



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY DR JIKO LUVENI, MINISTER FOR WOMEN AND SOCIAL WELFARE, GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI, AT THE 57TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (New York, 4 March 2013)**

Madam Chair,  
Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. First, allow me to extend our warm congratulations and welcome, to you as Chair of the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women and to the members of your Bureau. The Group of 77 wishes to assure you of its full cooperation during the deliberations of this very important session.
3. The Group would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report under this priority theme that will certainly enrich discussions during the session.

Madam Chair,

4. The Group of 77 welcomes this session's priority theme: **Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls**, and urges Member States to encourage active engagement and effective and meaningful participation of all segments of societies including collaboration and coordination amongst and within government authorities, and with stakeholders, in the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls.
5. The UN Women's country data on the scope and current situation on this priority theme shows that 7 out of every 10 women in the world report having experienced physical and/or sexual violence at some point in their lifetime (E/CN.6/2013/4, at paragraph 9). This data shows how prevalent this problem is and that it respects no barrier irrespective of income, class or culture within all societies. In this context, the Group of 77 expresses its deep concern about the different ways in which violence against women and girls are manifested as well as the devastating effects and significant economic and social costs on individuals, communities and societies. Such violence will exacerbate the impacts of economic crises, armed conflicts and natural disasters further in worsening the vulnerability of women and girls to unemployment and poverty. It is against this backdrop that the Group of 77 urges Member States to act with due diligence to address the root causes of such violence in a holistic and systemic approach.

Madam Chair,

6. The Group of 77 reiterates that eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge facing developing countries today. Achieving it through an inclusive and equitable economic growth at all levels including the challenges and achievements in the context of women and girls, is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development and reaching the MDGs. In this context, the Group of 77 wishes to stress that whilst sustained and inclusive economic growth is essential for eradicating poverty and hunger in developing countries, an integrated and inclusive national efforts in this regard should be complemented by an enabling international environment and genuine international cooperation aimed at expanding the development opportunities of developing

countries toward the realization of their established goals and targets.

7. The Group stresses the importance of promoting empowerment of women and their ability to generate income, ensuring equal access for all women, including those in rural areas, as vital development agents to productive resources, opportunities and public service. The Group of 77 is convinced that women's empowerment, and their full and effective participation in all spheres of society, is fundamental to the achievement of equality, development and peace. To this end, the Group stresses that it is important to promote and facilitate the increased political participation of women, including their participation in other decision-making positions.

8. Despite the progress made thus far, challenges and obstacles remain in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action and the outcome of the Twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly. The Group of 77 recognises that the conclusions reached from the review of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, and the outcome of the Twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly, should enrich the meetings of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly that will be held later in the year. This review should provide a timely opportunity to assess the progress made in the implementation of areas of concern, determine the obstacles and challenges encountered and find the appropriate solutions they require. To this end, the Group stresses the importance of sharing national experiences for the purpose of building upon progress, with an effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism to advance the goals of sustainable development through equality, peace and security for all women everywhere, in the interest of all humanity.

Madam Chair,

9. The Group of 77 emphasizes the need to find effective remedies to the elimination of specific forms of violence against migrant domestic workers, violence faced by women and girls with disabilities and rural, indigenous women and girls as well as older women. In the context of emerging challenges, the Group of 77 emphasizes the need to remove all forms of structural impediments to access to justice and gender bias and encourages members to provide equal service and legal protection to all citizens. The Group further stresses that the emergence of these challenges reiterates the need for special attention targeting the structural roots of poverty in the international system that are hindering the efforts of the developing countries in their fight against poverty. The urgent need for such prevention strategies should be integrated into the broader policies and programmes, including those related to gender equality, education, employment, poverty eradication and health. To this end, the Group again stresses that the role of UN Women is of utmost importance in promoting better coordination within the UN system in order to address all barriers that impede the advancement of women.

Madam Chair,

10. The Group of 77 emphasizes the importance of family and family programmes in the prevention of violence against women and girls, and that it should be raised in the current discussions of the MDGs, SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda. Family is the foundation of every society and the social state of a nation is a reflection of the state of families within such nation. Effective implementation of policies and programmes that strengthen the well-being of families may reduce and eliminate violence against women and girls in the family, community, wider society and the nation as a whole.

11. The Group of 77 highlights the lack of progress on the strategic objective of equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men in general, and care-giving in the context of HIV/AIDS in

particular. The Group recognise that facilitation of a more inclusive system through an effective and equitable development strategy should narrow the gap between women and men and mitigate challenges facing equal sharing of responsibilities between men and women.

12. The Group of 77 stresses the importance of enhancing international cooperation and global partnerships in the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, including the fulfilment of commitments on official development assistance, debt relief, market access, financial and technical support and capacity building.

Madam Chair,

13. The Group of 77 is deeply concerned with the suffering of women and girls living under foreign occupation, and underscores the urgency for collective actions to remove the obstacles to the full realisation of their rights.

14. The Group of 77 recognises that multi-sectoral and coordinated systems which respond to the multidimensional impacts of violence against women and girls should not only be easily accessible, but also maintain confidentiality and privacy of victims and survivors and be able to impose effective punitive remedies in a timely manner. To this end, the Group is firmly committed to the efforts to end violence against women and girls in all its forms and manifestations, and stresses the need to implement concrete actions at all levels to prevent and eliminate the continuing occurrence of such violence.

15. In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China reaffirms its commitment to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the 23rd Special Session of the General Assembly, and looks forward to a productive and successful session.

I thank you.