



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY ELIANA SAISSAC, SECOND SECRETARY, MISSION OF ARGENTINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION OF THE SECOND PREPARATORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE UN CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: "GREEN ECONOMY IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ERADICATION" (New York, 7 March 2011)

Session 2: Theme 1 of the Conference: Green Economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication

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

At the first meeting of the preparatory committee, in May 2010, the G-77 stated that an understanding of the scope and possible benefits, risks and costs of the "green economy" approach, is necessary to avoid replicating a discussion on the interrelationship between environment, economy and society, or on the distinctions between the development challenges faced by developing countries and the situation of developed countries.

Throughout the past 10 months, and in particular at the first intersessional informal meeting in January, we have shared views on this theme. In different settings and at the initiative of many countries, we have seen experiences, both in developed and developing countries, of concrete actions that have led to benefits for the country involved. Many developing countries are at the forefront of promoting these activities and are leading the way towards sustainable development. However, much remains to be done in the area of a "green economy" in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

For the G-77, the following elements should be considered as the foundation for our future discussions and as the basis for an outcome at the Conference on the theme of "green economy" in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication:

Sustainable development conceptual framework. The "green economy" in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication should be developed in accordance with the principles contained in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21, as well as the instruments further adopted for the implementation of Agenda 21, in particular the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

Poverty eradication as the overriding priority. Despite progress in the past decades, poverty remains the most pressing issue in the area of sustainable development. Our common goal to eradicate poverty should guide our efforts towards sustainability, while considering the needs of both present and future generations. The creation of decent jobs, inter alia, should be an integral part of these considerations, as should the contribution to the achievement of the MDGs.

Global crises. Countries are facing multi-dimensional economical, ecological, energetic and food crises that undermine the achievement of the internationally-agreed development goals. The complex and multidimensional aspects of these crises should be addressed. A systemic approach is needed.

Flexibility and no "one-size-fits-all". An outcome on this theme should be based on a flexible approach that recognizes the different levels of economic, social and environmental development of countries, as well as their particular conditions and priorities. The policy space of each country to define their own paths towards sustainability in their economy and society, in accordance with their own circumstances and priorities, should be reaffirmed, as well as the sovereign right of countries over their natural resources. A uniform approach to the concept of "green economy" is not warranted.

Focus on implementation. The central component of the contribution to sustainable development of this theme is its potential contribution to advancing the provision of means of implementation.

An outcome should:

- i) advance the development, deployment, and transfer of sustainable, environmentally-sound technology in developing countries, including by addressing access by developing countries to technologies and measures to prevent abuse of intellectual property rights;
- ii) unlock the provision of new and additional financial resources to developing countries;
- iii) contribute to the generation of scientific and technical capacity and knowledge in developing countries;
- iv) allow for expanded market access for products from developing countries while combatting trade-distortive measures, such as subsidies in developed countries and "green protectionism".

The approach offered by a "green economy" could prove useful if it assists in the implementation of policies that promote incentives to sustainable consumption and production patterns and resilient economic development, protect and use environmental resources sustainably, and promote social well-being, in the short and long term.

Fulfilment of commitments. In the area of sustainable development, the main challenge stems not from the absence of rules and commitments, but from the lack of fulfilment of the obligations that have been established mostly the past 20 years. The possible implementation of outcomes on this theme cannot substitute the fulfilment of those commitments.

Mr. Chairman,

Further understanding and dialogue is still needed to clarify some of the implications and possible opportunities and risks of the "green economy" approach. What are the implications in terms of costs, disruption of production patterns and job destruction/creation of certain measures? What are the macro-economic impacts of transitioning to a "green economy"? How can the risks associated with conditionalities and green protectionism be mitigated while at the same time market opportunities for developing countries are expanded? What are the opportunities and risks in the environmental, social and economic aspects of sustainable development?

The approach taken should respond to the objectives of the Conference, as spelled out in resolution 64/236, namely, to renew political commitment for sustainable development, to address new and emerging issues and to assess progress and gaps in implementation. A clear picture of the challenges we currently face will allow for a better understanding of a "green economy" approach, rooted on sustainable development and directed towards poverty eradication.

We expect that discussions in this meeting will contribute to advance common understanding and respond to the questions raised.

Thank you.

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