



**STATEMENT BY H.E. JOHN ASHE, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE,
MISSION OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77
AND CHINA, GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON AGENDA ITEM 40:
REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL; AND ON ITEM 44:
INTEGRATED AND COORDINATED IMPLEMENTATION OF AND FOLLOW-UP
TO THE OUTCOMES OF THE MAJOR UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCES
AND SUMMITS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS (New
York, 3 November 2008)**

Mr. President,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The Group thanks the Secretary-General for the report contained in document A/63/83, and we also welcome the report of the Economic and Social Council in document A/63/3.
2. During this year's Substantive Session of ECOSOC, on the theme "implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development," Ministers pointedly recognized that the international community was meeting at a critical juncture in our efforts to realize the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and that we face multiple challenges in our efforts to achieve these goals.
3. Back then in July, less than four months ago, some were still skeptical to recognize the turmoil in financial markets as a "crisis," preferring the terms "instability" and "uncertainty". In the short space of time since then the world has come to recognize the financial situation for what it is - "a crisis". This crisis in international financial markets has now permeated well into the global economy, significantly slowing global economic growth. This, added to the food crisis and rising fuel prices, as well as the impacts of environmental degradation and climate change, means that urgent individual and collective actions, both short and long term, are needed to curtail the impact on development and to ensure that development gains are not reversed and future efforts are not undermined.
4. Our Ministers expressed determination to take concerted actions to promote progress towards the realization of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, in the face of these overwhelming risks to development. We certainly hope that the strong political will that is required will be demonstrated in a timely fashion.
5. In the face of such challenges, development remains a central goal by itself, and sustainable development, in its economic, social and environmental dimensions, constitutes a key element of the overarching framework and purpose of the United Nations.
6. During the Council's discussions on the various economic and social issues, the Group of 77 and China identified several areas where progress is lacking and which we deem as vital for development, and in particular for the achievement of the Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADGs), including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Mr. President,

7. There is general agreement that global challenges such as climate change and the environmental crisis, the global food crisis, the financial crisis, the energy crisis and the crisis in

international policy and institutional infrastructure - which bear disproportionately on developing countries and the poor - have to be addressed in an integrated and holistic manner. They cannot be sequenced and have to be addressed with urgency. The international community has the framework of the MDGs and other IADGS around which to rally efforts. But actual implementation actions remain woefully lacking.

8. There is now an opportunity for extraordinary responses from the international community, but this window of opportunity will be closed if we are not swift with concrete responses but instead carry-on with the status quo.

Mr. President,

9. As we continue to examine and assess the role of the UN System in ensuring a coordinated implementation of the outcomes of major UN Conferences and Summits at all levels, the Group of 77 and China continues to stress the need to ensure a strong and direct link between coordination and development effectiveness. The result of increased coordination should be tangible and measurable development results where it matters most. We should therefore place priority on monitoring results at the country level.

10. We remain convinced that the UN is the best intergovernmental forum for advancing the development agenda and for facilitating the full realization all Internationally Agreed Development Goals, including the MDGs.

11. On the very important factor of policy coherence, the UN, through the ECOSOC, has a key role to play in ensuring that the policies of developed countries and international institutional partners are coherent and consistent with development goals and objectives of developing countries, particularly trade policies, financial policies, policies on intellectual-property and technology transfer. Such inconsistencies should be the subject and object of the deliberations of the ECOSOC, and this Assembly, so that they can be identified and corrected.

12. The Group of 77 and China reiterates that securing real progress on the Global Partnership for Development goal must become a priority. The importance of benchmarks and targets under MDG 8 cannot be overemphasised, as global partnership is necessary to achieve all IADGs and the MDGs. The General Assembly should make this message abundantly clear.

13. Additionally, there remain many challenges to the coordination of the humanitarian assistance activities of the United Nations, both in situations of natural disasters and in complex emergency, including addressing these situations in a timely, safe and efficient manner. A single natural disaster can set back development progress in a developing country by several decades, accentuating poverty and economic vulnerabilities. For these reasons, it is critical that affected States, donor countries, the UN system and other humanitarian organizations coordinate to provide much needed humanitarian assistance and development support, recognizing the primary role of the affected State and in full respect of resolution 46/182 of the General Assembly.

14. In conclusion, The Group of 77 and China hopes that the international community and development partners will take urgent measure to address the significant and debilitating implementation gaps identified in several areas, in particular the transfer of technology, food security, agriculture and rural development, trade policies including agricultural subsidies, debt, ODA.

Thank you Mr. President.