



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. DR. ABDALMAHMOOD ABDALHALEEM MOHAMAD, AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE 53RD SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (New York, 2 March 2009)

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates.

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I wish to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and your entire bureau for the continued stewardship of the Commission on the Status of Women at its 53rd session. Looking forward to constructive and fruitful session in the next two weeks, I assure you, on behalf of the Group, of our full support and cooperation to the bureau and other members of the Commission.
2. At the outset, the Group of 77 and China would like to express its appreciation to the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women for its ongoing work in coordinating the system-wide implementation of gender mainstreaming into the United Nations. We would also like to commend the role of UNIFEM and the Division for the Advancement of Women in providing guidance and support to the Commission on the Status of Women for follow-up on the critical areas identified by Beijing Platform for Action.
3. The Group of 77 and China also commend the vital role played by the International Research and Training Institute for Women (INSTRAW) and its contribution to research and training in the advancement of women and in the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women. In this regard and in order for the Institute to continue its efforts and activities, the Group strongly urges the Secretary-General to speed up, as a matter of priority, the process of appointing the Executive Director of the Institute, position that it has been vacant for almost a year.
3. We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report submitted under the priority theme of this 53rd session "The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS"
4. In this regard, various conferences and summits have already addressed this issue, highlighting the need for equal partnership between women and men in family and community life and society and to ensure, through legislation, incentives and encouragement opportunities for women and men the promotion of equal sharing of responsibilities in all aspects.
5. The World Summit for Social Development addressed the need for equal partnership between women and men in family and community life and society, and shared responsibility of women and men in the care of children and older family members.
6. The 1995 Beijing Declaration emphasized that the equal sharing of responsibilities and a harmonious partnership between women and men were critical to their well-being and that of their families.
7. The Beijing Platform for Action noted that a more equal sharing of responsibilities between

women and men enhances the opportunities of women and girls to shape and design public policy, practice and expenditure so that their interests maybe recognized and addressed.

8. The current economic and financial crises are threatening to reverse the already modest progress towards the Internationally Agreed Development Goals including the Millennium Development Goals. Unemployment, poverty and hunger are turning out to be worse than even the most pessimistic predictions. Women and girls will be among the most affected, with already low participation rate in the structure labor market and gender-based discrimination. Therefore, it is necessary to include a gender perspective in possible future Plans aiming to overcome these crises.

9. This session of the Commission allows us to examine more closely the challenges related to the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS. By collectively reviewing efforts in this area and sharing best practices, the Commission could make an important contribution to facilitate the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men.

10. The Beijing Platform for Action called for strengthened national capacity to create and improve gender-sensitive policies and programmes on HIV/AIDS including the provision of resources and facilities to women who find themselves the principal care-givers or economic support for those infected with HIV/AIDS.

11. Inequality in the public arena can often start with gender inequality and practices and unequal power relations between women and men within the family. The unequal division of labor and responsibilities within households based on unequal power relations also limits women potential to find the time and develop the skills required for participation in decision making in wider public forums.

12. The many challenges faced by women and girls in caregiving in ordinary circumstances are significantly increased in families affected by HIV/AIDS, particularly in relation to resources and support provided, the lack of involvement of men, and the impact on the empowerment of girls.

In conclusion,

13. The G77 and China is of the view that all countries should take concrete measures to address these challenges at the national level by facilitating the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS. At the same time, there is a need to enhance international cooperation and global partnership to assist countries in achieving this goal. For the effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, and in that context, we urge developed countries that have not done so to make concrete efforts towards the target 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) as ODA to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of GNP of developed countries to least developed countries. They must commit, inter alia, to debt relief and the opening of markets to give opportunities particularly to women entrepreneurs.

Delivering on these commitments will enhance the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and meet the MDGs and challenges of achieving equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.