



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY SOUTH AFRICA AT THE CLOSING PLENARY OF THE 21ST CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (COP21), PARIS CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE (Paris, France, 12 December 2015)

Mr. President, Your Excellency, Mr Secretary-General, Madam Executive Secretary, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

2. At the outset, allow me to convey the Group's sincere appreciation for the leadership of France as COP President during this conference. The tireless efforts by Minister Fabius and the dedicated team of the Presidency inspired all Parties to work constructively and in a spirit of compromise - not only on concluding the Paris Agreement - but also on addressing issues that have a direct bearing on the urgent implementation of our actions to address climate change. The closing of the pre-2020 ambition gap is essential and the work of the COP in this regard must remain our main focus. Therefore, the outcomes under the COP and CMP at this session are welcomed. We have been focusing strongly on the creation of a post-2020 climate agreement and, therefore, spent less time on major tasks that would enhance our implementation pre-2020. We must now refocus our attention to the urgent tasks at hand.

Mr. President,

3. The commitment of the G77 and China to this process has been unwavering. Climate change already has serious impacts in developing countries. Many of our members already experience untenable rising sea levels. Some countries experience the devastation of extreme weather events, such as heat waves, heavy precipitation, greater frequency and intensity of tropical cyclones, severe droughts and water and food insecurity. These impacts are steadily eroding the development gains that we have made.

4. Our commitment to address climate change does not begin and end here in the UNFCCC. We are already taking the most ambitious measures we can to prevent further harm and to adapt to inevitable changes. However the efforts we make on our own will not be enough. We need the cooperation of all countries to make a difference in the fight against climate change.

5. Given the exceptional nature of the Paris Climate Change Conference and our focus on securing an ambitious and fair Paris Agreement, a number of key issues related to the COP finance agenda unfortunately could not receive the appropriate consideration, particularly issues related to long-term finance and the guidance to the Standing Committee on Finance. We expect to come back in Morocco with substantive discussions on increasing finance ambition pre-2020.

Mr. President

6. The Convention was written with this spirit of cooperation in mind. In its principles and provisions, the Convention recognises that countries have different responsibilities and capabilities. This is still case. In addition to serious climate change impacts, developing countries also face urgent socio-economic challenges. The only way that we can address climate change and

eradicate poverty is if developed countries continue to take the lead.

7. Our developed country partners argue that the world has changed since the adoption of the Convention. Indeed, there have been changes and developing countries have stepped up their actions in line with their capacity. The fact that we are here in Paris to adopt a universal agreement "agreement applicable to all" attests to this fact. This is a great leap forward for developing countries. Again, developing countries have been asked to take this leap without the firm commitments on support that we have asked for to enable us to do our fair share. For our efforts to be successful, it is critical that developed countries significantly enhance the ambition of their actions and ensure that the enhanced actions of developing countries are adequately supported. In the build-up to this conference, we have noticed and welcomed the pledges made by a number of developed country Parties. This support has to be sustained if we wish to have any meaningful response.

I thank you.