that the success of the new Programme of Action highly depends on the LDCs themselves taking the ownership and leadership role in making and implementing effectively the relevant policy choices, each according to its own conditions and requirements, with the enhanced, predictable, definite and targeted support of their development partners.
7. Likewise, we are of the conviction that the least developed countries must enjoy full flexibility in

determining their policy as well as fiscal space in the context of their own national developmental governance, policies and strategies. Nevertheless, national efforts of LDCs should be complemented by supportive global programmes, measures and policies aimed at expanding their development opportunities.

Mr. Chairman,

8. We must recognize that the lack of productive capacities, full employment and decent work opportunities is one of the key challenges to the LDCs' sustained growth and development. Therefore, building viable competitive and diversified productive capacities is the only way for the LDCs to structurally transform their economies, sustain development gains, generate gainful employment, compete in the global economy, increase resilience to shocks and eventually be able to graduate from the LDC status itself.

9. The Group is deeply concerned that the situation in the LDCs is still deteriorating in the wake of the multiple and mutually exacerbating global crises, i.e., food, fuel, economic and financial as well as climate change. As a consequence, the modest development gains that the LDCs made over the years have now been reversed, pushing a large number of their people to extreme poverty. Moreover, the LDCs are lagging behind in meeting most of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Development Goals.

10. With a total population of 843 million and a fast rate of population growth of 2.3 per cent per annum, the LDCs will continue to face the challenge of poverty for years to come unless concrete steps are taken to tackle its root causes rather than only treating its symptoms. Poverty, as a multi-dimensional problem, continues to debilitate human progress in the LDCs due to the inability to get access to essential services such as education, health, water and sanitation. Eradicating poverty is, therefore, the greatest challenge facing the LDCs. Not surprisingly, the UNCTAD LDCs report 2010 stated that "the number of people living in extreme poverty in LDCs has continued to increase throughout the past 30 years and by 2007 it was twice as high as in 1980."

Mr. Chairman,

11. The Group of 77 and China stresses that due to lack of adequate flow of resources, particularly ODA and FDI, the successive past programmes of action for the LDCs over the last three decades have not been able to bring about the needed visible socio-economic transformation. Therefore, scaled-up and predictable financial support to the least developed countries is indispensable for their development in the next decade.

12. It has become incumbent upon the international community to come up with a concrete and practical programme of action with clear and measurable targets and implementation timeframes, taking due account of the positive elements in the Brussels Programme of Action and redressing the shortcomings that had undermined its full implementation.

13. In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, the Group of 77 and China stresses, once again, the fact that the success of the new Programme of Action for the LDCs does not only depend on the efforts of the LDCs themselves but also on the extent to which the international community mobilizes resources in their support.

I thank you.