



STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JORGE ARGENTINO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ARGENTINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE HIGH-LEVEL SYMPOSIUM ON THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (Beijing, People's Republic of China, 8-9 September 2011)

Mr. Yang Jiechi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, Mr. Zhang Ping, Chairman of the National Development and Reform Commission of China, Mr. Sha Zukang, Under Secretary General of the United Nations, Secretary General of the UNCSD, Mr. Wu Hailong, Executive Secretary General of China Preparatory Committee for UNCSD,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates and representatives,

1. I am very honored for this invitation to deliver a statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. At the outset, allow me to say that the Group is fully engaged with the preparatory process of the Conference Rio plus 20. The Group has been working tirelessly in New York and will continue to do so to present our unified and consensual position as a contribution for the preparation of the compilation document.
3. In this sense, we are working on the definition of concrete proposals by the Group that would allow an effective implementation of the outcome of this landmark Conference on sustainable development, and we expect that G77 and China proposals be reflected properly in the forthcoming compilation document and the ensuing zero draft.
4. We thank the government of China for convening this informal meeting that we consider important to share views, exchange ideas and get clarification on the issues ahead of us. However, at the same time, this meeting should not prejudge the results of the negotiation nor replace the formal process, but rather contribute to develop a common understanding.
5. Regarding the way forward, for the Group of 77 and China it is important to have a dynamic, effective, transparent and inclusive process up to the Conference next year and to this end, it is of utmost importance to secure financial resources to ensure the full participation of developing countries during all the stages of the negotiations.

General comments:

6. It is worth remembering that the objective of the Conference is to secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development, to assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development, and to address new and emerging challenges. This objective remains of utmost importance, in the same level of the themes selected.
7. The Conference needs to produce an assessment as to why many of commitments of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio 1992 as well as the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, 2002, were not realized to their full potential.
8. The UNCSD should not renegotiate or retract agreed instruments, principles and outcomes of

the major summits on sustainable development. Guided by the Rio Principles and Agenda 21, Rio-plus-20 Summit outcomes should provide the necessary political impetus for the range and level of action required to bridge the implementation gaps in developing countries which grapple with the effects of multiple crises. Furthermore, it is critical that the international community, in particular developed countries commitments regarding international cooperation are fully implemented and reinforced.

On the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development:

9. As we are all aware, diverging views remain on how to enhance the efficiency of the current United Nations system in the area of sustainable development. In this regard, the Group of 77 and China understands that the 2012 Conference should be aimed at renewing and enhancing political commitment and increasing efforts to ensure that the current institutions involved in implementing the sustainable development agenda in the UN system become more effective, including through, among others, the promotion of synergies among them and the provision of an adequate level of financial resources. At the same time, we would need to address how the institutional framework for sustainable development at all levels can be strengthened to accelerate the achievement of the sustainable development agenda in all three of its dimensions.

10. To that end, the G77 and China strongly reiterates that the three pillars of sustainable development should be addressed in a coordinated, integrated and comprehensive manner and that the UN economic, social and environmental activities should not be dealt with in isolation. The UN should play a central role in the international economic, social and environmental governance.

11. As general principles, the G77 and China agree that the reforms needed should be taking into account Agenda 21 as their framework, build on developments since 1992 and lead to the achievement of sustainable development. Furthermore, the reform must lead to reconfiguring the role and mandates of the key institutions within the UN system, reaffirming that the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities is the basis of international cooperation in the area of sustainable development, ensuring that developing countries have access to new environmentally sound technology, including through the transfer of that technology and the provision of predictable, new and additional financial support and responding to continuing and emerging challenges and issues related to environment and development.

12. The G77 and China is working very hard to achieve a common position on how to enhance the IFSD as a whole. Different concrete options have been proposed, and we are discussing them in depth inside our group. However, at this stage, the Group would like to emphasize the importance of reviewing the current format of the CSD and enhancing the UNEP's role in the sustainable development institutional framework.

On the "Green Economy":

13. There is not, at this moment, a common understanding of what a "green economy" approach entails, as well as of its potential risks, costs and benefits, which is necessary for our discussions to move forward towards the full implementation of the commitments concluded 18 years ago in UNCED. Clearly, there is no need to redefine sustainable development, which has proved its value as a basis for our work. The Group of 77 and China strongly believes that our discussions around the green economy can only prove fruitful in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradications, as has been agreed.

