



STATEMENT BY MR. MOHAMMED ARROUCHI, COUNSELLOR, ON BEHALF OF THE G 77 AND CHINA, ON AGENDA ITEM 94 d: "FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES" AT THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 20 October 2003)

Mr. Chairman,

Let me at the outset extend, on behalf of the G-77 and China, our sincere thanks to Mr. Anwarul Chowdhury, Under-Secretary-General, for his enlightening presentation of this item.

At the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) the international community reaffirmed its recognition of the specific constraints faced by Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and underscored the need for particular support in their efforts to advance sustainable development. This special group of developing countries is an important component of the Group of 77 and China, and we value and support their commitment to addressing their unique vulnerabilities and pursuing sustainable development.

At Johannesburg the international community also agreed to a full and comprehensive review of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA) and called on the General Assembly during its 57th session to consider convening an international meeting to undertake this review.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group welcomed the adoption of GA resolution 57/262 and the SIDS decision at CSD-11, which agreed to convene the international meeting in Mauritius from 30 August to 3 September 2004 and defined the preparatory process leading up to that meeting. We consider the international meeting an event of critical importance and we are confident that it will result in renewed political commitment and practical and pragmatic action to further implementation of the BPOA, particularly by the wider international community.

To date, preparatory meetings have been held in the three major regions of SIDS (the Caribbean, Pacific and AIMS regions). The Group looks forward to further support by the international community in the remaining preparatory activities, including the inter-regional meeting scheduled for the Bahamas, January 26-30, 2004, and the preparatory meeting at CSD-12 from April 14 to 16, 2004, and perhaps most importantly in the international meeting itself.

What has clearly emerged from the three regional meetings of SIDS is the continued resolve and commitment by SIDS to implement the actions and measures contained in the BPOA. However, support at the international level has been inconsistent and inadequate.

Mr. Chairman,

The reports of these regional meetings provide further evidence that since the adoption of the BPOA in 1994, SIDS have become even more vulnerable on all three pillars of sustainable

development.

" Their fragile environment has worsened as a result of climate change, sea level rise, climate variability, and their susceptibility to natural disasters and other global environmental phenomena.

" Their economic prospects have deteriorated with the decline in commodity prices, loss of traditional markets and declining levels of ODA and FDI.

" Their social cohesion is severely compromised with challenges such as transnational crime, illicit drugs and HIV/AIDS.

Taken together, these present a formidable set of hurdles to the sustainable development of SIDS.

Mr. Chairman,

The resolution to be considered at this session will be largely procedural in nature, however I wish to elaborate on some of the main points the Group is expecting from this process.

Firstly, as the Group has stated in the past we have no intention of renegotiating the Barbados Program of Action, which remains faithful to the core sustainable development aspirations of SIDS. We are however convinced that the approach to review its implementation must embrace new and emerging socio-economic issues recognized as critical obstacles to the sustainable development of SIDS.

Secondly, we wish to express our appreciation to the international donor community for the generous contributions made to the voluntary trust fund established by 57/262 for the purpose of assisting SIDS to participate fully and effectively in the international meeting and the preparatory process. We encourage and invite member states and organizations to continue to make contributions to this special fund.

Thirdly, the Group is hopeful that the Assembly will support the participation of developing countries in the international meeting through the provision of adequate resources.

Finally, we wish to reiterate the request made to the Secretary General as contained in 57/262, to strengthen the SIDS Unit in UNDESA to enable it to effectively assist in the preparations for the international meeting and also in the implementation of the outcomes of the Mauritius meeting.

Let me conclude by restating that sustainable development requires the full and effective participation of all stakeholders. We therefore urge the international community to facilitate the participation of SIDS in the various preparatory processes for, and in the International Meeting itself; and also to encourage the participation of our development partners at the highest level.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.