



REMARKS BY MS MAITE NKOANA-MASHABANE, MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION AND CHAIR OF THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE GROUP OF 77 AT THE 39TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE GROUP OF 77 (New York, 24 September 2015)

United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon,
The President of the United Nations General Assembly, Ambassador Mogens Lykkesøft,
The Executive Secretary, Mr. Mourad Ahmia,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

After the immense misery and social disintegration as a result of the Second World War, the establishment of the United Nations provided nations the means to foster peace, build democracy and create a just society on a global scale. The creation of the organisation was also a pathway for the independence of many of the members of this Group. 70 years after its establishment, we should use this occasion to evaluate the UN's history and its many achievements and challenges and assess its effectiveness in addressing the specific interests and needs of developing countries.

The future of developing countries lies in a strong and robust multilateral system, based on the principles of international law. We must secure the restructuring of international political and economic systems in order to rectify the inherent asymmetries of power. This would safeguard developing countries, which make up the majority of countries across the globe, having a voice in global governance.

The Group of 77 and China has made notable contributions over the years to the effective functioning of the United Nations. As the largest grouping of States within the UN system, the Group of 77 and China, has played a fundamental role in crafting international economic policies and relations, narrowing the gap between developing and developed countries. The Group has also been a major actor in developing initiatives to advance development and international economic cooperation among developing countries. The Group can therefore legitimately claim a large part of the credit for advancing the interest of marginalised people of the world within the UN system.

Today's meeting provides us with an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to the continuing validity and relevance of the objectives and principles of our Group. In this regard, this meeting will adopt a declaration that will include strategies of action underpinning and supporting the processes in which we have been involved during the past year and in which we remain involved.

Distinguished delegates,

During the past 9 months, we have witnessed the finalisation of the negotiations on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The outcome document that the Summit will adopt build on the Millennium Development Goals and covers all three dimensions of sustainable development. This global development agenda recognises and responds to the triple challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment that most of us continue to face.

It has been our Group's active engagement of the negotiation process that has ensured that the key interests of developing countries are reflected in the outcome document.

The realisation of the new Agenda will only be achieved if the Global Partnership focuses on adequate means of implementation as identified under Goal 17 and under each individual goal. It is imperative that the follow-up and review process for the goals should also focus on whether the means of implementation have been achieved and whether developed countries have kept to their commitments.

Of major importance in the outcome document is the inclusion of the Principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR) which recognises our different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respects our national policies and priorities.

Another major achievement has been the reference to the right to development; and, removing the obstacles to the full realization of the right of self-determination of people living under colonial and foreign occupation.

Distinguished delegates,

The 3rd International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD3) resulted in the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

While the Addis Agenda emphasises the importance of financing for development, it is disappointing that there is little in the way of new funds to fill the existing development financing gap. Developed countries merely repeat their 45-year-old commitment to allocate 0.7% of their Gross National Income (GNI) to Official Development Assistance (ODA). The problem is that only a handful of developed countries have ever met this target.

Distinguished delegates,

South Africa welcomes the work carried out by the Ad Hoc Committee on Debt Restructuring Processes. South Africa, within the Group of 77 and China, will continue considering improved approaches to restructuring sovereign debt, taking into account the newly adopted Basic Principles and work carried out by the international financial institutions, in accordance with their respective mandates.

The 10th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) will be held for the first time in Africa, in Nairobi, Kenya this December. South Africa urges the international community to work tirelessly to conclude the Doha Development Round of negotiations and give priority to issues that address the imbalances and inequities of the current global trading system by agreeing on legally binding outcomes that will allow developing countries to effectively engage in equitable global trade.

Distinguished delegates,

In December at the upcoming Paris Climate Conference, we hope to adopt a new legal agreement which we are currently negotiating under the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action.

It is important that this multilateral process on climate change be respected and lead to the adoption of an ambitious and fair agreement in Paris. This agreement should serve our twin objectives of ensuring environmental integrity, whilst protecting the development space of developing countries. To be successful, the new legal agreement must be fair.

Fairness would imply respect for the Convention's principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR&RC). There should be differentiation between

the actions required of developed and developing countries based on different capacities and historical responsibility for climate change. Respect for CBDR&RC also means the provision of the financial and other support from developed countries that developing countries require to enable them to undertake their best efforts to address the climate challenge.

The new legal agreement must accord adaptation the same priority as mitigation. Since adaptation is a global responsibility, we should call for the adoption of a global goal on adaptation.

Means of Implementation and support for developing countries (public sector finance, technology transfer and capacity building) will be of central importance to the Paris outcome.

Developed countries should commit to a goal of jointly mobilizing US\$ 100 billion per year by 2020 to address the needs of developing countries. Funds provided to developing country Parties may come from a wide variety of sources, public and private, bilateral and multilateral, including alternative sources.

A significant share of new multilateral funding for adaptation should flow through the Green Climate Fund.

It is essential that existing commitments covering the pre-2020 period are honoured and that the second commitment period to the Kyoto Protocol comes into force preferably before COP21/CMP11. The new legal agreement covering the post-2020 period will have limited credibility if there is insufficient action in the pre-2020 period.

Distinguished delegates,

The 70th anniversary of the UN is also an opportune time for us to evaluate and discuss ways in which to strengthen South-South cooperation. South-South cooperation remains important for strengthening the economic independence of countries of the South and is not a substitute, but rather a complement to North-South cooperation.

We should also look at ways in which we could strengthen the institutions of the Group of 77 and China. We must ensure that the Secretariat of the Group is adequately funded to ensure that it carries out the Group's objectives in an effective and efficient manner. Similar support should also be extended to institutions that promote and contribute to the unity and solidarity of the Group, including the South Centre, in order to be our power houses for service delivery, knowledge sharing, information, professionalism and excellence.

Distinguished delegates,

During this session, we will approve both the biennial budget for 2016-2017 and the scales of assessment. The Group should continue to stress that the level of resources approved by the General Assembly must match the increase in mandates and activities approved by Member States. It is essential that arbitrary cost-cutting not be used as an excuse to shift funding from developing country programmes to the detriment of the South.

Distinguished delegates,

In conclusion, and in view of our ongoing endeavours for a fair and just world, the Group of 77 and China should remain involved and relevant in all multilateral processes, specifically at this important juncture when the international community is considering our collective development aspirations beyond 2015. From our own experience, it is clearly evident that the G77 is most powerful when it

is most united. Let us harness the diversity of our group to fortify our unity.

I thank you.

