

Statement by Ambassador Kamyab (Islamic Republic of Iran), on behalf of the G77 & China, on agenda items 98(b), (c), (d), (e) and (g) of the Second Committee of the General Assembly

New York, 30 October 2001

Mr. Chairman,

I have the pleasure to express the views of the Group of 77&China on agenda items 98(b), (c), (d), (e) and (g). Let me quickly begin my statement by turning to the first agenda item 98(b); the Implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR). I would like to thank the Secretary General for his very informative report. We welcome the establishment of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction. As specified in General Assembly resolution 54/219, we have to review the institutional arrangements established for ensuring the continued effective implementation of ISDR. But before coming to that point, let me comment on Section II of the SG report. As indicated in the report, both developed and developing countries are vulnerable to disasters given the fact that disasters do not know boundaries. However, the vulnerability of developing countries to these hazards is much more than the developed countries due to lack of early warning systems and emergency response, lack of equipment and trained personnel and, in general, insufficiency of technical, technological, institutional and trained human resources. That is the root cause of the great loss of this group of countries caused by natural disasters. We concur ourselves with para 6 of the report which touches upon some of the important cause of the countries vulnerability to disasters. In this context, while we agree generally with the recommendations of the SG on the substantive and institutional issues presented in the report, we strongly believe that in the activities that are undertaken by the Task Force and the Strategy secretariat, Particular attention needs to be given to the situation of developing countries and their respective regions. For the sake of effectiveness and to avoid duplication, it is quite necessary for the Task Force and the secretariat to enhance synergy and coordination with relevant organizations and institutions.

Turning to the report of the SG on international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Nino phenomenon, we welcome signing the Memorandum of Cooperation between Ecuador and WMO which contributes to initiation of the activities of the International Research Center on El Nino in Guayaquil-Ecuador. We believe strengthening this Center would help to have a better scientific understanding of the El Nino phenomena. We also welcome the result of the meeting of the Working Group on Climate and Disasters (WGCD) in which it establish two priority for its work. In our view, reviewing sectoral monitoring and warning systems (within and outside UN) as well as supporting international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Nino phenomenon are two complementary steps, which improve the situation. Referring to paragraph 18 of the report, we believe the experience and lesson learned from the implementation of the project (Reducing the impact of environmental emergencies through early warning and preparedness) should be available to countries. In addition, the continuation of such projects in other developing countries is encouraged. Regarding the recommendations of the SG in the report, we can go along with all of them and stressing, in particular, paragraph 35 that calls for ensuring functional synergies between various working groups dealing with these matters.

Regarding item 98©the Convention on Biological Diversity and Bio-safety Protocol, the Group would like to note the results of the Second Meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol in Nairobi from 1to 5 October.2001. We consider the deliberations on the issues like compensation, decision-making procedure and capacity building very useful. With regard to the liability and redress regime, we believe that this regime should address the liability and redress resulting from transboundary movement of LMOs. We emphasize also on the importance of information sharing on the transboundary movement of LMOs. We look forward to seeing the CBD/COP-6 in the Netherlands (April 2002) to decide on the

outstanding issues such as long-term strategic action plan for the implementation of CBD. Strengthening the ways and means of implementation of the convention, which is quite necessary for realization of the objectives of the convention, should also be decided upon.

On item 98(d); the Convention to Combat Desertification, we had the Fifth Conference of the Parties of the CCD held recently in Geneva. The Group of 77&China is satisfied with the decision of the Conference on the establishment of the Committee for Reviewing the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC). In fact, lack of having such body in the convention was hindering the implementation of CCD from its inception. We greatly welcome the establishment of CRIC and express our readiness for active participation in its meeting. We are also happy with the agreement on the establishment of the Expert Group on Desertification and Droughts within the Committee on Science and Technology (CST). We believe this could pave the way for more effective work of the CST. On the question of the budget, the agreement on increasing the budget in itself is considered a step forward. However, we believe the approved budget for the next biennium is still far from being adequate to meet the actual needs of the convention. We strongly believe that the implementation of the convention is heavily relied on having a permanent financial mechanism. Bearing that in mind, we welcome the decision of the GEF Council and encourage GEF to take the next steps on designation of land degradation as its new focal area of work. We feel that we are on the right track.

Referring to agenda item 98(e) on Further Implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the Group would like to thank Secretary General for his report in which it is explained the activities that has been done in response to the requirements of Res.55/202. While there were some progresses in the implementation of the Program of Action for the Sustainable Development of the Small Islands Developing States of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Islands Developing States, it seems that there is a need for further work in different areas including information and communication technology as well as globalization and trade liberalization.

Turning to agenda item 98(g) on World Solar Program, the Group would like to thank Secretary General for his report. Actually, it is our desire that obstacles and constraints which hinder the promotion of new and renewable sources of energy as well as the ways for their resolution to be addressed. In this regard, we welcome the initiation of this work and stress on its importance. We welcome recommendations made by CSD-9 on solar energy, in particular, the role of the governments in developing energy services in remote and rural areas as well as their role in removing barriers in the implementation of policies for renewable energy development in those areas. In our view, countries should take more advantage of the World Solar Program through its use as one of the means for enhancing the application of solar energy and technology.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.