



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR ABDALMAHMOOD ABDALHALEEM MOHAMAD, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE SEVENTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (New York, 13 May 2009)

Madam Chairperson,
Your Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

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

During the past weeks, we have focused on devising recommendations on issues of particular importance for all, but which have a special significance for developing countries: Agriculture, Rural Development, Drought, Desertification, Land, and Africa. The Group is committed to concluding negotiations and achieving a successful agreed outcome consisting of a set of action-based, time bound and development oriented policy options including mechanisms for their follow up and implementation.

The Group accords high importance to the implementation of the outcomes of the major UN Conferences related to economic and social fields, including Agenda 21 and JPOI. We believe that the discussions of CSD on various thematic issues will highly contribute to the achievement of Agenda 21 and the internationally-agreed development goals, including the MDGs, by 2015.

The Group reaffirms its commitment to the Rio Principles, which are particularly relevant in the present context of mounting challenges to sustainable development.

In the context of the multiple interrelated and mutually reinforcing crises, including the financial crisis, the global food crisis and climate change, our response to the challenges in each area must be decisive. Eradicate hunger and poverty, ensure food security, achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs should remain the guiding forces of our decisions, as well as the special needs of developing countries, particularly Africa, LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.

Further effective measures should be urgently taken to remove the obstacles for people living under foreign occupation to fully realize sustainable development.

The Group also reaffirms the special needs and challenges faced by countries emerging from conflict, and urge the international community and the UN system to address these needs.

Consideration of the thematic issues in the agenda of CSD must be undertaken in the context of sustainable development and its three pillars of economic development, social development and environmental protection, which are mutually reinforcing and inter-related.

Agriculture, rural development, and land management are crucial sectors especially in developing countries. The Group agrees that advancing the implementation of the agricultural development agenda requires renewed commitment and a new vision for global cooperation to implement

policies that simultaneously aim at increasing agricultural productivity, creating fair trade regimes, conserving natural resources, and investing in agricultural-related infrastructure.

The Group reiterates that, for developing countries as a whole, the means to implement sustainable development plans and strategies are of utmost priority. Without the means of implementation, sustainable development plans and strategies will remain scarcely more than words on a page. It is not enough to compile a list of policy options, with out the means to implement them.

The progress achieved with regard to the means of implementation; trade, finance, technology transfer, capacity building, education, scientific research -- is far from the level needed for effective implementation of agreed commitments and recommendations..

It is essential, to appropriately address the urgency resulting from the food crisis and price volatility, and in this context it is critical to consider, inter alia, the trade and market distortions occurred as a consequence of subsidies applied by developed countries to their agricultural production and exports, the financing capacity, and the establishment of conducive economic and market environments.

A fair international system of free trade is a critical component of this environment. Subsidies to agricultural production in developed countries cause market distortions which have a negative impact on the development opportunities of developing countries. Elimination of such subsidies are a fundamental part of the global effort to promote agriculture, rural development and eradicate poverty and hunger. Equally important is market access to developing country agricultural products. These elements have been highlighted time and again during the past weeks and should constitute a key element of our conclusions.

Providing new and additional financial resources is urgently required. The Commission must also address the issue of access to, the development, acquisition, transfer and diffusion of new and appropriate technologies, particularly environmentally sound technologies and corresponding know-how to developing countries, in order to increase productivity and competitiveness

Support to research in areas of critical importance to the developing countries, such as improvement of crop resilience, better productive practices and improved resource management, particularly in light of the challenges presented by drought, desertification and climate change. Education and scientific research are key components for developing advanced agricultural sciences in developing countries.

Madam Chair,

We attach great importance to the role of the Commission on Sustainable Development, which should continue to provide guidance and coordination on issues related to the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, and more importantly the means of their implementation. The CSD should remain at the center of our efforts and discussions to further implement Agenda 21. Overcoming the gaps and constraints in implementation on Agenda 21 and JPOI is critical in order to the way forward.

Finally, the Group of 77 and China will remain actively and constructively engaged, and will continue to work towards an agreed outcome that will help strengthen and sharpen our common resolve to tackle the challenges we face.

I thank you.