



**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 AND CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE JOINT DEBATE ON AGENDA ITEMS 9 AND 14, IN THE PLENARY OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 11 November 2013)**

Mr. President,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I wish to thank the Secretary-General for the report contained in document A/67/736, and welcome the Report of the Economic and Social Council for 2013 in document A/68/3.
2. At the outset, the Group would like to recognise the dynamic leadership of the President of the Council, H.E. Ambassador Nestor Osorio, and his Bureau, in guiding the work of the Council in 2013. Our gratitude goes also to the Secretariat staff for their hard work as well as to all the facilitators of draft resolutions for their tireless efforts.
3. We would also like to acknowledge the various meetings held under the auspices of the Council, including the special high-level meeting of the Council with the Bretton Woods institutions, the WTO and UNCTAD; the special meeting on external debt sustainability and development; and the meeting on international cooperation in tax matters.
4. These meetings have provided us with the opportunity to review and strengthen the relationship between the Council and other stakeholders through constructive debates on important global development issues.

Mr. President,

5. While the Group welcomes the Report of the President of ECOSOC, we note with concern that work is still pending on the Council's substantive session. We regret that three and half months after its July session, we are still not in a position to adopt the coordination segment resolution or the Ministerial Declaration. The Group considers the Ministerial Declaration to be a significant document, especially in light of the importance of science, technology, innovation and culture as both enablers and drivers for promoting sustainable development and achieving the MDGs. We urge the President of ECOSOC to continue his leadership to guide members towards achieving a consensual outcome as soon as possible.

Mr. President,

6. With reference to the Report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of the General Assembly Resolution 61/16 on the Strengthening of ECOSOC, the Group concurs with its recommendation that the Council needs to transform itself into an issues-oriented, knowledge-based, stakeholder-friendly intergovernmental body. We believe the Council should play a pivotal role in the United Nations, especially in view of the need to accelerate the achievement of the MDGs and elaborate the development goals of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.
7. The Group holds the view that the inter-related challenges of poverty eradication and sustainable development are at the heart of the Council's mandate. The strengthening of ECOSOC should aim

at making the Council a more relevant and responsive multilateral intergovernmental body to follow up the outcomes of all UN conferences, including the political commitments renewed at the Rio+20 conference, with increased international cooperation.

8. In this regard, the Group of 77 and China urges the Council, in accordance with resolution 61/16, to strengthen its relations with other intergovernmental bodies, especially the newly established High-level Political Forum; the regional commissions, the Bretton Woods institutions; ECOSOC subsidiary bodies and other relevant stakeholders. Such strengthening should bring greater coherence to the work of the Council system, making it an effective and relevant UN body, which not only follows up on agreed development goals, but also responds to new and emerging global challenges.

I thank you, Mr. President.