



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. ARTURO CABRERA, CHARGE D'AFFAIRES, PERMANENT MISSION OF ECUADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS IN GENEVA, DURING THE GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE 2017 SESSION OF THE HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS SEGMENT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (Geneva, 21 June 2017)

Mr. President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. At the outset, allow me, on behalf of the Group, to thank you and other members of the Bureau for organizing this very important segment.

Mr. President,

The Group of 77 and China welcomes the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment as an essential platform for discussing how Member States, the UN System and other stakeholders can continue to enhance the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance in order to effectively address the needs of the increasing number of people affected by humanitarian emergencies.

We also receive with appreciation the organization of the interactive panel that addressed the transition from relief to development, a matter of outermost importance for the Group.

Furthermore, we also welcome the draft resolution on "Strengthening of the Coordination of Emergency Humanitarian Assistance of the United Nations", and we thank the Secretary General for the report on this issue. During the presentation of this report on 3 May 2017, the Group made several observations that are important to emphasize at this time:

- The Group of 77 and China strongly believes that the ECOSOC and the General Assembly have different mandates and functions, and should avoid duplications in their respective work. Given that ECOSOC is a technical body of the GA, its Humanitarian Affairs Segment should focus on the operational aspects of humanitarian assistance and humanitarian emergencies.
- The Member States of the Group request to be constantly informed on the operationalization of the coordination of humanitarian assistance in emergency situations and the implementation of normative aspects, and how recommendations bring operational ideas to enhance coordination in the field.
- The Group stresses the need to pay equivalent attention to, on the one hand, conflict and security, and, on the other, emergencies and natural disasters. Relevant information and recommendations are necessary on these equally important issues in order to address the need to strengthen capacity building and resilience.
- For example, the issue of famine is becoming very serious in several countries, for which substantive, concrete and operational recommendations are required to support efforts made to address the challenges linked to this phenomenon.
- The same observation can be applied to the important issue of responding to humanitarian emergencies in urban settings. The Group expects further substance on the operationalization of the New Urban Agenda in the context of humanitarian assistance, along with concrete prospective

recommendations in this regard.

- The Group of 77 and China also underlines the need to enhance national leadership. While it is important to build local partnerships, we believe that capacity building is different from enhancing leadership. The latter is a confirmation of the primary role of affected States in humanitarian assistance.
- The Group also welcomes the coordination of humanitarian assistance among the different humanitarian actors and relevant development agencies. However, we would like to be effectively and regularly informed on how this coordination is implemented and what the identified gaps are.
- We underline the need to address the insufficient diversity in geographical representation and gender balance in the composition of humanitarian staff of the United Nations, in particular regarding professional and high-level staff. Sufficient data status of humanitarian staff should be readily available, as well as more information on what is being done to address this gap.
- We also request quality data and statistics, with identifiable sources and clear sampling methods, including those related to the situation in specific countries.

We appreciate the attention given to our observations on the Secretary General's report. The Secretariat has already made some revisions to the current text, and has assured us that our recommendations will be taken into consideration in the future.

The Group of 77 and China reaffirms the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence for the provision of humanitarian assistance, as well as the promotion and respect for international humanitarian law. We express concern at the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures; we condemn the threats to and deliberate targeting of humanitarian personnel, including through acts of terrorism; and we call upon all States and parties to comply with the provisions of international humanitarian law in order to protect and assist civilians, including in occupied territories.

The Group notes with deep concern the growing funding gap which still exists in addressing the humanitarian needs on the ground, and wishes to appeal to donor countries to increase assistance.

Mr. President,

The Group of 77 and China addressed these and many more important related matters during the complex but successful negotiations on the draft resolution on "Strengthening of the Coordination of Emergency Humanitarian Assistance of the United Nations" to be adopted during this Humanitarian Affairs Segment. The agreements reached by the Group and our partners demonstrate the importance Member States give to the issues associated with humanitarian emergencies, and our commitment for further collaboration within the international community for the provision of humanitarian assistance.

Let us use the opportunity in front of us to continue working together towards a productive and rewarding segment.

Thank you.