



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. MR. VIRACHAI PLASAI, AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE PLENARY MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOLLOWING THE ADOPTION OF THE RESOLUTION ON THE FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR DEVELOPMENT AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL (New York, 29 July 2016)**

Mr. President,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on the adoption of the resolution on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda at the global level with consensus. Without doubt, this resolution underscores the shared vision and aspiration of all Member States and State Members for the crucial path set forth to assess progress in the implementation of the ambitious global agenda and to ensure that its overall objectives of poverty eradication and sustainable development are duly attained.

Mr. President,

3. The 134 Members of the G77 and China attach high importance to the robust guidance on how the 2030 Agenda is to be followed up at the national, regional and global levels. We recall that on 5 February 2016, it was the Group of 77 that proposed to you the way forward to address issue of coherent, efficient and inclusive follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda at the global level in a more structured and inclusive discussion in a form of the General Assembly's resolution to be derived by an intergovernmental process.
4. With today's adoption, would like to express the Group's deepest disappointment that one of the Group's most important historical principles regarding countries and peoples under colonial and foreign occupation is omitted. We underscore that the resolution first and foremost must be read and implemented consistent with the 2030 Agenda which starts from the premise that no one shall be left behind. We further emphasise that while a full listing of all groupings of countries and peoples who face specific challenges was not in the end accommodated in the draft resolution, this, in no way, betrays our leader's commitment to leaving no one behind and the shared principles that they reaffirmed in the 2030 Agenda.
5. The right of self-determination is a primordial right that anchors the United Nations. For the Group of 77 and China, it has been and continues to be a beacon of hope for all those who struggle under the weight of occupation. While the Group did not break silence, it could not remain silent on an issue that has long united us and has been a thread of solidarity for our Group. It was deeply disappointing therefore that even a benign reference to this right and the very principles that uphold this right, which the Group proposed as a way out of the impasse, was rejected. Indeed, it begs the question that if we cannot stand for what the United Nations in its very Charter promises, then what do we stand for?
6. It is therefore incumbent upon the Group to set forth its understanding of the interpretation of the resolution for the record as follows:

- That there is no derogation from the commitments enshrined in the 2030 Agenda, especially from the shared principles as set forth in the Agenda;
- That while countries and peoples under colonial and foreign occupation are not explicitly mentioned in the resolution, paragraph 35 of the 2030 Agenda which refers to "the full realization of the right of self-determination of peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation, which continue to adversely affect their economic and social development as well as their development" is nonetheless validated in the resolution's reaffirmation of the 2030 Agenda itself; and
- That the process of the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda at global level including through the High Level Political Forum shall therefore be conducted by taking into account paragraph 35 amongst other relevant paragraphs relating to countries and peoples facing specific challenges.

7. The Group reiterate and reaffirm our strong position that in the implementation and the follow-up and review of 2030 Agenda, we must not forget the severe difficulties faced by peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation and strive to remove the obstacles to their full realization of the right of self-determination, which adversely affect their economic and social development and their ability to achieve and implement the sustainable development goals and to ensure that they will not be left behind.

8. Our Members have demonstrated utmost flexibility in agreeing to the introductory remarks of the President of the General Assembly, in the interest that the institutional arrangements for the follow-up and review process for the 2030 Agenda and its related mechanism set out in the resolution can be implemented. This, we believe, is the shared benefits of all Member States and State Members of the United Nations. However, we wish to caution that our flexibility cannot be used as a precedent or a pretext to adopt a new methodology of negotiation in any future intergovernmental process, especially as it relates to the issue at hand. Due consideration must be given in the negotiation process to the full realization of the right of self-determination of countries and peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation in relation to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

9. It is within our legitimate hope that all Member States and State Members will engage in all future negotiations with an open mind in order to leave no one behind.

I thank you.