



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ABDULLAH M. ALSAIDI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE 2010 HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (New York, 1 July 2010)

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

1. It gives me great honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China in this high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council on the implementation of the internationally agreed goals and commitments on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

2. There is no doubt that this segment acquires special importance since it provides a timely opportunity to assess the progress made, share experience and lessons learned and find appropriate ways to overcome remaining obstacles and challenges. Moreover, it will produce valuable inputs to the high-level plenary meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly on accelerating progress towards the achievement of the MDGs by 2015.

3. During the last decades, the issue of advancement of women has received considerable attention and the international community has put it high on its agenda. Several conferences have been convened to discuss the cause of women. Many conventions and declarations were adopted. Despite the progress made thus far, it is uneven and challenges and obstacles remain in the implementation of the internationally agreed goals and commitments on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

4. Gender equality and empowerment of women are still far to achieve. Women still constitute the majority of the world's poor. Challenges continue to prevent women and girls from exercising their right to education. Illiteracy remains a key issue for women, who account for nearly two-thirds of the 776 million illiterate adults in the world. Women's health continues to face challenges that should have been attenuated in the last century. Violence against women remains a major blight on humanity everywhere. Women still suffer the consequences of conflicts. Significant constraints on women's access to full employment and decent work remain in many parts of the world. Low representation of women in decision-making positions in local government, as well as in the private sector, also remains a concern. National mechanisms for gender equality and empowerment of women continue to face constraints and challenges in the implementation of their mandates, including inadequate human and financial resources. Many women face barriers to the enjoyment of their human rights. Stereotyped portrayals of women in the media have remained a serious challenge in many countries. Environmental degradation results in negative effects on the life of population at large and on the women in particular. Girls remain particularly subject to various forms of violence.

5. It goes without saying that progress cannot be made towards achieving the internationally

agreed development goals, including the MDGs, without progress in gender equality and empowerment of women.

6. The G-77 and China underlines the urgent need for collective action to remove obstacles to the full realization of the rights of women and girls living under foreign occupation. This is important to the realization of the internationally agreed development goals and commitments on gender equality and empowerment of women, including the Millennium Development Goals.

7. The G-77 and China expresses its deep concern at the negative impact of the ongoing global crises and challenges, such as the financial and economic crisis, the food crisis and continuing food insecurity and energy crises, climate change, and natural disasters on gender equality, the empowerment of women and the achievement of the MDGs. We call for collective action to address these crises and challenges and we stress the fact that women are disproportionately affected by them.

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

8. With regard to the process of system-wide coherence, including, inter alia, the new gender entity, the G-77 and China together with the Non-aligned Movement in the Joint Coordinating Committee, have been engaging actively and constructively in the process and was keen to make the new entity a reality.

9. The Group of 77 and China is looking forward to the General Assembly's adoption of a resolution on system-wide coherence that establishes a new United Nations entity on gender equality and the empowerment of women, also known as UN Women. An entity with strong and universal field-presence is critical in strengthening national capacity in advancing the status of women. We express our deep appreciation for the excellent work and programmes done in the field by INSTRAW and UNIFEM, and look forward to a smooth transition period. We stress, in particular, the importance of ensuring the continuation of all current operational activities, field offices and facilitates, as well as existing and new country programmes. The Group looks forward to the early operationalization of the new entity, which will strengthen the UN's ability to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women worldwide .

Mr. President,
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10. The G-77 and China believes that greater efforts are needed to support developing countries towards achieving the internationally agreed goals and commitments on gender and the empowerment of women, including through the fulfillment of all commitments on official development assistance, debt relief, market access, financial and technical support and capacity building.

11. It is time to translate our commitments into action and redouble our efforts to accelerate progress towards realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women.

12. In conclusion, the Group of G-77 and China reaffirms its commitment to the full and effective implementation of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and other internationally agreed goals and commitments

on gender equality and the employment of women.

I thank you.

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