



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JORGE ARGENTELLO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARGENTINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE 55TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (New York, 22 February 2011)

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Firstly allow me, on behalf of the Group, to extend our heartfelt congratulations to you and other members of the Bureau on your election to the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The Group of 77 and China wishes to assure you of its full cooperation during the deliberations of this very important session.

Mr. Chairman,

2. This fifty-fifth session is a very special one, since it is the first one after the establishment of UN-Women. I can proudly express that the G77 and China engaged actively, together with the Non-Aligned Movement in the Joint Coordinating Committee, in the whole process that came out with the establishment of UN-Women. In particular, let me recall the comprehensive and forward-looking document containing concrete and essential elements of the new Entity that the JCC submitted to the Co-Facilitators of the system-wide coherence process. The Group of 77 and China is confident that UN-Women will contribute successfully to a world-wide achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women.

3. In addition to that, sixteen years ago the United Nations convened the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing aimed at advancing the goals of equality, development and peace for women everywhere in the interest of all humanity. Despite the progress made so far, challenges and obstacles remain in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Poverty still constitutes a major challenge for women especially in developing countries. Girls continue to account for the majority of children out of school and women remain a majority of those who are classified as illiterate. Women's health continues to face several challenges that could have been overcome. Violence against women and girls persists in every country in the world. Women still suffer the consequences of conflicts. Women's economic empowerment is constrained by gender inequalities and disparities in economic power sharing. Access to labour markets and to decent work remains particularly limited for women. Women are still underrepresented at senior decision-making levels in all areas. The institutional mechanisms for gender equality and empowerment of women encounter obstacles which impede full implementation of their mandates. Many women face barriers to the enjoyment of their human rights. Stereotyped portrayals of women in the media have remained a serious challenge in many countries. Environmental degradation results in negative effects on the life of population at large and on women in particular. Girls remain particularly subject to different forms of violence.

4. Peace is inextricably linked to equality and development. Therefore, the international community should give priority attention to the plight of women living under foreign occupation and put an end

to their suffering.

5. Beside the persistent obstacles to the implementation of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, new threats and challenges are emerging. In this context, the Group of 77 and China would like to stress the importance of addressing the impact of the global economic and financial crisis, world food crisis and continuing food insecurity, energy crisis and the challenges posed by climate change on women.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The G77 and China stresses the importance of enhancing international cooperation and global partnership for achieving gender equality and empowerment of women, including the fulfillment of all commitments on official development assistance, debt relief, market access, financial and technical support and capacity building.

7. 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 looks forward to a productive and successful session.

Thank you.