



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. SULTAN AL-MAHMOUD, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE STATE OF QATAR TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 87, "GLOBALIZATION AND INTERDEPENDENCE": (A) GLOBALIZATION AND INTERDEPENDENCE; B) INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT; (C) PREVENTING AND COMBATING CORRUPT PRACTICES; AND TRANSFER OF FUNDS OF ILLICIT ORIGIN AND RETURNING SUCH ASSETS TO THE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN; AND (D) CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT, AT THE SECOND COMMITTEE, FIFTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 29 October 2004)

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for allowing me to speak on behalf of the group of 77 and China on the agenda items 87(a), 87(b), 87(c) and 87(d).

Mr. Chairman,

On agenda item 87(a) "Globalization and Inter-dependence", we thank the Secretary-General for his report A/59/312 on the agenda item "Globalization and Inter-dependence" under consideration today.

Mr. Chairman,

It was hoped that the era of globalization would bring about sustained and equitable growth of all nations, as a natural consequence of free movement of capital, goods and services. The impact of the globalization process has, however, been uneven. As the Secretary-General had observed in the report he presented to the Millennium Summit more than three years ago, the benefits of globalization are not shared equitably whereas its costs are being borne disproportionately by the poor. Little progress has been made in reducing disparities in income and wealth between nations. The challenge before the international community is to maximize the benefits of globalization while minimizing its negative impacts.

The persistence of inequitable sharing of the benefits of globalization and the ever-widening gap between developed and developing countries, as well as the deteriorating socio-economic situation in developing countries with their adverse effect on the poor highlights the need for institutional and policy changes at all levels.

We need to examine the challenges faced by the developing countries. One of the challenges is the growing imbalances in the global economy and the asymmetries in the global trade. Foreign direct investment which brings with it not only access to financial resources but also technology has decreased drastically in the recent years. A large number of developing countries which are experiencing low growth rates have been engaging in policy reforms. These reforms can only be sustained through increased external assistance. It is imperative to create an enabling international economic environment through concerted action on trade, debt and development assistance for the greater integration of developing countries into the world economy.

It is also important to address the issue of voice and participation of developing countries in the international economic decision-making and norm-setting processes with a sense of urgency as recognized at UNCTAND XI. It is particularly important to developing countries that all countries take into account the need for appropriate balance between national policy and international discipline and commitments.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China would like to emphasize that the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits have already created a significant shared vision towards globalization and we need to build upon it with collective political resolve. In this context, the Group of 77 and China believes that putting the Millennium Development goals and other development targets at the centre of economic institutions and policies is a critical way to "confront the centrifugal forces" unleashed by globalization.

Globalization with a human face would be an effective tool for the developing countries in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. Chairman,

On agenda item 87(b) "International Migration and Development", the Group of 77 and China would like to welcome

the report of the Secretary-General A/59/325 on "international migration and development" which provides a summary of the recent activities carried out within the United Nations system, as well as cooperation between the United Nations and relevant intergovernmental organization on this issue.

Mr. Chairman,

The widening economic and social gap between and among many countries, especially between developed and developing countries, the marginalization of some countries in the global economy, due in part to the uneven impact of the benefits of globalization and liberalization, and the absence of peace and security have contributed to large flows of people between and among countries.

While migration has been a permanent part of national and international developments throughout history, international migration has been a growing complex phenomenon, and today has become a key issue of international interest and concern. Countries of origin, transit and destination are attaching increasing importance to this phenomenon and its contribution to development.

The International Conference on Population and Development has identified international migration as one of the major issues that require attention due to its deep-rooted effects on population trends, development, and the very livelihood of millions of people around the world.

It is recognized that international migration has significant potential for improving development in developing countries. In this context, remittance flows represent the second largest source of external funding for developing countries-second only to foreign aid.

