



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. FABIAN GARCIA, FIRST SECRETARY OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ECUADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 28: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN, AT THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE 72TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 5 October 2017)

Mister Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 28: Advancement of Women. Let me start by expressing our appreciation to the Secretary-General for the reports submitted under this important agenda item, which reiterate the persistent challenges in the advancement of women, and the continuing discrimination and violence against women and girls, in particular in rural areas and among women migrant workers. The reports provide us with insight on causes, consequences, and recommendations to address these issues.

2. The Group notes with appreciation the improvements in the status of women in the United Nations system, and encourages the Secretary-General to continue to address the low representation of women in the professional and higher categories, while enhancing monitoring and accountability, career and capacity development, and harmonization of gender-related policies.

Mister Chair,

3. The Group of 77 and China reaffirms its support to the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the outcome of the twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly. These historic documents represent the guiding policy framework for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

4. Gender equality and women's empowerment are inextricably linked to sustainable development. The international community must make collective efforts in translating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into tangible benefits on the ground. Gender equality and women's empowerment is a stand-alone Sustainable Development Goal and a cross-cutting issue in all of the SDGs. As such, it requires appropriate funding and effective implementation and follow-up at the national, regional and international levels.

5. The Group of 77 and China welcomes the progress made by women and girls in many fields around the world. However, poverty, inequality, violence and discrimination linger in the world's current affairs, and overall progress for women and girls remains unbalanced. Inequalities remain in labor force participation and leadership, wages and income, pensions, social norms and conditions of work, among others. Women of all ages continue to be vulnerable in terms of access to justice, basic healthcare and education; lack social protection and other services essential for maintaining economic livelihood and self-sufficiency and supporting their ability to generate income and to thrive, particularly women in rural areas.

6. We are concerned that women and girls are disproportionately affected by natural disasters. Climate change poses a challenge to the achievement of sustainable development and women and

girls are particularly affected by its adverse effects. It is important to remember, however, that women are also active actors or agents of change in relation to both climate change mitigation and adaptation. Women should participate in decision making processes at all levels considering they possess a strong body of knowledge and expertise that can be used in disaster risk reduction, mitigation and adaptation strategies.

7. The Group recognizes that violence against women and girls continues to be a major obstacle to the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment. We must take all necessary measures to prevent, attend and eliminate all forms of gender violence in public and private spaces, in particular femicide, and to ensure that women with disabilities, girls, youth, indigenous, Afro-descendant, older women and those in vulnerable situations, are not subject to multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination.

Mister Chair,

8. The Group of 77 and China affirms that an environment that maintains world peace and promotes and protects human rights, democracy and the peaceful settlement of disputes, in accordance with the principles of non-threat or use of force against territorial integrity or political independence and of respect for sovereignty as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, is an important factor for the advancement of women.

9. We realize the positive impact of creating an environment which supports women and girls to reach their full potential. It is with this basis in mind that we call for concrete actions in further mainstreaming a gender perspective into the design, implementation and evaluation of public policies. We wish to also underscore the importance of gender-responsive budgeting initiatives in order to contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment. We voice our steadfast support for enhancing the political participation of women and their role in the promotion of peace and security, and the need to engage men and boys in the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women.

10. The Group of 77 and China remains fully committed to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. We will continue to promote economic opportunities essential for maintaining economic livelihood and to further empower women. We look forward to enhancing international cooperation and global partnership for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women, which includes the fulfillment of commitments on official development assistance, debt relief, market access, financial and technical support and capacity building, in particular in education and training, healthcare, as well as access to science and technology for women and girls.

Mister Chair,

11. In closing, allow me to reaffirm the Group's commitment to the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, in particular the remaining gaps in all 12 critical areas and the outcome of the twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly, and the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. All States have the obligation, at all levels, to use all appropriate means of a legislative, political, economic, social and administrative nature in order to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all women and girls.

Thank you.