



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. LUKE DAUNIVALU, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, PERMANENT MISSION OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 27: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, AT THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 7 October 2013)**

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. At the outset, allow me, to extend our warmest congratulations to you Mr Chairman and other members of the Bureau on your election. The Group of 77 and China wishes to assure you of its full cooperation and support during the deliberations at this session.
3. The Group would also like to thank the Secretary-General for the reports submitted under agenda item 27, which will continue to stimulate our discussions.

Mr. Chairman,

4. Despite significant progress in various areas over the past years, much more needs to be done to achieve our mutual goals in the field of social development. The analysis contained in the report of the Secretary-General provides us with an overview of the discussions held by the Commission for Social Development during its fifty-first session on the priority theme of, 'promoting the empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication, social integration and full employment and decent work for all', as they remain a persistent global challenge.
5. To help accelerate progress towards the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit for Social Development and other development goals, the G77 and China fully share the recommendations in the report that the empowerment of people should be considered as an important approach to advancing social development. This is achieved through the enabling environments and policies, such as, reducing poverty by promoting employment and social integration, enhancing choices and capacities including equal access to quality education and skills training, achieving inclusive sustainable economic growth, effective and transparent institutions to foster participation in broad-based consultations and civic engagement, efforts to boost smallholder productivity, social inclusion, empowerment and participation as some of the priorities to be included in the global development agenda beyond 2015.
6. In this respect, the G77 and China highlights the role of empowerment of people also concerned that the social challenges identified at the Summit persists today with their intensifying consequences, in particular the global financial economic crisis, the food crisis and continuing food insecurity, as well as the menacing environmental challenges, which all have a major negative impact on social development and undermine further the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Mr. Chairman

7. We firmly believe that in light of the continuing challenges on the achievement of social

development goals; poverty eradication, social inclusion, full employment and decent work for all, and the implementation of the commitments made at the World Summit becomes even more urgent than ever before. In this regard, we reaffirm our commitment to implement the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the Summit, and the further initiatives for social development adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth special session.

8. We must be committed to fulfill our obligations in conformity with international law through taking further collective and concrete actions to remove all obstacles that are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person to the full realization of the rights of peoples to self-determination, in particular those living under colonial and foreign occupation, which continue to adversely affect their economic and social development.

9. We welcome the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), which calls for a more balanced integration of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, and the importance of poverty eradication, social inclusion and participation for the future of our planet.

10. With all these challenges, the G77 and China underscores the crucial role of international cooperation, including south-south and triangular cooperation, in realizing the internationally agreed development goals and promoting the goals of social development. On this note, the Group stresses that the international community and development partners have an important role to play in collaborating with and supporting the developing countries in implementing their social development agenda.

Mr. Chairman

11. The fulfilment of the commitments by developed countries, both individual and collective is crucial and imperative. In this regard the Group calls for a more strengthened, coherent and integrated development approach, including the fulfilment of commitments on internationally agreed official development assistance, and the timely implementation of all commitments under the global partnership for development.

12. The G77 and China urges member states to ensure that the international trade agenda is harmonised to support measures targeted towards equalizing opportunities for access and participation in global markets and with other multilateral agreements in social development. We support the Enhanced Integrated Framework of the WTO to address the supply and trade related infrastructure and productive capacity constraints and the specific needs and priorities of developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

13. Empowerment should first take a people-centred approach focusing on the marginalized and disadvantaged social groups including women, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, youth, older persons and migrants who continue to suffer from a higher-than-average chance of falling into the poorest category of the population.

14. Persons with disabilities must be given particular attention, and further actions should be taken to promote their rights and address their needs. In this context, we welcome the outcomes of the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other Internationally Agreed Development Goals for persons with disabilities. This forum has provided an invaluable opportunity to review development policy and practices from a disability

perspective, strengthen commitment to ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities in development, and their inclusion and empowerment in emerging international development frameworks as agents and beneficiaries of development. The G77 and China acknowledges the value of their contribution to the general well-being, progress and diversity of society.

15. Population ageing is an issue that deserves great attention and requires concerted efforts, well focused and forward looking policies and actions at all levels. The G77 and China attaches great importance to the issues of elderly people, which not only face discrimination on the basis of age but, impacted by forms of discrimination, poverty and violence, as well as lack of specific services and resources.

Mr. Chairman

16. The G77 and China welcomes the continued focus on youth and calls upon member states, the UN system and relevant stakeholders to fully implement the recommendations contained in the outcome document of the UN High-level Meeting on Youth held in 2011, which outlined 17 areas of action on youth issues, including specific measures for advancing inclusive job creation, skills development and vocational training designed for specific labour-market needs. Further, we acknowledge the celebration of the "BYND 2015 Global Youth Summit", in September 2013, as a contribution to the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda.

17. We are pleased to note that since the proclamation of the International Year of the Family in 1994, the international community has undertaken a range of activities and commitments in support of its objectives. The preparation for and observance of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2014 provides a useful opportunity to strengthen national family-centred policies and programmes, particularly in the areas of family poverty reduction, work-family balance and intergenerational solidarity.

Mr. Chairman,

18. Following the practice of previous sessions, the G77 and China will submit under this agenda item the following three draft resolutions: 1) Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, 2) Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing, and 3) Preparations for and observance of the 20th anniversary of the International Year of the Family. The Group looks forward to the valuable contributions and support of all member states.

19. In closing, the G77 and China looks forward to engaging in the discussions with partners with the aim of contributing to the achievement of our mutual goals in the field of social development.

Thank you.