



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS YOLINDA CHAN, COUNSELLOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF THE ECOSOC HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS SEGMENT (Geneva, Switzerland, 15 July 2013)

Mr. President,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. The Group takes note of the report of the Secretary General and its recommendations which offers an opportunity to take stock of progress made and draw lessons and new modalities for the future through working together and sharing our country experiences and best practices. With regard to the new notions and elements introduced in the report, the Group would like to reiterate that new initiatives or proposals should comply fully with the GA resolution 46/182 and the Charter of the United Nations.
3. The Group reiterates its commitment and support to the guiding principles articulated in the annex of GA Res 46/182 of 19 December 1991, as the founding resolution of the framework for the provision of UN humanitarian assistance. Member States, in cooperation with United Nations humanitarian organizations should engage in the provision of humanitarian assistance in accordance with this resolution to promote greater respect for and full adherence to the humanitarian principles, humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence, while engaging in negotiations for and during humanitarian operations.
4. Particular attention also needs to be paid to the guiding principles of respect of sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of States, which should remain the overarching parameters in all efforts for coordination of humanitarian assistance. We emphasize in this regard the primary role of the concerned State in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of humanitarian assistance. We also emphasize that the United Nations has a central and unique role to play in providing leadership and coordinating the efforts of the international community to support the affected countries.

Mr. President

5. This year's overall Humanitarian ECOSOC segment theme, "the future of humanitarian affairs: towards greater inclusiveness, coordination, interoperability and effectiveness" and the two panel themes are appropriate and timely given the increasing challenges that the humanitarian system currently faces in bringing together a broad and growing range of humanitarian actors, partners and their range of innovative tools to provide emergency humanitarian assistance. We hope that discussions and debates will further enhance OCHA's role in coordinating international humanitarian assistance in order to effectively address the needs of the increasing number of people affected by humanitarian emergencies.
6. The increased number of people displaced or affected by complex humanitarian emergencies, natural disasters continue to increase dramatically, especially in developing countries. These challenges have been exacerbated by the impact of climate change, global food crisis, continuing food insecurity and financial and economic crisis. In this regard, the Group reiterates that we must

increase our efforts to strengthen capacities and frameworks to better cope with these challenges. Complacency or inaction in response to such situations is inexcusable.

Mr. President

7. Collaboration and coordination of humanitarian assistance to internal displaced persons are multifaceted and requires different organizations to work with the governments on different aspects. Collaborating and coordinating for humanitarian emergency response and recovery, should be further enhanced by strong incorporation of multi-dimensional into humanitarian response, including health care services, gender, urban planning, land ownership, customs and traditions.

8. The Group reaffirms that States must comply fully with their obligations under international humanitarian law, in particular the Fourth Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 to protect and assist civilians in occupied territories. The Group further reiterates its call on the UN System and the International Community to strengthen their efforts to provide the humanitarian assistance to those civilians. Further action should be taken in this regard.

9. The Group supports the necessity for evidence-based humanitarian decision making from reliable data, and emphasizes the importance of information sharing among Member States. Against this backdrop, the UN system and relevant humanitarian and development organizations should ensure that sharing data on risks that can lead to humanitarian crisis should also incorporate the need for building capacities of developing countries to undertake such measures.

Mr. President

10. The Group highlights the need for strengthening preparedness and resilience at national, local and regional levels. While the Group agrees that building resilience is a long-term development process, investment in preparedness through addressing underlying risks, and to prevent and mitigate damage and to assist in reducing the impact of disaster, is necessary to provide more predictable and effective delivery of assistance and relief. The mid-term review of the Hyogo Framework for Action has highlighted the lack of progress against Priority Action 4 on reducing the underlying risk factors. Further action is needed, including by the diversification of funding mechanisms by member states, humanitarian and development organizations, including private sectors and humanitarian funding institutions, to assist developing countries investments in preparedness, prevention, mitigation and response capacity.

11. The Group supports the need for more concerted efforts and work to be deployed for the improvement of the UN system's work on humanitarian response, including by addressing Priority 5 of the Hyogo Framework for Action. This would include the enhancement in developing countries of existing humanitarian capacities, knowledge and institutions at all levels; including through funding, technical assistance or expertise and the transfer of technology, to facilitate appropriate capacity and response to humanitarian emergencies. Innovative approaches should be encouraged for direct engagement and empowerment of governments to expand national humanitarian capacities that lead to better preparedness and effective and definitive response of national and community first-responders to the needs of people, at the time of humanitarian emergencies.

12. Special attention is drawn to the needed support of the international community to ensure predictable, flexible and adequate humanitarian funding mechanism for effective humanitarian assistance. While increased funding for humanitarian assistance, through partnerships and strengthened and flexible financial mechanisms is important, the question of advancing stakeholder interest and accountability to people affected and donor for the concept of 'value for money', needs

to be mirrored against the principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship. In this regard, the specific role of financial institutions and the Central Emergency Response Fund and other funds, during preparatory and resilience and recovery phase, should be explored further.

Mr. President

13. Climate change with its extreme environmental events has serious consequences for millions of people and their countries today. While all countries are at risk, developing countries are more vulnerable because of fewer resources and capacities at their disposal to cope with and adapt to climate change and environmental degradation. Within developing countries, low lying small island states, the poorest and people living in vulnerable situations are most susceptible to the adverse effects of environmental degradation. While resilience of vulnerable communities can be increased to reduce the chances for forced migration, the risk of forced environmental migration of people from low lying small island states is real. To this end, the Group highlights the need to mainstream environmental resilience, adaptation and mitigation as well as climate change policy considerations into migration, development and humanitarian action, at the international and national levels.

14. Emergency humanitarian assistance to affected countries should not be seen as an isolated mechanism for humanitarian response or as a replacement for international development cooperation. Emergency humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation and long term development are different stages of coordinated effort that should remain separated. Humanitarian assistance must be provided in ways that will support recovery and long-term development. In this regard, coordination and collaboration between humanitarian and development actors need to be enhanced.

15. In closing, the Group of 77 and China trusts that the resolution, negotiated in a constructive spirit, can be adopted by consensus, and we thank the co-facilitators for their efforts in allowing us to reach this consensus, and to congratulate you Mr. President, for guarding the excellent discussions during this segment of the ECOSOC.

I thank you.