



**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, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THEMATIC DEBATE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE: PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS IN THE ENERGY-WATER NEXUS (New York, 16 May 2013)**

Mr President,

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

We thank you, Mr President, for convening this thematic debate. The Group of 77 and China strongly advocates the achievement of sustainable development and eradication of poverty, which are our first and overriding priorities. We highlighted at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development last year the urgent need for practical and effective solutions to sustainable development. Our development aspirations face real threats from the pressure being put on natural resources and the threat of climate change. Addressing unsustainable consumption patterns and lifestyles in developed countries is a fundamental response in this regard.

The Group of 77 and China is of the view that it is vital for all Member States to promote sustainable development in accordance with the Rio Principles, in particular, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. It is equally important that we fully implement Agenda 21 and the Outcomes of other relevant UN Conferences in the economic, environmental and social fields, including the Millennium Development Goals Declaration. The principle of sovereignty of States over their natural resources should also be at the core of our discussions.

We further emphasize the critical role of the international community in the provision of adequate, predictable, new and additional financial resources, transfer of technology and capacity building to developing countries.

With regard to climate change, we reiterate our view that the UNFCCC is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.

Mr President,

Developing countries are facing significant risks from the adverse impacts of climate change, and already experiencing increased impacts, including persistent drought and extreme weather events, sea-level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification. These climate impacts further threaten our food security, efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development. For small island developing states for instance, climate change and sea level rise represents the gravest of threats to their survival and viability, including for some the loss of territory. It is important that we proceed with a sense of urgency in the climate change negotiations in accordance with the principles and provisions of the climate change Convention.

In this regard, we reiterate our call for the fulfillment of climate-related and environmental commitments by developed countries, in particular those under the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol. Moreover, we call for the full and effective implementation of the commitments made under the various sustainable development frameworks applicable to developing countries,

including the MDGs.

Access to clean water and sanitation is of vital importance in meeting food security and the eradication of poverty. Water is also essential to promote socio-economic development and for the protection of the environment. Issues of access to potable water, water quality, underground water, management and planning as well as water being an energy source are essential to the future of our populations.

We need to clearly identify and utilize the link between policy, decision making, science and practice in order to transcend the rhetoric between the reality and our desired goals in both the energy and water sectors. It requires unifying a variety of know-how and experience to attain sustainable development and address the climate change and environmental objectives in a meaningful manner.

There is a need to share technologies, experiences and best practices on the effective use of water, not only as a basic necessity but also as an energy source. In view of the importance of water and energy to promoting socio-economic growth, support should be provided to developing countries in their efforts to improve the development and deployment of clean technologies, management, conservation, and sustainable use of water and water-related energy resources.

As with water, energy access remains critical to the development aspirations of our people. With more than 1.3 billion people in developing countries outside the pale of energy access and 2.6 billion still dependent on firewood for domestic needs, the urgency to act cannot be overemphasized.

We recognize that technologies are now available for making water potable, for saving and redistributing its supplies, for reducing the demand for water and securing new sources of water, as well as maximizing energy efficiency, energy conservation and increasing use of water-related renewable energy resources.

The United Nations system plays an important role in addressing the issues of water and energy by providing support to the efforts of countries and institutions to accelerate progress in water and energy resources management.

There is a need to explore new ways and avenues to tackle basic needs in terms of water and energy resources. There is an equally urgent need for meaningful international cooperation in sharing cutting-edge technologies, best practices and capacity building to assist developing countries in providing universal access to energy and water to their peoples. We must be active both in the management and development of the relevant resource infrastructures in order to increase access to and effective use of safe water and reliable energy supply for all.

Thank you.