



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA AT THE INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE UN'S ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES (New York, 18 January 2007)

Honorable Co-Chairs,

The Group of G-77 and China is pleased to contribute to this informal consultative process on the institutional framework for the United Nation's environmental activities under paragraph 169 of World Summit Outcome 2005.

In order to be able to make a meaningful contribution to the process, we would like to seek the following clarifications:

First, how do the co-Chairs see the present discussions to evolve and what are their expectations of the outcome of this process and how would it relate to other reform processes including the System-Wide Coherence. We believe that a better understanding of the framework of consultations would lead to more fruitful discussions.

Second, unlike last year's informal consultations, which focused on the institutional framework at the global level, drawing its mandate from Paragraph 169 of World Summit Outcome 2005, the co-Chair's recent questionnaire appears to be focused on the implementation of UN activities at the country level. We would like to know the rationale and basis for this shift in focus.

Third, G-77 has also noticed that certain new elements have been introduced for discussions such as; Partnerships of the global environmental system with civil society, business and science communities. We would like to know the reasons for doing so.

Fourth, the first set of questions, about implementation of UN environmental activities at the country level (1-5), relates to systemic issues and operational activities of the United Nations, thus falling under the purview of the debate on system-wide-coherence. The second set of questions "Enhancement of global governance" (6-9) relates to the activities of UNEP vis-à-vis other actors. Separate processes are under way to address these issues. Would it not be duplicative to address these issues in the present framework?

Honorable Co-Chairs,

While addressing the issues of environmental activities, the Group of 77 and China strongly believe that the three pillars of sustainable development should be addressed in a coordinated, integrated and comprehensive manner. UN environmental activities must not only be supportive of the objectives of major UN Conferences and Summits in the economic and social and related fields but also preserve the integrity of the three pillars of sustainable development, as agreed in Agenda 21, the Millennium Summit, World Summit on Sustainable Development and 2005 World Summit.

Our efforts, coupled with our political will, have proven insufficient to overcome the environmental challenges that we face today, mainly due to lack of capacity, inadequate resources, including financial, human and technical, and unfair agricultural, trade and other economic policies. Due to all these impediments, it is not entirely within the capacity of developing countries to achieve the

internationally agreed developmental goals, including the MDGs, and provide better standards of living to our people, despite our best intentions.

Through this process, we will seek to secure the implementation of the decisions reached at the Rio, Johannesburg and Bali conferences. We are disappointed that so far little progress has been made towards the implementation of Bali Strategic Plan for Capacity Building and Technology Transfer. We believe that the provision of stable, predictable and adequate financial resources for environmental activities and entities are vital for implementation of development commitments.

The Group would like to reiterate that “from our origins to the future . . . from Stockholm to Rio de Janeiro to Johannesburg and in the World Summit outcome”, Member States reaffirmed that “development is a central goal by itself and that sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental aspects constitutes a key element of the over-arching framework of the United Nations’ activities”. We further re-affirmed our “commitment to achieving the goal of sustainable development, including through the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg plan of implementation”.

Honorable Co-Chairs,

We are concerned that by dealing with the issue of environment in isolation from the two other pillars of sustainable development, the aspirations for improvement in the lives of world’s poor will remain unfulfilled.

I thank you.