



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY  
AMBASSADOR JORGE ARGENTINO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
ARGENTINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP  
OF 77, AT THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE 2011 SUBSTANTIVE  
SESSION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (Geneva, Switzerland,  
5 July 2011)**

Mr. President,

1. It is an honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China in this High-Level Segment of the Substantive Session of the Economic and Social Council on the implementation of the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education, in particular the Millennium Development Goals and the six Education for All goals.
2. There is no doubt that this segment acquires special importance since it provides a timely opportunity to assess the progress made, to share experiences and lessons learned and find appropriate ways to overcome remaining obstacles and challenges.
3. We meet at a most challenging time. The international community is facing multiple crises, which are putting these international multilateral institutions -created to provide policy advice and coordination on global issues- to the test.
4. We also meet at a time when the world is increasingly looking to the United Nations, including the Economic and Social Council, for leadership in tackling these global economic and social challenges.
5. In the view of the Group of 77 and China, this Session of ECOSOC must demonstrate its preparedness to be proactive, to become seized of emerging challenges and to effectively exercise its coordinating responsibility.
6. The members of the Group of 77 and China would like to recognize the important progress made in the fulfillment of some of the internationally agreed commitments for education, in particular towards the universal, non-discriminatory access to primary school.
7. Our governments have made important efforts to ensure access to quality education for all and at all levels and to incorporate education as a key component of our development strategies. In that regard, we would like to underline that the progress made thus far is still uneven, and many challenges and obstacles remain in the implementation of the internationally agreed goals and commitments on education.
8. As was stated by the Group in the Havana Programme of Action in 2000, we believe that there is a need to work towards achieving the objective of eradicating illiteracy and to promoting the concept of Education for All Throughout Life, through steps to promote basic education, ensuring special emphasis on the promotion of girls education, as well as higher level education, strengthening of education infrastructure and non-formal methods of education. Furthermore, in order to ensure access to education, it is key to strengthen our efforts towards addressing basic and other infrastructural needs to the spread of knowledge, such as provision of electricity, transport and better communications facilities as well as building classrooms and schools.

9. We emphasize that education and development are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, and reiterate the importance of social protection measures to remove barriers to access to education for all-children, youth and adults- including women and girls, the poorest children living in cities in the streets and in rural and remotes areas, children with disabilities, migrant children, refugees and displaced persons, indigenous children, children in armed conflict and post-conflict situation and affected by natural disasters, and children living under foreign occupation.

10. The G77 stresses the need to take further effective actions to remove the obstacles to the full realization of the rights of peoples living under foreign occupation to promote the achievements of the MDGs, in particular the education-related development goals and those of education for all.

Mr. President,

11. The Group considers that education is a powerful tool to promote social inclusion and that quality education is as important as access to education, and we are committed to strengthening the teaching profession, the incentives to improve teaching and to improve the conditions and teaching practices, in a multidisciplinary approach to education.

12. Information technology could become an effective instrument to foster equality in the field of economic growth and development and to narrow the gap between the developed and the developing countries, as well as to facilitate access to knowledge and education at all levels of society.

13. We emphasize the need for transfer and development of these technologies, and for integrating information and communication technologies in the educational process, with the goal of improving quality and equity in education for all.

Mr. President,

14. Recognizing that education is a fundamental human right and essential to achieve the full enjoyment of human rights and development for all, the Group of 77 and China would like to call the international community to translate commitments into action and to redouble our efforts to accelerate progress towards realizing the implementation of the agreed goals and commitments on education.

15. In that regard, the G77 and China believes that greater efforts are needed to support developing countries towards achieving the internationally agreed goals and commitments on education, and we call for strengthened commitments on official development assistance, as well as increased, predictable financial and technical support and capacity building that is aligned with countries' national priorities, as well as channeled in ways that strengthen national educational systems.

16. To this end, we encourage donors to work on national timetables to increase aid levels within their respective budget allocation processes towards achieving the existing ODA targets. The full implementation of these commitments will substantially boost the resources available to push forward the international development agenda.

I thank you, Mr President.