



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON THE OCCASION OF THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA - STATEMENT ON THE PREAMBLE AND THE DECLARATION (New York, 27 July 2015)

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

Co-facilitators,

We thank you for your efforts in preparing the revised draft of the outcome document for the UN Summit on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The latest draft clearly shows that you as co-facilitators are taking on board the views that have been expressed in our discussions over the last week. The latest draft is a significant step in bringing us closer to a final agreement, which we can adopt this Friday.

Co-facilitators,

The Group of 77 and China has made several interventions covering all aspects of the text, including making specific proposals to further improve the text.

We will therefore not make a statement reiterating the Group's principled views, as this has been done before, and in any case, you already have it before you. Instead, we will utilise this opportunity to raise key substantive issues, with practical proposals.

Before we make substantial comments, allow us to comment on your proposal on our methods of work this week. The Group of 77 and China does not believe that it is useful or productive to hold informal-informal's during the evening session. Should we require more time for our discussions and in the interest of openness, transparency and inclusiveness, we would propose that the plenary sessions continue into the evening sessions, rather than holding separate informal-Informal's.

Turning to issues of substance, it should be noted that the Group has several comments and proposals, but in the interests of time, we will only comment on a few of these and forward the remainder to you in writing.

Co-facilitators, the Group of 77 would like to raise the following:

- ❖ We continue to see no reason for the inclusion of the preamble. All issues raised in the preamble are substantively repeated in the declaration, which makes the preamble redundant. Therefore, it should be noted that while we are providing comments on the Preamble, it does not mean that we are agreeing to its inclusion.
- ❖ While the amended proposed preamble is an improvement, it does not adequately reflect all three of the dimensions of sustainable development. Any attempt to also draw linkages which attempt to redefine sustainable development, should be strongly resisted by the co-facilitators.
- ❖ We note the references to the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities. The Group continues to believe that CBDR applies to the entire development agenda that we are adopting. We stress that CBDR is an acceptance that all Member States have responsibilities for

global sustainable development, no matter whether you are one of those States with extensive means or whether you are a State with the least. It is however necessary to recognise our different levels of development.

❖ We propose to delete the reference to "shared responsibility" in paragraph 36, which dilutes the differences between the developing and the developed countries and contradicts the essence of the principle of CBDR.

❖ Regarding paragraph 15, the Group of 77 and China proposes to replace the phrase "forced displacement of persons" with "mass movement of refugees".

❖ Regarding annex 2, the Group has consistently held the position that the introduction of the Open Working Group Proposal for Sustainable Development Goals and targets should continue to be reflected as part of the OWG-SDGs in its entirety. Such an approach would be consistent with UN General Assembly resolution A/68/970. The Chapeau presents a delicate balance, which resolves many of the difficult political differences we may have such as a reflection of different development models.

❖ As the Group has indicated before, language on climate change in the declaration, as now referenced in paragraph 31, should not prejudice the Paris UNFCCC outcome.

It would therefore be important to avoid language in the declaration implying the legal nature and scope of commitments, which is a matter that has not been agreed to in the UNFCCC negotiations. As developing countries, we insist on the need for a form of differentiation that will allow for universal participation and on balanced treatment for the other pillars of the Convention (these include support for developing countries; adaptation, etc.).

It is therefore proposed that the paragraph should be adjusted to read, "We acknowledge that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change. The global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible international cooperation aimed at holding the increase in global average temperature below 2 degrees or 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels by accelerating the reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to the impacts of climate change. Noting the ongoing negotiations under the UNFCCC to be concluded at the COP21, we call on all States to work for a comprehensive and ambitious climate agreement"

❖ In paragraphs 41 and 66, it would be necessary to include a reference to "the establishment of a Plan of Action for the cooperation with Middle-Income countries in the framework of the United Nations."

❖ Regarding the issue of "migration" referenced in paragraph 35, the Group proposes that language be introduced which recognises that migration is also an enabler for development. The roles and responsibilities of the countries of origin, transit and destination should be appropriately balanced. It is the Group's contention that the last line of paragraph 35 does not reflect this balance and should thus be deleted.

❖ Regarding paragraph 46 on debt, it would be noted that "developing countries" were inadvertently omitted from the list of countries that remain vulnerable to debt crises. In this context, we should also recognise ongoing processes to address issues surrounding debt at the United Nations.

The following language is proposed in this regard: "Furthermore, we take note of discussions in the United Nations on debt issues".

Co-facilitators,

These brief comments constitute the Group of 77 and China's preliminary comments on the preamble and declaration.

I thank you.