



STATEMENT BY MR. XOLISA MABHONGO, MINISTER COUNSELLOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA, AT THE ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION OF ECOSOC (New York, 17 January 2005)

Mr. President,

Allow me, on behalf of the G77 and China to congratulate you and the Bureau on your election. We look forward to working closely with you during 2006. We wish to assure you of our commitment to contribute constructively to ensure a “more effective ECOSOC as a principal body for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and (for) recommendations on issues of economic and social development, as well as for (the) implementation of the international development goals agreed at the major UN conferences and summits, including the MDGs”, as agreed to during the recent World Summit.

Mr President,

Your Bureau, together with the full membership of ECOSOC, will be tasked during 2006 not only with addressing the various regular agenda items but, even more importantly, will have to steer the Council to undertake the follow-up to the decisions taken at the 2005 World Summit. It will take our collective will and agreement to ensure the successful implementation of these decisions of our Heads of State and Government.

In this regard, Mr President, you can count on the full support of the G77 and China and be assured that we will work constructively to realize a more revitalized and strengthened ECOSOC.

In conclusion, Mr. President, allow me also to take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Munir Akram, and the 2005 Bureau for the sterling work they did during the past year. We all know that last year was also a particularly challenging year, but under the wise council of Ambassador Akram and the Bureau we managed to achieve many things, which we could build on during this year. In particular we wish to highlight the contribution of ECOSOC to the preparations for the 2005 World Summit as well as the innovation of thematic discussions on topical issues, such as the Challenges of Food Security in Africa and the Avian Flu.

I thank you.