



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. MR. PETER THOMSON, AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF 77, ON AGENDA 24: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT, SUB-ITEMS (A) AND (B), IN THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE SIXTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 14 October 2013)**

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to make this statement on operational activities for development of the United Nations system on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. The Group places highest priority on operational activities for development, as these represent the efforts of the United Nations in implementing the policy mandates on development that we the General Assembly give to the UN system. This year the focus of operational activities for development has of course been the implementation of the policy guidance given through the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (resolution 67/226) adopted last year by the General Assembly.
3. The Group wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the analysis of funding of operational activities for development of the UN System for 2011 (A/68/97), which gives us pertinent information on whether sufficient emphasis in terms of resourcing is being placed on operational activities for development. In this regard, the Group expresses grave concerns that despite the continuing challenges being faced by developing countries with regard to poverty eradication, and more so in times of economic difficulty in the context of the global financial and economic crisis, total contributions for operational activities in 2011 showed a 6.9% decline in real terms as compared to 2010, and that this included a 3% decline in core funding for development-related activities. Although over a 15-year period the trend of funding has been upward, it is equally of concern that the upward trend is represented by growth in non-core resources, with the long term trend of core funding showing huge declines.
4. The Group would therefore urge donors, in line with both the QCPR and the ECOSOC resolution on follow-up to the QCPR, to prioritise core funding in recognition that it is the bedrock of the UN's operational activities for development, and crucial for efficient implementation of the QCPR.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The Group of 77 and China has participated actively this year in matters relating to the implementation of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, and believes that the follow-up and monitoring of the implementation will be crucial to ensuring that developmental benefits are accrued by the communities who are most in need around the world. An important part of this evaluation will be the work of the interim coordination mechanism for system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development. The Group appreciates the policy document prepared by the Interim Coordination Mechanism which contained proposals for the pilot independent system-wide evaluations, and looks forward to working with Members during this session to agree on the themes for the pilot evaluations to be implemented as early as possible. The themes agreed must be overarching considerations in operational activities for development. It is important to get these evaluations under way at the earliest to ensure that feedback on the implementation of the

important policy guidance given in the QCPR is obtained systematically.

6. It is also important for the G77 to underscore that poverty eradication still remains the over-riding priority for developing countries. In this regard, for the first time ever, there was an explicit mandate given by the QCPR Resolution to "assign the highest priority to poverty eradication". The Resolution requested the UN Development System to focus all its development programmes and projects to address this greatest global challenge as their underlying objective. The true test of the operational activities segment lies therefore in ensuring that the UN Development System delivers this very mandate.

7. As articulated in the QCPR, the contribution of the UN development system is crucial in addressing poverty eradication, capacity-building and development, South-south cooperation and the development of national capacities, transitions from relief to development as well as gender equality and women's empowerment.

Mr. Chairman,

8. A related matter is the oversight provided by the Economic and Social Council on the implementation of the QCPR. The General Assembly has worked hard this year to reform the work of the ECOSOC in such a way as to ensure that it will be able to continue providing the necessary oversight in a manner that is sustainable long into the future. The resolution on the ECOSOC reform passed earlier in this session, we feel, takes some important steps towards this objective. The Group is fully cognisant that the changes to the ECOSOC cycle that have been designed to ensure maximum participation and efficiency in its operations may require modifications to the reporting cycles agreed by the UN Development System on the implementation of the QCPR. The Group of 77 and China looks forward to working with the UN Development System to ensure that feedback and reporting on QCPR implementation is managed in this transition period as we shift to the new cycle for ECOSOC.

Mr. Chairman,

9. Allow me to touch on a few key matters relating to South-South cooperation. We wish to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the current state of South-South cooperation and the growing support by a large number of UN organizations, specialized agencies, funds and programmes, as well as regional commissions.

10. The Group welcomes and supports the proposed recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report. In this context, the Group wishes to seize this opportunity to reiterate its position on the related actions to further strengthen the UN Office for South-South Cooperation as contained in document SSC/17/L.5 of 12 May 2012 and the Declaration adopted by the Thirty-Seventh Annual Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 held at UN Headquarters on 26 September 2013.

11. The Group reiterates its long standing position that the UN system must enhance its efforts by taking concrete measures to mainstream support for South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation. The Group welcomes the emphasis on such mainstreaming efforts in the strategic plans for some of the funds and programmes that have recently been agreed to by the governing boards of the funds and programmes. We encourage the same for the specialized agencies.

12. Our emphasis on South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation is because it has proven to be an effective strategy to sustain the development efforts of developing countries. It provides

effective means of enhancing the participation of developing countries in a global economy, by benefiting from best practices of strategies and policies implemented in countries which have gone through similar experiences. In this context, we would encourage the UN development system to utilize the databases and knowledge of the Office of South-South cooperation, which has a system-wide coordination role in this regard, to facilitate linkages for South-South and triangular cooperation. This supportive and facilitative role of the UN is crucial in ensuring that the principles of south-south cooperation, particularly those of ownership and bilateral initiative by countries of the South, are maintained. The Group firmly believes that South-South cooperation firmly rooted in agreed principles, and supported by the UN development system, will truly complement the patterns in North-South development to create concrete developmental gains across the world.

13. Finally, Mr. Chairman, the Group of 77 and China looks forward to constructive engagement in the consultations on the resolution on Operational Activities for Development which it will, as is traditional, be putting forward again this year, and which will touch on the issues mentioned in this statement.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.