



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR THULANI NYEMBE, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE SECOND COMMITTEE MEETING ON ITS METHODS OF WORK (New York, 9 October 2015)

Mr. Chairman;

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 believes that through your leadership and guidance the Second Committee would be in the position to carry out its work effectively and efficiently. The Group of 77 and China congratulates you thus far for ably conducting the business of this Committee in an even and balanced manner. The Bureau is also congratulated for its supporting role to your chair-ship in order to ensure that the Second Committee runs like a well-oiled machine ready to play its role in assisting to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions, which is an overarching goal that needs our full and undivided attention.

Mr Chairman;

The topic under discussion on the "Methods of Work" for the Second Committee is indeed opportune and timely. It is critical that we all understand the context that we need to work under, otherwise our efforts will be in vain. We thus need to agree on the way forward on this important issue that affects the manner in which we do our work.

We have listened carefully to other speakers who talked about a need to reform the United Nations system and by extension the Second Committee. This work would require sufficient time and extensive consultations to all concerned.

Of paramount importance is that the implementation of the the outcome document entitled "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" would require that we the developing South work together with the developed North in making sustainable development a reality.

It is indeed, critical that the work of the Second Committee builds on the various development priorities we have set for ourselves, including in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the afore-stated 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the various programmes of action for countries in special situations. The Second Committee's ultimate objective should be to lay the foundation for the implementation of the commitments that have resulted from these processes.

Therefore, a discussion on the working methods needs meticulous planning and dedicated time to share ideas and information. We must ensure that the richness of the agenda of the Second Committee is not lost in favour of efficiency. Careful consideration of this matter is necessary. We believe that such a decision cannot be taken at this stage as already there are draft resolutions that the Group of 77 and China will be tabling in the coming days and weeks. The draft resolutions concerned will be updated accordingly, to start the process of aligning our work with the current 2030 Agenda. This is an important preliminary work on this issue without prejudging the discussions and decisions on how the work of the Second Committee relates to the work of other

Committees and the United Nations system in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Mr Chairman;

In our engagement over the coming months in the current 70th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Second Committee session, we will give priority to ensuring systematic follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

In this regard, we acknowledge the need to have a proper reflection on the current agenda of the Second Committee. However, this does not mean to "move beyond the past", as has been stated by some of our Development Partners. On the contrary, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development duly established, as a matter of principle, which, inter alia, states that "the follow-up and review will build on existing platforms and processes, where these exist.

In addition, consistent with this principle, while looking forward to the report to be issued by the Secretary-General in consultation with member states, on a coherent; efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level, the Group of 77 and China considers that the Second Committee should take a lead on these matters, by constructively aligning its resolutions to the priority assigned to the implementation of both the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, respectively, in accordance with existing mandates, in order to systematically support and inform the oversight of the High-level Political Forum. Over and above the afore-stated processes, there are also various development priorities we have set for ourselves, including the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the various programmes of action for countries in special situations, which should guide the work of the Second Committee.

The Group of 77 and China underscores that the General Assembly is the only inter-governmental body ensuring universal participation for a systematic follow-up and review of the implementation of an Agenda predicated to leave no one behind.

Mr Chairman;

Furthermore, later this month there will be the next phase of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) dialogues on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations Development System, in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the Operational Activities Segment. This is another important platform to discuss this issue at the ECOSOC level, which should be allowed to carry out its mandate, accordingly. We look forward to these discussions in view of the next Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR). It is imperative to interrogate further the Secretariat's "fit for purpose" concept, in order for all member states of the United Nations to have a common understanding in terms of what this entails.

In this regard, we recall that both the General Assembly and the ECOSOC have adopted resolutions on the dialogues being held about the long-term positioning of the United Nations Development System, respectively, to be ultimately addressed by the next QCPR.

We also need to explore synergies in the work of the Second Committee and the United Nations Development system with the High-Level Political Forum, which has a central role in overseeing a network of follow-up and review processes at the global level, and is tasked with promoting system-wide coherence and coordination of sustainable development policies in the implementation of the 2030 agenda. These discussions are critical in allowing Member States to articulate their positions

and share their views on strengthening the United Nations Development system to ensure coherent and integrated support in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

It will be prudent for the Second Committee to also study recommendations and guidance, as appropriate, emerging from these discussions before any decision on the methods of work of the Second Committee can be taken.

Mr Chairman;

The Group of 77 and China believes that today's discussion is a first step, in a more comprehensive discussion. Perhaps we might not want to amend the work of the Committee at this stage, as it will be extremely sudden and would not enjoy the full support of all Member States, particularly the developing countries. Instead of functioning in silos, we need to work together to streamline the working methods of the Second Committee in a structured and sustainable manner.

Furthermore, it should be mentioned that the 2030 Agenda is broad and far-reaching, way beyond the remits of the Second Committee and therefore, any attempts to reform the Committees will need an in-depth discussion to ensure that we reach a win-win outcome. We recognise that the Agenda encompasses seventeen (17) goals, while distinct in their own right, are also inter-linked. Therefore, this discussion must also extend to not only how the work of the Second Committee should be reformed, but to how the other Committees and the HLPF's work will be complemented, in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Mr Chairman;

The Group is concerned with utterances that would not enable the United Nations to align its working methods with the 2030 Agenda. This Agenda will need all hands on deck in terms of making it tangible and meaningful to the lives of all humanity.

It is imperative for all of us to apply our minds in a concerted way, in order to ensure that the United Nations Development System and the Second Committee in particular, begin to align their working methods with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I thank you.