



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. LUKE DAUNIVALU, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON THE TWENTIETH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD-20) (New York, 28 March 2013)**

Madame Chair,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. At the outset, I wish to thank you for convening this informal consultation on the twentieth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-20). I also acknowledge the zero draft you have proposed for an ECOSOC decision regarding the duration and provisional agenda of CSD-20.

Madame Chair,

3. The Group of 77 is very concerned about the sequencing of events as outlined in the proposed decision, where the one-day CSD-20 session is to be held immediately before the first High-level Political Forum (HLPF) with an agenda focusing on the cessation of the CSD. We recall here that the mandate from the Rio+20 Outcomes Document, as contained in paragraph 84, is to establish a universal, intergovernmental, high level political forum, building on the strengths, experiences, resources and inclusive participation modalities of the CSD that will subsequently replace the Commission. It is clear from this mandate that the HLPF must be established first in order to replace the CSD. In this regard, the Group of 77 reiterates that we must avoid the creation of an institutional gap or vacuum in the transition from the CSD to the HLPF. It is imperative that we respect this sequence and ensure that we maintain the space for substantive discussions of sustainable development issues.
4. Furthermore, the General Assembly resolution 67/203 on the implementation of Agenda 21, stipulated that the last session of the Commission should be procedural and should take place after the conclusion of the negotiations on the HLPF and immediately before its first meeting, in order to ensure a smooth institutional transition. The Group does not share the view the CSD-20 should necessarily be the last session.
5. As the closure of CSD is intricately linked to the creation of the HLPF, the Group of 77 is of the view that it is premature to cease the work of CSD when the form and function of the HLPF is still being molded.

Madame Chair,

6. The Group of 77 concurs with the need to reach a compromise as soon as possible on the timing, duration and agenda of CSD-20. In this regard, the Group proposes to defer the convening of CSD-20 to a later time rather than having the session in early May, if this compromise is not reached on the convening of the session. Following this course does not necessarily require a Resolution in the form that you have proposed but a simpler mode of capturing this decision would be sufficient.
7. The Group of 77 and China wishes to assure you, Madame Chair, of the Group's commitment to

engage constructively in the 20th session of CSD.

Thank you.

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