



**STATEMENT BY MR. ABDELLAH BENMELLOUK (MOROCCO), ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA, ON AGENDA ITEM 92: SECTORAL POLICY QUESTIONS: PREVENTING AND COMBATING CORRUPT PRACTICES AND TRANSFER OF FUNDS OF ILLICIT ORIGIN AND RETURNING SUCH ASSETS TO THE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN (New York, 13 October 2003)**

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Group of the 77 and China, we would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of funds of illicit origin and returning of such assets to the countries of origin.

The Group of 77 and China are concerned with the problems arising from corruption and transfer of funds and assets of illicit origin. Corruption represents a real threat to the stability and the well being of societies and to the economic and social development of each country.

Corruption is a phenomenon common to all countries, developed and developing as well. Its economic, social and political implications vary from country to country and from one region to another.

Needless to stress that Governments have the primary responsibility in combating and preventing corrupt practices and transfer of illicit funds. Admittedly, it is a complex phenomenon, which can be overcome only by the determination and strong political will of governments.

However the constant convergence of efforts at the national, regional, and international levels is essential. Governments have to act at the national and international level by enacting and applying laws and regulations aiming at preventing and combating corrupt practices.

Also, efforts by national authorities cannot succeed without the involvement and the participation of civil society, private sector and the economic actors.

Combating and preventing corrupt practices and transfer of illicit funds and returning such assets to the countries of origin also requires an effective and efficient co-operation at the international level. We would like to reaffirm in this respect the commitment of our Heads of State and Government at the International Conference on Financing for Development, to make of the fight against corruption a priority. Preventing and combating corruption and the transfer of illicit funds and repatriation these funds and assets are considered crucial to the mobilization of financial resources for development.

They also committed themselves to finalizing the negotiation of a convention on corruption, in all its aspects, including the question of returning of funds illicitly acquired to the countries of origin.

In this respect, we welcome the completion of work of the special Committee on negotiating a convention on corruption.

We are satisfied that the Ad Hoc Committee for the negotiation of a convention against corruption had further deepen the reflection on all aspects of corruption and transfer of funds and assets illicitly acquired and their returning to the countries of origin and reached agreement on clear and simple rules, applicable at both national and international levels.

We welcome the offer by the Government of Mexico to host the High Political Conference for the signature of this convention. We encourage all Member States to participate in this conference which represents an opportunity to discuss ways and means to promote this convention, in particular the strengthening of international co-operation for preventing and combating the phenomenon of corruption and transfer of funds of illicit origin and the returning of these assets to the countries of origin.

The international co-operation is fundamental to support efforts and measures taken at the national level. The responsibility in the matters remains divided between the Member States.

Thank you.