Individual and private earnings remittances by migrant workers contribute significantly to development and poverty reduction in a large number of developing countries; therefore it is important that Member States and private organizations take measures to reduce the cost of remittance transfers. Governments should also seek ways to set up programs and develop incentives to promote and provide opportunities for possible productive investment of those remittances. While migration can fill labor market gaps in countries of destination, it also leads to the loss of highly skilled migrant workers from countries of origin. International migration should be well managed, in order to have positive and beneficial outcomes. To better analyze this phenomenon, focus must be centered on the ways of maximizing the potential development impact of international migratory flows on countries of origin and destination.

Mr. Chairman,

At the Millennium Summit, world leaders agreed to take measures to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of migrants, migrant workers and their families, to eliminate the increasing acts of racism and xenophobia in many societies, and to promote greater harmony and tolerance in all societies.

With this approach we have to keep in mind that the issue of migration and development needs to be addressed on the basis of common responsibility of all nations.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me add that the Group of 77 and China appreciates the efforts taking place within the United Nations system to address this important issue, and in this regard, we welcome with appreciation the convening of the High Level Dialogue on international migration and development that will take place during the General Assembly at its sixty first session in 2006. We believe that this will be an important opportunity to promote an understanding of the phenomenon, address all the issues concerning international migration and development and share experiences and exchange information concerning migration flows.

The international community needs an overall global approach to this complex issue. Addressing migration effectively at the global level requires coherent, comprehensive and consistent policies to effectively manage it. The G77 hopes that there will be political will to strengthen international cooperation on issues related to migration and to ensure that international migration is effectively managed for the benefit of all.

Mr. Chairman,

On agenda item 87(c) "Preventing and Combating corrupt practices and transfer of funds of illicit origin and returning such assets to the countries of origin", we welcome the report of the Secretary-General, A/59/203.

The G77 and China strongly believes that corruption is a serious barrier to the effective resource mobilization and

allocation, and diverts resources away from activities that are vital for hunger and poverty eradication and economic development. Corrupt practices endanger the stability and security of societies, undermine the values of democracy and civil ethics and jeopardize sustainable and political development, in particular when an inadequate national and international response leads to impunity.

The prevention of corrupt practices is an important aspect to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals. Equally important for economic development is the transfer of assets of illicit origin and the return of such assets to the countries of origin. All national legislations and international legal instruments need to be adequately regulated for prevention of corrupt practices and the repatriation of assets to the countries of origin.

The G77 strongly believes that the private sector, at both the national and international levels, including small and large companies and transnational corporations, also has an important role in preventing and combating corrupt practices. To this effect, we call on the private sector at all levels to remain fully engaged in the fight against corruption, and emphasize the need to take concrete actions within the United Nations system and through the participation of all relevant stakeholders to ensure corporate responsibility and accountability, as well as to fight corruption more effectively.

Mr. Chairman,

On agenda item 87(d) "Culture and development", I would like to thank the Secretary-General for providing a concise and informative note for discussion on the issue of culture and development.

Mr. Chairman,

The interlinkages between culture and development are multi-faceted. While the full extent of these interlinkages is yet to be explored, there is a growing consensus that strategies to achieve development goals have to be embedded in the cultural traditions of each society. This culture sensitive approach is likely to yield much better results than an approach that is based on one size fits all. The World Summit on Sustainable Development endorsed that the genuinely sustainable development must reconcile social, economic and human demands.

To pursue a culture sensitive approach to development, there is a need to better understand cultural diversity and how it impacts on the process of development. The pursuit of development also requires enhanced international cooperation, which in turn requires greater harmony among different cultures

Mr. Chairman,

We recognize that cultural heritage, beyond its aesthetic and economic value, has a profound meaning relating back to the memory of peoples, their multiple identities, and to its potential for creativity, cultural diversity and dialogue. It is a matter of concern that a large number of countries were and are being deprived of their cultural heritage either through plunder or illicit trade in such artifacts. There is also a need for protecting the heritage that is under threat, which mostly emanates from environmental factors.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group strongly believes that cultural diversity and dialogue have to play a significant role in the realization of MDGs. The Group will play its due role in promoting this dialogue, which we hope will build new bridges for achieving the long cherished goals of peace and prosperity.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.