



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (ECOSOC) ON THE AGENDA ITEM ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN TAX MATTERS (New York, 23 July 2015)

Mr President,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

At the outset, the Group of 77 and China wishes to thank you for your efforts in convening this ECOSOC Meeting. We also wish to thank the Secretariat for the documents prepared for this meeting.

The Group of 77 and China welcomes this opportunity to discuss international cooperation in tax matters, particularly the strengthening of institutional arrangements to promote international cooperation in tax matters. We maintain that while there is increasing recognition of the central role of tax systems in development, the fact remains that there is still no global, inclusive forum for international tax cooperation at the inter-governmental level. There is also not enough focus on the development dimension of these issues.

The Group would like to take note of the report of the Committee on its tenth session, and the report of the Secretary-General on further strengthening the work of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters.

Mr President,

The Group of 77 and China has repeatedly called for the upgrade of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters, transforming it from experts acting in their own capacity, to an inter-governmental subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), with experts representing their respective governments. We believe that this would go a long way in not only strengthening international cooperation in tax matters, but it would allow all member States, including developing countries, to have an equal say on issues related to tax matters as well.

Mr President,

The Group of 77 and China believes that the Committee should be further strengthened, with an emphasis on better integrating the Committee's work into the programme of work of the ECOSOC following its reform, and on enabling the Committee to effectively contribute to the financing for development and the post-2015 development agenda processes.

The Group would like to note the emphasis put forward in the third International Conference on Financing for Development that was held in Addis Ababa from 13 to 16 July 2015 that efforts in international tax cooperation should be universal in approach and scope and should fully take into account the different needs and capacities of all countries.

The Group also welcomes the decision taken at the FFD Conference to work to further enhance the resources of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters in order to strengthen its effectiveness and operational capacity, as well as to increase the frequency of its

meetings to two sessions per year, with a duration of four working days each, and notes that the Committee Members shall be appointed by the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States.

The Group further requests the Secretary-General to report to the Council at its 2016 special meeting to consider international cooperation in tax matters, on the outcome document of the third International Conference on Financing for Development, as appropriate.

We urge all countries and institutions interested in providing financial assistance to the Committee's activities to make voluntary contributions to the trust fund. This extra-budgetary contribution is necessary to support the work of the Committee and its sub-Committees, as well as increase the participation of experts from developing countries.

Mr President,

Since we have the floor, please allow us to state the following:

We would like to withdraw the L-9 document and replace it with the following draft decision. It reads thus:

"Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters
The Economic and Social Council decides,

to take note of the report of the Committee on its tenth session and of the report of the Secretary-General on further strengthening the work of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters."

Mr President, I thank you.