



**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR BYRON BLAKE OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA, AFTER THE ADOPTION OF THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION OF THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE ECOSOC SUBSTANTIVE SESSION 2008 (New York, 3 July 2008)**

Mr. President,

1. The Group of 77 and China compliments you on the manner in which you have been conducting the affairs of the ECOSOC and in particular this session of the Council including the new institutions - the AMR and the DCF. The Group is pleased that you have been able to secure a Ministerial Declaration before the close of the High Level Segment.
2. There has been a sense of revitalization and new dynamism in the Council.
3. The Group of 77 and China considers the final declaration to be a significant document, especially in the light of the expectations of some partners at the beginning of the process. The Group of 77 and China acknowledges that all delegations showed a level of flexibility and worked hard to achieve the final text. The Group thanks all delegations. The Group also thanks Mr. Selwin Hart of Barbados for his skill and selfless effort in facilitating the process.

Mr. President,

4. Having said that, the Group of 77 and China is convinced that the flexibility was not equally shared. The Group of 77 and China, as is increasingly the case in recent years, has had to show more than its fair share. Mr. President, even at the very end a minor proposal by the Group of 77 and China which would have made its members less uncomfortable and the overall document more balanced, could not be accommodated. The Group, out of deference to you, and in recognition of the importance of a strong and united ECOSOC, again had to make the concession. The Group of 77 and China had expected more in this resolution given the number, depth and complexity of crises confronting the international community and the positive statements made in the plenaries. There was a clear disconnect between policy statements for public consumption and negotiating instructions or realities.
5. The Group of 77 and China advanced proposals in a number of urgent and critical areas which could not be accommodated mainly on grounds of protecting the length of the document, the absence of agreed language in previous resolutions and declarations, or the fact that the issue was being dealt with in some other process. This, in spite of the new and grave, indeed dire, nature of some of the challenges now confronting the international community. The Group had advanced in its opening statement to this High Level Segment that we are in extraordinary times, and that extraordinary times require extraordinary responses from us as an international community. That view was clearly not shared.
6. The Group of 77 and China was and is particularly concerned, for example, that issues such as the transfer of technology in the context of climate change could not be accommodated. This is a critical issue in any strategy to address mitigation of, and adaptation to climate change. That an issue as current and critical as Food Security and the Global Food Crisis could only be minimally treated; trade policies including agricultural subsidies could hardly be mentioned in spite of the

limited, if any progress in the Doha "Development" Round after eight years; Debt, and indeed ODA, have to await the Monterrey Review Process, and climate change itself has to await the Bali Process.

Mr. President,

These are issues that lie at the core of development, and most importantly these are issues critical to achieving the IADGs, MDGs, and implementing the outcomes of major UN Conferences and Summits. They bear heavily on many of the current crises.

Mr. President,

The Group thanks you for your personal intervention and exhortation in the effort to achieve a successful High Level Segment. It also thanks the Secretariat for its support.