



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY DR. MAYA MORSY, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF EGYPT AT THE SIXTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (New York, 12 March 2018)

Madame Chair, honorable presidents, vice presidents, deputy prime ministers, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The Group would like to congratulate you, Madame chair, on your election as Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women. We wish you and your Bureau a successful session and we assure you of our full support and cooperation.

2. The Group of 77 and China thank the Secretary General for his reports which will contribute in informing our deliberations and discussions.

Madame Chair,

3. This year's priority theme on "Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls" is a theme of utmost importance to the Group.

4. The Group is concerned about the persistence of the feminization of poverty, recalling that nearly 80 per cent of the extreme poor live in rural areas and work in agriculture and emphasizes that the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is an indispensable requirement for women's empowerment and sustainable development.

5. The Group is concerned also that many rural women continue to be economically and socially disadvantaged due to their limited access to economic resources and opportunities and their limited access or lack of access to quality education, health-care services, justice, land, sustainable and time- and labour-saving infrastructure and technology, water and sanitation and other resources, as well as to credit, extension services and agricultural inputs, and that they are excluded from planning and decision-making and their disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work.

6. Climate change poses an additional challenge to poverty eradication and the achievement of sustainable development, threatens food security and increases the risks of famine. Rural women and girls, especially in developing countries, are disproportionately affected by the impacts of desertification, deforestation, sand and dust storms, natural disasters, persistent drought, extreme weather events, sea level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification.

7. Violence and discrimination against rural women and girls continue to be a major obstacle to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Furthermore, women and girls in rural areas may be particularly vulnerable to violence because of multidimensional poverty and lack of access to social care and protection services and, as applicable, employment opportunities, as well as negative social norms and attitudes, including attitudes by which women and girls are regarded as subordinate to men and boys.

Madame Chair,

8. The Group of 77 and China believe that the empowerment of rural women and girls is

fundamentally linked to sustainable development. Eradicating poverty, addressing persisting inequalities in income and wealth within and among countries, while ensuring access to opportunities and economic outcomes aiming at equitable and inclusive growth for a healthy, and an environmentally sustainable, peaceful and prosperous planet as set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development must be our objective.

9. The Group recognizes that the empowerment, inclusion and development of indigenous women in rural areas, including through the establishment of indigenous-owned businesses, can enable them to improve their social, cultural, civil and political engagement, achieve greater economic independence and build more sustainable and resilient communities, and notes the contribution of indigenous peoples to the broader economy.

10. We recognize further that the positive contribution of rural women migrant workers has the potential to foster inclusive growth and sustainable development in countries of origin, transit and destination, underlining the value and dignity of their labour, in all sectors, including in care and domestic work, and encouraging efforts to improve public perceptions of migrants and migration.

Madame Chair,

11. In its 61st Session, the Commission on the Status of Women decided to strengthen and support the contributions of rural women and women farmers to the agricultural sector, food security and nutrition and the economic well-being of their families and communities, and to enhancing agricultural and rural development, including small-scale farming, and ensure that they have equal access to agricultural technologies, through investments and the transfer of technology, and innovation in small-scale agricultural production and distribution, supported by integrated and multi-sectoral policies that improve productive capacity and incomes and strengthen their resilience, and address the existing gaps in and barriers to trading their agricultural products in local, regional and international markets. The Commission decided further to support remunerative non-agricultural employment for rural women.

12. The Commission emphasizes the importance of taking measures to promote the economic empowerment of indigenous women, including by ensuring access to quality and inclusive education and meaningful participation in the economy by addressing the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and barriers they face, including violence, and promote their participation in relevant decision-making processes at all levels and in all areas, while respecting and protecting their traditional and ancestral knowledge.

13. Those decisions shall be put in place. Practical measures should be taken this year in order to implement them. In this regard, the Group underlines the paramount importance of enhancing international cooperation, including the role of North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, the latter being a complement to North-South cooperation, not a substitute, and global partnership to address challenges faced by rural women and girls and enhance their opportunities.

14. The Group emphasizes the need for measures to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against rural women and girls, in particular femicide, and to ensure that women with disabilities, girls, youth, migrant, indigenous, Afro-descendant and older women, are not subject to multiple, intersecting or aggravated forms of discrimination, thus the need to improve the collection and analysis of data, disaggregated by sex, income, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability, and other relevant factors.

Madame Chair,

15. The Group expresses its appreciation for the submission of the Secretary-General's report on "The situation of, and assistance to, Palestinian Women" and the Group is pleased to put forward for consideration of all Member States a draft resolution on this important issue.

16. In closing, Madame Chair, 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.

17. We stress that 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, including the right to development, and fundamental freedoms of women and girls including those in rural areas. We reaffirm the importance of Member Parties complying fully with their international obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Thank you.