



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. DIEGO LIMERES, MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY AND DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ARGENTINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 19: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, AT THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE 66TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 31 October 2011)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The Group thanks the Secretariat for its presentation of the reports before us on agenda item 19: Sustainable Development.

Introduction:

2. At the outset, the Group of 77 and China reiterates that Sustainable Development is the comprehensive conceptual framework that the United Nations has agreed as the basis to address the multi-dimensional challenges of economic development, social development and environmental protection. This framework is to be strengthened and the basic principles in which it is founded should not be renegotiated or retracted.

3. The G77 and China believes that the international community still faces the challenge of fulfilling the commitments previously agreed in the sustainable development field, along with the full integration of the three pillars of sustainable development. It is necessary to have a coordinated, integrated and balanced approach to promoting the operationalization of sustainable development.

4. The Group's first and overriding priorities are the eradication of poverty and sustainable development. In this context, the multiple and ongoing crises, including the financial, economic, food and energy crises and the challenges relating to the limit of and the unsustainable use of resources have significant and unforeseen impacts on our countries, and are undermining our efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs.

5. For developing countries, effective international cooperation continues to be an essential factor to enable the full achievement of the development goals. We reiterate our call to our development Partners for increased new and additional financial resources, transfer of technology and capacity building for the full and prompt realization of sustainable development actions on the ground.

Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)

Mr. Chairman,

6. Next year one of our members will host the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, twenty years after the international community agreed on the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. For the Rio plus 20 Conference, we look forward to an outcome in which the renewed political commitment to the Sustainable Development Agenda leads to the full implementation of this landmark Declaration, Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the

Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and to an outcome that fully support developing countries national efforts to achieve sustainable development.

7. Guided by the "Rio Spirit", a Rio-plus-20 Summit should provide the necessary political impetus to bridge the implementation gaps. We should aim for the adoption of action oriented outcomes that will yield concrete results in the field of financing, access to technology and the building of capacities in developing countries. With that in mind, we must not shy away from identifying what still needs to be done to consolidate the progress achieved, overcome the remaining challenges and identify ways to address persistent and new and emerging issues. At this session of the Second Committee, we should agree as expeditiously as possible, on the organization of work for the Conference, in support for the preparations of the Conference and its host Country.

8. At the same time, the G77 and China urges developed countries and international and bilateral donors to provide contributions to the UNCSD trust fund and to enhance the active participation of representatives from developing countries in the negotiating preparatory process of the Conference and in the Conference itself.

9. In this regard, and in view of the importance the Group is attaching on the Rio+20 Conference, and its outcome, which needs focused effort and dedicated time, the G77 and China has decided to table procedural resolutions under the Agenda item (19) on sustainable development, as an exception and for this 66th session, following the established practice in similar cases where the preparation for a major United Nations Conference coincided with the General Assembly session. Adopting such decision will enable all of us to allocate more time and effort during these months for the preparation of the Conference, which should be an overriding priority. The Group looks forward to the reciprocation of this decision by all, so that we can focus our efforts on considering the potential tangible outcome that the Conference should produce.

Follow-up to and Implementation of Mauritius Strategy

Mr. Chairman,

10. The Group of 77 and China welcomes another opportunity to reaffirm its support for the efforts of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to achieve sustainable development. SIDS are acutely vulnerable to the effects of climate change, including phenomena such as sea-level rise, coral bleaching due to rising temperatures and the extreme nature and increased frequency of severe weather events such as hurricanes. While these challenges are not faced exclusively by SIDS, for this Group of small, vulnerable low-lying states, the threat is existential. Our response to their plight must therefore be characterized by the requisite sense of urgency. In this regard, we reiterate our call to the international community to make good on its commitments to SIDS as embodied in the Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA) and the Mauritius Strategy for the further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (MSI).

11. As we continue our preparations for Rio+20, we recall that it was at the Earth Summit in Rio twenty years ago that we explicitly recognized the particular needs of SIDS. We must therefore ensure that the concerns of SIDS are adequately addressed at Rio+20, and reflected in the Conference outcome document as part of the international community's renewed political commitment to the achievement of sustainable development.

International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Mr. Chairman,

12. During the last decade and recently, Disaster Risk is accumulating faster than economic growth, thus hampering development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The midterm review of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, revealed that its principles have guided progress towards resilience. However, risk management systems and decision-making at national and international level require further critical development, including disaster loss accounting and integrated risk modeling, to support development and investment planning.

13. The G77 and China reiterates its full support to the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, for its policy guidance and its coordination in this regard, and expresses its satisfaction of the results of the Mid-Term Review of the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015).