14. This concept should be developed in accordance with the principles contained in the Rio

Declaration on Environment and Development, in particular, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, with Agenda 21, as well as the instruments further adopted for the implementation of Agenda 21, in particular the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

15. For the G77 and China, the notion of "Green Economy" is inextricably linked to technology development, access and transfer, issues that in conjunction with the provision of new and additional financial resources and capacity building should be properly addressed through international cooperation.

16. In order for the benefits of applying "green economy" as a concept to outweigh the risks, it should be firmly rooted under the paradigm of sustainable development, respecting the policy space of each country to define their own paths towards sustainability in their economy and society, in accordance with their own circumstances and priorities. In this sense, global indicators should not be imposed on developing countries. Social inclusion, decent jobs, transition costs and impacts should be seriously considered and addressed so as to ensure a meaningful outcome at the 2012 UNCSO for developing countries and be able to generate a common vision to guide our future.

17. Moreover, the "green economy" should not imply conditionalities to development assistance. An outcome on this theme should allow for expanded market access for products from developing countries while combating trade-distortive measures, such as subsidies in developed countries and "green protectionism", address the concerns related to the impact of new market mechanisms on the integrity of ecosystems, and the sustainable development of developing countries. It should further promote substantive changes in the current unsustainable consumption and production patterns, with developed countries taking the lead.

On the Objective of the Conference:

18. The Group of 77 and China is deeply concerned that severe challenges still remain in achieving the goals of the three pillars of sustainable development, particularly in the context of the current global crises. At the same time, there is a need to address new and emerging sustainable development issues that arise, including from current global crises and challenges and those that we will inevitably face in the future. These include the financial and economic, food and energy crises and the challenges, including those relating to climate change, biodiversity, desertification, water scarcity, frequency of disasters and the need to prepare and recover from disasters. All of these crises and challenges have significant and, in some cases, unforeseen impacts on the standards of living, the achievement of the MDGs and the health of those in developing countries, particularly the most vulnerable.

19. The discussions on new and emerging challenges should focus on preventing new crises, achieving sustainable development, eradicating poverty and addressing inequalities. It should also be based on the principles enshrined in paragraphs 2 and 7 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, including the sovereign right of countries to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental and developmental policies and that States have common but differentiated responsibilities. At the same time, these issues should be examined in the context of the other objectives of the Conference, which are to secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development and to assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development.

20. The success of our common efforts is closely linked to the means available to ensure effective implementation. The issue of the means of implementation must be underscored, as a global responsibility, given the global nature of the challenges the world faces today. Therefore, the

provision of new and additional resources is crucial to enhance the United Nations capabilities in the area of implementation. In this regard, it is imperative to increase the United Nations regular budget resources allocated to all mandated development activities, including those related to sustainable development, in order to ensure predictable and adequate funding.

21. The Group of 77 and China calls for the fulfillment of all official development assistance-related commitments, including the commitments made by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance by 2015, as well as the target of 0.15 per cent to 0.20 per cent of gross national income for least developed countries, and urge those developed countries that have not yet done so to make concrete efforts in this regard in accordance with their commitments.

22. There is an urgent need for the international community to adopt an effective, equitable, durable and development oriented solution to the debt problem of developing countries, particularly through total debt cancellation, and increased concessional financial flows.

23. The lack of progress in implementing the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation Agreements on technology transfer is a serious priority issue. The shortfall of technology transfer and dissemination should become the focus of the international community and the UN System, including at the highest political level. This should include the full implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building, but should also go well beyond this, so as to attain the goals contained in Chapter 34 of Agenda 21.

24. As I have already indicated, the Group of 77 and China is looking forward to the opportunity offered by this meeting to exchange views and proposals in a constructive spirit and to gain a better understanding of the diversity of views towards finding common ground for progress.

25. The G77 and China is committed to continue working through an outcome for the Rio plus 20 Conference focus on implementation, on action, on concrete proposals and on time bound measures.

26. We will redouble our efforts to make UNCSD a successful conference and to support Brazil, one of our members, in its endeavors. We remain convinced that the unity in the diversity of 131 countries is our strongest asset.

I thank you.