

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ARIZAL EFFENDI, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BEFORE THE SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF THE ECOSOC ON ITEM 6 OF THE GENERAL SEGMENT: "INTEGRATED AND COORDINATED IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP OF MAJOR UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCES AND SUMMITS"

New York, July 27, 1998

Mr. President,

It is indeed my privilege, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China to address a few brief remarks on item 6: integrated and coordinated implementation and follow-up of major United Nations Conferences and summits. We regard this issue as of critical importance for ensuring full implementation of conference outcomes that could help propelling development and eradication of poverty. Indeed, it is increasingly recognized that the continuum of major conferences and summits of the 1990s represent the major multilateral response and corrective to the unpredictability and uncertainties of globalization. The Group of 77 and China therefore welcome the comprehensive report E/1998/19 by the Secretary-General on the progress achieved by the United Nations system in this regard at the intergovernmental, interagency and country levels.

The Group recognizes that the Council's main contribution has been in reviewing cross-cutting themes derived from the major conferences. We also see poverty eradication and the promotion of the well-being of people everywhere as an overriding objective of the Council's efforts to ensure an integrated and coordinated follow-up. In lieu of its coordinating role it is important that the Council strikes a balance between the specificity of conference outcomes and the need to address cross-cutting issues.

The coordination and management role of the ECOSOC should take place at all 3 main levels, intergovernmental, regional and national. It is our challenge therefore in this substantive session to ensure that the United Nations system provides adequate integrated support to governments to enable them to effectively translate the internationally agreed goals and objectives into a consistent set of national strategies and policies.

As to the functional commissions, while they possess great expertise in their own particular areas of competence, it is the Council that is best suited to overseeing the system-wide implementation of conference follow-up. The Council also represents the best source for identifying and examining cross-cutting issues. In this regard, it is important that the functional commissions ensure that their activities and outcomes are widely disseminated. For this purpose, we fully agree that the ECOSOC should initiate a dialogue process with all the bureaus of the Functional Commissions, particularly to coordinate the preparations for the forthcoming five year reviews. This would greatly help to ensure that all relevant information available in the system is fully utilized in the preparatory processes.

On the issue of regional follow-up, there is a need for further improvement. First, there should be a clear division between the functions of the Regional Commission and those of the Functional Commissions on the implementation of the operational activities. There should also be better communication between the Regional Commissions and the Council such as the Executive Secretary of the regional commissions addressing the Council as they did in several occasions this year.

The Council should also exercise its guidance role to the Funds and Programmes so that their activities in assisting national governments in promoting sustainable human development would also take into account the need for a coordination and integrated follow-up of the United Nations conferences. For this purpose it is

important that the reports of the executive boards of the Funds and Programmes are made widely available. As to the Executive Boards themselves, their respective guidance roles and that of the Council should be clarified. Moreover, to further enhance coordination, the reports of both the Council and Executive Boards should be much more analytical.

Turning now to the important issue of inter-agency coordination at the regional and national levels, the Council should continue to promote regular interaction between the inter-agency committees. We note from the Report that based on the intensive process of inter-agency consultations and country reviews over the past two years, inter-agency task forces of the ACC have produced a wide variety of outputs over a broad range of policy issues. In this context and with the completion of the work of the task forces, the responsibility of the inter-agency coordinated follow-up to conferences rests with the ACC and its standing bodies.

The task forces have carried out an important task in translating the conferences goals to the field level. Now, it is important that the machinery of the ACC for such follow-up is put to full use. ECOSOC guidance is important to ensure that these successor arrangements are effectively in place. United Nations networks and their use of task managers are also important. In this context we agree with the Council President's Summary of the meeting on 13 - 15 May 1998 that the interaction of the Council and the ACC should be further improved. In addition, interaction and coordination between the Council and the Specialized Agencies as well as the Bretton Woods Institutions are major objectives that should be seriously pursued. In this regard the Council should seek to build bridges and institutional ties with the governing bodies of the Agencies.

At the country level, we believe that the national governments are mainly responsible for implementing the conference follow-up. However, the UN system could also serve as important tools in assisting the countries to fulfill this enormous implementation task. In this respect, the Resident Coordinator should facilitate a genuine dialogue between the relevant parties, including the national governments, civil society and other donors. It is also part of the Resident Coordinator's role to promote initiatives in support of national capacity building for conference implementation. While we fully acknowledge the role of the Resident Coordinator to ensure that the outcomes of the various conferences be implemented in a coordinated manner, it is also important to bear in mind that each of the conference outcome has its own integrity and identity.

Furthermore, while we acknowledge that the role of the Resident Coordinator is indispensable in integrating the United Nations system's activities in supporting national efforts to follow-up the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences, it would also be interesting for developing countries to be able to learn the best practices of the conferences implementation in those countries not covered by the Resident Coordinator system. For this purpose, dissemination of best practices, experiences and challenges shall be very useful.

It is difficult to deny that beside coordination, the availability of financial resources constitutes important factor for the implementation of the agreed goals of the United Nations conferences and summits. It is now well recognized that the effective implementation of the conference's outcomes requires considerable levels of such resources. Much of the available resources come from the public and private sectors at the national levels. But there is still an acute need for substantial new and additional funding if the implementation of the outcomes is to be moved forward. We are aware that the Group is always pleading its case for additional funding. But the fact remains that if the provision of adequate resources is left wanting, all other components of the strategies can be totally undermined. This situation is particularly aggravated by the ongoing decline in ODA which the greater majority of developing countries depend upon. We therefore agree with the Report that ODA should constitute the main source of external funding for the developing countries and, in particular the LDCs and the Council must continue to address the question of declining resources for conference implementation. Moreover, in light of declining ODA it is crucial that the ECOSOC links financing to the goals and targets of the Conference.

In conclusion Mr. President, we believe that despite the progress made in ECOSOC coordinating role, it is

still a long way from realizing its full potential in system-wide coordination of the United Nations activities with economic and social fields. Therefore, it is essential to ensure that our exercise in this very critical and important subject should also aimed at strengthening the role of ECOSOC in coordination and policy guidance to this whole arrays of the United Nations system in economic and social fields.

Thank you Mr. President.

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