Protection of Global Climate for Present and Future Generations of Mankind

Mr. Chairman,

14. Climate change, one of the most serious global challenges of our times, threatens not only our development prospects but also the very existence of many societies; we believe that the international community, particularly the developed countries, given their historical responsibility, need to address it within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and with a second commitment period in its Kyoto Protocol (KP), the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change. This would only be achieved by adhering to the provisions and principles of the Convention, particularly on the basis of equity in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. We recall that an appropriate response to this challenge should address mainly the roots of the problem and not the consequences alone. We reiterate the need for enhanced and urgent actions in the provision of financial resources and investments to support actions on mitigation, adaptation and technology transfer to developing countries. In this regard, the G77 and China calls for the full operationalization of the Standing Committee of the Financial Mechanism of the Convention, the Technology Mechanism and the Adaptation Committee in the next Conference of the Parties to be held in Durban, South Africa.

15. We reiterate also that Parties included in Annex II of the Convention should intensify their efforts aimed at fulfilling their commitments on the provision of adequate, predictable, new and additional financial resources, enhancing technology development and transfer, meeting costs of adaptation, and strengthening capacity building in developing country Parties in accordance with articles 4, paragraphs 3, 4, and 5 of the Convention. The historical imbalance in financing to the detriment of adaptation must be redressed, and adaptation financing be treated in an equal manner as for mitigation.

Implementation of UNCCD

Mr. Chairman,

16. Desertification, land degradation and drought corrode the other pillars of sustainable development. The United Nations Convention to combat Desertification is an important tool to achieve food security, poverty eradication and sustainable development and to promote sustainable land use in dry lands. We therefore call for enhanced cooperation among the secretariats of the three Rio Conventions at the national level, as well as with the United Nations organizations and agencies while respecting their individual mandates.

17. The G77 and China underlines the relevance of the core issues of the Convention to the themes and the objective of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, and in this regard, calls for attention for the need to raise the profile of desertification, land degradation and drought among the priority issues to be addressed by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

Convention on Biological Diversity

Mr. Chairman,

18. On the issue of Biodiversity, the Group of 77 and China underlines the need to promote the prevention of continued biodiversity loss as the impact of unsustainable use of biodiversity threatens to increase poverty and undermine development. Therefore, the Group of 77 and China reiterates its calls for the urgent implementation of the three objectives of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, in a mutually supportive manner. All three pillars of this Convention are not only important to the development of developing countries, but also provide important tools in our fight against poverty.

19. The Group of 77 and China welcomes the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 as the overarching biodiversity framework as well as the ongoing efforts aimed at translating the Aichi Targets into national biodiversity strategies and action plans as the actions of concrete implementation in achieving Convention objectives, and the implementation of United Nations Decade on Biodiversity 2011-2020 as a unique opportunity to engage the people of the world in the battle to protect life on Earth.

20. The Group of 77 and China reaffirms the importance of the Multi-Year Plan of Action (MYPA) on South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity for Development to be adopted at the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in Hyderabad, India, in October 2012, as a major tool at the service of the biodiversity agenda, and reaffirms the importance of UNCSD meeting next year that is expected to strengthen and renewed political commitment on sustainable development as well as in biodiversity protection agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

21. The Group takes note of the report of the Governing Council of UNEP on its 26th regular session.

22. Additionally, we stress that concrete measures are needed to ensure the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Capacity Building and Technology Transfer. We are concerned by the slow pace of implementation of this important Plan which is indented to enhance the ability of developing countries to better address environmental challenges.

23. We reiterate the call on the United Nations to increase substantially its resource allocations to UNEP's regular budget to demonstrate, in more than words, our commitment to addressing the dire environmental challenges that we face.

Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy

24. The G77 and China is concerned that over three billion people in developing countries rely on traditional biomass for cooking and heating, that one and a half billion people are without electricity and that, even when energy services are available, millions of poor people are unable to pay for them

25. In this regard, the G77 and China emphasizes the need to improve access to reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy services and resources for sustainable development, taking into consideration the diversity of situations, national policies and specific needs of developing countries.

26. There is a need to intensify research and development in support of energy for sustainable development, which will require an increased commitment from developed countries to deploy financial and human resources for accelerating research efforts. We also understand that at the core of the issue of energy access lies the challenge of access to technology and in this regard immediate action should be taken.

27. Finally, Mr. Chairman, let me emphasize that the G77 and China calls developed countries to take further action to mobilize the provision of financial resources, technology transfer, capacity-building and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries, as set out in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.