



THE GROUP OF 77

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Statement by H.E. Mr. Mahmoud Talaat,

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the Republic of Kenya, and the Permanent Representative to UNEP, UN-HABITAT, and UNON on the occasion of assuming the chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China at Nairobi for the year 2015

(UNON, Nairobi, 2 February 2015)

Excellency Mr. Ittiporn Boonpracong, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand,

Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives,

Dear colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me start by extending my sincere appreciation to the members of the G77 and China in Nairobi for entrusting Egypt to assume the chairmanship of the Group for the year 2015.

I would also like to take this opportunity to pay a special tribute to H.E. **Ittiporn Boonpracong**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Thailand, and his team for their leadership, dedication and outstanding performance as Chair of G77 and China during year 2014. Their contribution had been significant and I certainly hope that their support to the Group will continue.

That said, we shall spare no effort to consolidate on the achievements of Thailand, particularly, the endeavor to convene the 46th meeting of the G77 and China Chapters in 2015 in Nairobi. We share the views expressed by Ambassador Boonpracong, that it is pertinent to hold this meeting for the first time in a developing country.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to emphasize Egypt's firm belief in the significance of the Group of 77 and China, as the largest intergovernmental group which provides an opportunity for countries of the South to articulate and promote their collective interests and enhance their joint negotiating capacity on all major international issues within the United Nations system. The G77 also plays a critical role in promoting South-South Cooperation for development as well as strengthening economic and technical cooperation among developing countries.

In this regard, we welcome the Santa Cruz Declaration adopted by our leaders last year. Besides incorporating the views of the Group on a wide range of global economic and social matters, the Declaration reminded us that the initial rationale for the creation of the Group 51 years ago remains valid today, in order to "strengthen and expand the struggles of the G77 and China in all fields towards greater achievements and for the betterment of the lives of our people."

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is no doubt that Sustainable Development is currently at the forefront of multi-lateral diplomacy. Two weeks ago the 1st round of intergovernmental negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda was concluded, last week the 1st drafting session on outcome document for the 3rd International Conference on Financing for Development was also concluded.

In this context I would like to re-iterate the Group's position that Sustainable Development must aim to eradicate poverty and fight inequality and strive to safeguard the well-being of generations to come.

It is important to continue to recognize "poverty eradication" as the overarching objective for the realization of sustainable development. We also stress the importance of integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development, social, economic and environmental, in a balanced manner. In addition, the significance of the Rio principles, in particular the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities CBDR, must be highlighted.

It is also important to note in this regard that although South-South Cooperation is an important tool for development endeavors, it remains complementary to and not a replacement for the North-South Cooperation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you are all aware, a very challenging year lies ahead of us. 2015 is the year in which the United Nations celebrates its 70th Anniversary and it is also the concluding year of international efforts towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Furthermore, member states of the United Nations will be working to agree on the means of implementation for the post 2015 development agenda in July 2015, to conclude the intergovernmental negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda by September 2015 and finally achieve agreement during the next Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris.

As it has always been the position of the G77 and China, the intergovernmental nature of the processes, which were open and transparent, need to be fully preserved. In addition, internationally agreed outcomes and principles should not be re-opened or re-negotiated.

In order to meet our development aspirations, the Means of Implementation, including capacity development, technology transfer and financial resources remain among our top priorities. In addition, a strengthened global partnership for development, remain critically important.

In the same vein, the 10-Years Framework Programme for Sustainable Consumption and Production must be inclusively promoted.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to highlight only a few of the significant work that lies ahead of us in Nairobi this year:

1. The first and the most immediate is the 25th Session of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat and the Second Prep. COM. on the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) that shall take place next April in Nairobi.

As a Chair of the Group, Nairobi Chapter, Egypt will coordinate closely with the group members to ensure that the positions of the group are harnessed and well represented in the two meetings. It is our target as a group to ensure that UN-Habitat remains functioning, with adequate resources that enables the fulfillment of the mandate of the Programme to serve the interests of the developing countries.

2. Following the 25th Governing Council of Habitat, we shall turn our attention to the Preparations for the Second Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP UNEA-2. This includes the follow up on the implementation of the decisions taken by UNEA-1, the discussion on the Programme of Work & Budget, as well as the preparations for the Medium Term Strategy (MTS 2018-2021).

In this context, I stress the need for the Group to stand strong to ensure the finalizing of the incomplete business of the last session of UNEA, as well as the full Implementation of Paragraph 88, of the Rio+20 Outcome document, in its entirety. High priority should be given, inter alia, to the Consolidation of UNEP Headquarter functions in Nairobi, and revitalizing the Bali strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-Building.

In that context, Egypt was privileged to be chosen to coordinate the positions of the Group in the previous session of UNEA, on the amendment of the Rules of Procedures of UNEA and the adoption of the Stakeholders Engagement Policy and we will remain committed to promote the positions of the Group on this issue as well as all other matters of common interest during the preparations for UNEA-2.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,
Excellencies, and dear colleagues,**

In conclusion, let me emphasize once more my belief that, our Group remains relevant, specifically at this important point in time when the international community is undergoing discussions on the world's development aspirations beyond year 2015.

It is clearly evident that the G77 is most powerful when it is most united, as the Chair of the Group, I would like to reaffirm my commitment, determination and dedication to coordinate the views and interests of all member countries to achieve the common benefit of the G77 and China.

Towards this end, Egypt relies on the support of all members of the group as we work together for the best interest of the developing countries.

Thank you very much.