

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. AMBASSADOR DAUDI N. MWAKAWAGO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, ON THE ADOPTION OF AN AGENDA FOR DEVELOPMENT AT THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

New York, June 20, 1997

Mr. President of the General Assembly
and Chairman of the Working Group on Agenda for Development
Co-Vice Chairmen, Ambassador Powles and Ambassador Mangoela
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am greatly honoured to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China at this historic moment of concluding the successful process of preparing an Agenda for Development.

At the outset, we would like to express our sincere appreciation for your initiatives and commitment which has greatly contributed to the realization of this outcome. Your consistent and persistent encouragement and guidance facilitated and generated the much needed political will and enthusiasm from all member states to continue with the negotiations and discussions and eventually attaining this product which we have just adopted.

We would also like to express our heartfelt gratitude and congratulations to the Vice-Chairs of the Working Group on Agenda for Development, Ambassador Powles of New Zealand and Ambassador Mangoela of the Kingdom of Lesotho for their outstanding work in conducting, guiding and propelling the negotiations amidst apparent wide gap between the negotiating groups and countries. Their patience, perseverance and proposals greatly facilitated reaching agreement and understanding between the negotiators on the most controversial issues. This successful conclusion of process can be attributed to their enduring commitment and efforts.

Mr. President,

The history of the task of preparing an Agenda for Development is well known to all of us here. You will recall that the Group of 77 and China was the main initiator for launching the proposal and continued to be the main protagonist during the last four years. You will also recall that imperative was premised on increasing realization that development was being marginalized in the mainstream and priorities of the intergovernmental processes of the United Nations system. The complementary linkage and balance between peace and development was being lost. The process of globalization was and is accentuating and increasing marginalization of developing countries in the global economy was becoming a reality, especially in the critical areas of international trade, money, finance, technology, information and communication flows.

Indeed, with all of these trends and tendencies in the world economy, it was recognized by both developed and developing countries, member states of the United Nations, that it was imperative to launch an endeavour of charting out a framework of objectives and measures for national and international actions to address development more squarely and comprehensively than any other previous initiative undertaken by the United Nations.

The outcome of that resolve, which we have just endorsed, is one of the best attempts of the member states of the United Nations to tackle compelling and important issues in international cooperation for development in recent past. Fundamentally, the agreed Agenda for Development provides a framework on principles,

objectives, measures and actions which would guide member states in addressing development issues at national and international levels in a comprehensive manner and in the medium and long term.

The package of elements contained in the document, is in no way exhaustive, but, in the main, it incorporates many of basic ideas and proposals which are crucial and of great concern to developing countries. First, there is a need to evolve a genuine partnership which recognizes the inequality and disadvantaged situation of the developing countries in the global economy and thus an imperative for the developed countries to have the much needed political will to support the development efforts of developing countries through the provision of concessional financial flows, preferential treatment in market access, durable debt relief measures, favourable terms in the transfer of technology and support to South-South cooperation.

Second, the functioning and operations of the United Nations system should be more efficient and effective to maximize its impact in development activities in developing countries. Towards this end, provision of predictable resources and institutional reforms are crucial. Third, developing countries should own their development process through assuming leadership in formulating strategies, policies and determining the priority programmes, projects and activities, with donor community and United Nations system playing the supportive and advisory role through their provision of financial and technical assistance.

Mr. President,

While celebrating this fruitful outcome, it is befitting also to record some of elements of disquiet, in the view of G-77/China, which to some extent, have reduced the clarity and dynamism of the document. First, lack of explicit acknowledgement that deficient and unpredictable provision of resources, especially, external resources, in particular, ODA flows and core resources of funds and programmes, has been and is the main constraint in dynamising the development process of developing countries. Second, there is an apparent emphasis that the United Nations system would function more efficiently and effectively, primarily, through rigorous reform process. Furthermore, this reform process seem to target more the United Nations entities which undertake tasks which are of great interest to developing countries.

Third, the definition of development is much more tilted towards the components of environmental protection and management. Fourth, commitment of developed countries on fulfilling the agreed United Nations targets, especially on resources flows is equivocal. Fifth, the supremacy of the United Nations General Assembly in policy guidance is not yet ascertained with regard to its relationship with the Bretton Woods institutions. Lastly, apparent overdose on values and norms of development, while belittling the special and unique characteristics of a country.

Mr. President,

Certainly, the preparatory process of the Agenda for Development has infused very useful lessons for the future negotiations. It has provided that the more genuine emerging partnership between developed and developing countries will overcome any degree of pessimism and disillusion which may surface in an unprecedented and prolonged negotiations such as this one, which has taken three years. We witnessed flexibility, pragmatism and realism from all sides. We hope that the negotiating atmosphere which we generated in charting this Agenda will continue to prevail in all the future intergovernmental processes and dialogues.

We have realized that all major political-economic-social-cultural problems of the world can be tackled meaningfully when development is fully addressed by both developed and developing countries as guided by

this Agenda for Development. In order to implement this Agenda for Development most effectively, political commitment is the most critical requirement. Developing countries are ready and committed to implement this Agenda fully with the expectation that our development partners will also play their part fully.

Mr. President,

Before I end my remarks, allow me to congratulate also, all of our development partners; the European Union, Mexico, Canada, Japan, Russian Federation, the United States of America and others, for their untiring efforts to negotiate and propose ideas which made it possible to conclude the preparatory work and produce this document on Agenda for Development.

I should also thank the Member States of the Group of 77 and China for honouring my country to lead them in the negotiations with our partners. Surely, without their cooperation, encouragement and understanding, the ending of the preparatory process could not be this joyous and beautiful. I thank you all. Last but not the least, I thank the Secretariat for working very hard to facilitate the negotiations. I would like to mention in particular, Mr. Johan Scholvinck and Ms. Marion Barthelemy for their tireless efforts in providing documents and clarifications. I would like to thank also the interpreters and all the Staff of the Secretariat who were working behind the scenes to facilitate our task.

I thank you all.

Thank you, Mr. President.