



STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR PETER THOMSON, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT AN INFORMAL MEETING OF THE PLENARY OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO DEFINE THE FORMAT AND ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (New York, 1 March 2013)

Distinguished Co-Facilitators,

1. I have the honour to deliver this Statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. It is of fundamental importance that we define the format and organizational aspects of the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in a manner that is consistent with the mandate, intention and spirit of what we agreed to in the Rio + 20 Outcome Document.
3. Rio obligates us, inter alia, to consider the need for promoting intergenerational solidarity for the achievement of sustainable development, taking into account the needs of future generations. In this respect, it is the desire of the Group to see the High-Level Political Forum finds its proper place within existing structures of the United Nations.
4. Precisely where within these structures the High-Level Forum should be placed is a matter that is currently being discussed within our Group. The G77 will revert to the plenary on placement.
5. At this juncture, the Group wishes to nevertheless underscore its preference that the High-Level Political Forum should provide a home for sustainable development and a space for political leadership, visibility and guidance in the formulation and implementation of the global agenda relating to sustainable development.

Co-Facilitators,

6. On the format of the Forum, the Group reiterates the agreement reached at Rio by stating that we expect participation in the High-Level Political Forum to be universal, intergovernmental and that it must follow up on the implementation of sustainable development and the balanced integration of its three dimensions: social, environmental and economic.
7. On organizational structure, the Group of 77 favors the Forum to conduct its affairs and meetings at Experts, Ministerial and at Head of Governments or States levels. The periodicity of meetings of the three levels will depend primarily on the agreed nature of their role. The Group considers that the Heads of States and Government level meetings of the Forum should be held at regular intervals, while the Ministerial meetings should be held yearly, with the Experts meeting regularly.

Co-Facilitators,

8. The Group emphasizes that the Forum should be able to perform all the functions listed in paragraph 85 of the Rio + 20 Outcome Document. The Group highlights the need for building on the existing strengths, experiences, resources and inclusive participation modalities of the Commission on Sustainable Development, which will be subsequently replaced by the Forum once it is operationalised.

9. We reiterate the need for the Forum to follow up and review progress in the implementation of sustainable development commitments contained in Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the Barbados Programme of Action, the Mauritius Strategy and the Rio +20 Outcome Document and relevant outcomes of other United Nations summits and conferences, including the outcome of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, as well as their respective means of implementation, and also the Monterrey and Doha Conferences on financing for development.

Co-Facilitators,

10. On participation, the Group welcomes and encourages system-wide participation of all United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and other relevant multilateral financial and trade institutions and treaty bodies, within their respective mandates and in accordance with United Nations rules and provisions.

11. Insisting on the preservation of the intergovernmental nature of discussion, the Group of 77 acknowledges the need for the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders to follow applicable procedural rules.

Co-Facilitators,

12. In relation to Outcomes, it is the Group's view that in order to attract widest possible acceptance, legitimacy and credibility, decisions of the High-Level Political Forum must be negotiated and agreed to through intergovernmental processes. The Group remains open to consider other additional forms of outcome of the Forum.

13. On the Agenda of the Forum, the G77 favors an approach that allows flexibility and permits accurate and timely responses to the needs and circumstances of the period concerned.

14. In conclusion, the Group wishes to convey its desire for the High-Level Political Forum to be the home for the SDGs and the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

I thank you.