



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MINISTER CLAUDIO ROSSELL, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE THEMATIC DEBATE CONVENED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON "WATER, SANITATION AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY IN THE POST 2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA" (New York, 18 February 2014)

Mister Chair,

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

At the outset, let me thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this thematic debate on one of the most important natural resources in the world. Also, I want to sincerely welcome the presence in this room of such a panel of experts and authorities in the fields of water, sanitation and energy; I thank you all for the information, the experiences and the insights you have shared with us.

Mr. Chair,

Last December, the General Assembly adopted without a vote Resolution A/RES/68/157, entitled "The human right to safe drinking water and sanitation", that reaffirmed the recognition of the right to safe drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights; and recalled that the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation is derived from the right to an adequate standard of living and is inextricably related to the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, as well as to the right to life and human dignity; but failed in recognizing in that text that the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation entitles everyone, without discrimination, to have access to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic use and to have physical and affordable access to sanitation, in all spheres of life, that is safe, hygienic, secure and acceptable, and that provides privacy and ensures dignity, as stated by the Human Rights Council.

Mr. Chair,

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

Although sustainable management of water is now high on the global and national policy agendas, the Group of 77 and China notes with great concern that despite declared commitments and many efforts to achieve Target 10 of Goal 7 of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to halve the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation by 2015, about 2.5 billion people still live without improved sanitation, and over 800 million people do not have access to improved water sources, and many more remain without safe and sustainable water supply. To accelerate efforts to achieve MDG 7, there is an urgent need to clearly identify, enhance and benefit from the link between policy, decision-making, science and practice in order to transcend the gap between rhetoric and the achievement of our desired development

goals in a meaningful manner.

Mismanagement of water resources has severe economic consequences. Without sustainable water management, the ability of the water system to meet the critical needs of people and business will be challenged. In an era of sustainable water management, cities should be innovative in providing access to basic sanitation and in devising effective systems for collection, treatment and re-use of urban wastewater to promote wastewater management. An effective wastewater management system or water rehabilitation program could make water efficiency practices sustainable.

Water is vital to economic development. Most economic activities require water; therefore, to achieve broad-based sustainable economic growth, cooperation is required to promote more efficient and sustainable use of water resources. Better policies, increased means of implementation, financing, investment and greater participation by stakeholders can contribute to addressing these issues. In this regard, Official Development Assistance (ODA) will still play an important role in the Post-2015 Development Agenda, especially in countries where basic infrastructure for water and sanitation services is not yet in place. Capacity building and technology facilitation could also provide valuable support for improving water management in developing countries.

The International Year of Water Cooperation 2013, declared by Resolution 65/154, provided a platform for increasing awareness, advancement and promotion of water cooperation at different levels, as well as for strengthening dialogue on the search for and establishment of mutually advantageous and efficient water cooperation.

The water challenge goes beyond access to water, sanitation and hygiene. The vital importance of water to sustain habitat and the survival of species and human existence was also acknowledged in the Muscat Declaration on Water, adopted by the Group of 77 and China in 2009 at its First Ministerial Forum on Water. Therefore, the Group holds the view that improving and promoting access to safe drinking water and sanitation, irrigation and hydro-energy production could lead to progress in the eradication of poverty and food insecurity, in accordance with the MDGs and Integrated Water Resources Management.

Mr. Chair,

Regarding energy, the Group of 77 and China acknowledges that energy is an important element to sustainable development, and that no country has developed without access to reliable and affordable energy. As in previous occasions, we express concern that in this modern age, nearly one out of five people still has no access to electricity and that nearly 3 billion people use biomass or animal waste to cook their meals or heat their homes. The urgency to act cannot be overemphasized.

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.

Let me recall that the Group of 77 and China urges countries, particularly developed countries, to refrain from excessive and wasteful consumption of energy. As Member States agreed in the Rio+20 Conference, developed countries are expected to take the lead in adopting sustainable

patterns of consumption and production; their leadership will be crucial on both issues of water and energy, and will work in tandem with their official support for the implementation of energy and water SDGs in developing countries. We also urge effective measures, both at the national and international levels, to address national energy deficits. Improved institutional and system capacities of developing countries, particularly LDCs and energy-poor countries, are crucial to enable their access to and benefits from financing, technology, knowledge and partnerships in the field of energy.

The United Nations system plays an important role in addressing these issues 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.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.