



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA, BY ANDRIES OOSTHUIZEN, FIRST SECRETARY, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 55: GLOBALISATION AND INTERDEPENDENCE, IN THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 19 October 2006)

Madame Chairperson,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China in addressing Agenda Item 55. In the interest of time I will limit my comments to item 55 (a): "Globalisation and Interdependence", and item 55(b) International Migration and Development.

Globalisation and Interdependence

Madame Chairperson,

We are all aware that the world is becoming increasingly more globalized. We also recognize that globalization and interdependence have opened new opportunities for the growth of the world economy and development, and that globalization could offer new perspectives for the integration of developing countries into the world economy. It could also improve the overall performance of the economies of developing countries by opening up market opportunities for their exports, by promoting the transfer of information, skills and technology and by increasing the financial resources available for investment in physical and intangible assets.

However, it should also be acknowledged that globalization has brought new challenges for growth and sustainable development and that developing countries have been facing special difficulties in responding to them. Some countries have successfully adapted to these changes and benefited from globalization, but that many others, especially the least developed countries, have remained marginalized in the globalizing world economy and as stated in the Millennium Declaration, the benefits are very unevenly shared, while the costs are unevenly distributed.

Madame Chair,

With regard to the issues highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General, A/61/287, the report rightly highlights the multidimensional aspects of science and technology and its crucial role in achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the millennium development goals.

It would also be recalled that during the World Summit on the Information Society held in Geneva and Tunisia respectively, the international community emphasised the importance of building a people-centred, inclusive and development orientated information society where every one could create, access, utilise and share information and knowledge, which could ultimately enable individuals and communities to achieve their full potential and to ultimately better their quality of life.

Unfortunately for many in the developing world, difficult challenges remains in improving the creation and use of scientific knowledge, skills and technology to meet critical economic, social and development needs. The SG mentions some of these challenges, including a lack of infrastructure and scarcities of resources, but we should also reiterate that the "international technology gap" is one of the main causes of the rapidly expanding socio-economic gap between rich and poor nations, which constitutes a major challenge for developing countries in their efforts to achieve the development goals.

Madame Chair,

In order to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, special efforts must be made to build and sustain scientific capacity both at the individual and institutional level, through increased allocation of appropriate resources, diffusion of technology, and the building of partnerships which are necessary to bring science based solutions to critical economic and social needs of developing countries.

The Secretary-General, in his report, made a number of suggestions, both at the national and international level, to address these challenges, of which South-South cooperation remains an important element. In this regard it is important to note that developing countries take their responsibility seriously as reflected in decisions taken during the South-South Summit held in Doha during 2005, in which particular attention was given to the role of Science & Technology. As a practical outcome of his Summit, Ministers of Science & Technology of the G77 & China recently

approved in Brazil a decision to transform the Third World Network of Scientific Organisations (TWINSO) into the Consortium of Science, Technology and Innovation for the South (COSTIS). This decision would contribute to the promotion and development of knowledge and technology in the South through the exchange of expertise, which is critical to build a scientific and technological base for the south in addressing its own needs and challenges.

The Secretary-General also correctly identifies the role that the United Nations should play in dissemination useful scientific information to developing countries. Reference is made to the importance of UNCTAD, UNESCO, the various regional commissions and also the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD). The importance of the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation should also not be forgotten. The G77 & China is particularly satisfied that agreement was reached at ECOSOC in 2006 to increase the number of seats in the CSTD which would allow an increase of the voice and participation of developing countries in matters of science and technology.

Madame Chair, we as Member States need to ensure that we follow-up on our commitment made in the 2005 World Summit that the United Nations would play an increasingly active role in ensuring that developing countries are able to achieve their goals in the area of innovation, science and technology.

Migration and Development

With regard to the issue of migration and development, the G77 and China is very pleased to note that the recently held High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development was well attended and indeed pursued at a high level, as it should have been. This clearly demonstrates the importance of the issue and the continued need to focus on the issue of migration, within the context of its impact on development.

Through out the various discussions that we already conducted on this issue during the past year, we all recognised that migration is a complex issue and that there is a need to approach it in a holistic and comprehensive manner. The Secretary-General in his report A/60/871 indicated that Member States share a core set of migration-related goals which could form the basis of a common understanding. Amongst other, the SG refers to the importance of enhancing the development impact of international migration, prevention of the exploitation of migrants, especially those in vulnerable situations and ensuring that migration occurs through legal channels. He further indicated that to mitigate the negative impacts of migration and to enhance the positive aspects thereof, a sustained international dialogue should be established to share experiences and to develop effective modalities for international cooperation. Such a process, led by, and open to all member states, is an important element and welcomed by the G77 & China. We believe that conducting this dialogue within the framework of the United Nations will also contribute to the strengthening of the multilateral system.

In this regard, the G77 & China has often emphasized the need to build partnerships and to ensure coordinated action to develop the necessary capacities of developing countries in addressing these challenges.

Madame Chair,

The effects of international migration on economic and social development highlight the complex relationship between underdevelopment, poverty, social exclusion and migration. In pursuing our goals to meet the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), we must intensify our focus in addressing foreign direct investment, trade, foreign aid, and debt relief so as to reverse underdevelopment, poverty and skills flight. Meeting the MDGs is central to eradicating poverty and unemployment, placing developing countries on a path of sustainable development, reducing recourse to forced and irregular migration and thereby facilitating migration out of choice.

The issue of remittances within the context of migration and development remains an important element and it is worth to again highlight the imperative of promoting conditions for cheaper, faster and safer transfer of remittances and that remittances should not be considered as a substitute for investment, trade, foreign aid and debt relief.

The need to further consider and analyze how the migration of highly skilled persons and those with advanced education impacts on the development efforts of developing countries also remains.

I thank you.

