



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MINISTER MARCELO SUAREZ SALVIA, PERMANENT MISSION OF ARGENTINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 22 (A) AND (B), GROUPS OF COUNTRIES IN SPECIAL SITUATIONS, AT THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE 66TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 20 October 2011)**

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China thanks the Secretariat for the preparation and presentations of the documents for our consideration under Agenda Item 22 (a) and (b).

**A. Agenda Item 22 (a): Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.**

1. Let me start by referring to agenda Item 22 (a): Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.
2. The Least Developed Countries continue to confront structural handicaps and constraints in their development efforts and remain highly vulnerable to external shocks due to lack of credible alternative means to withstand them.
3. In fact, as the Group has so many times stated in many previous presentations, we are deeply concerned that the situation in the LDCs continues to deteriorate as a consequence of the ongoing multiple and mutually exacerbating global crises. The global financial and economic ongoing crisis is clearly undermining development in the LDCs.
3. The modest development gains that the LDCs made over the years are being reversed, pushing a larger number of their people to extreme poverty. With great sorrow, we have to recall once again that the number of people living in extreme poverty continues to remain alarmingly high in the LDCs.
4. Moreover, the LDCs continue to be lagging behind in meeting most of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Development Goals. In this regard, the G77 and China expresses its grave concern that, with few years left before 2015, the Least Developed Countries are lagging behind in meeting many of the MDG targets.

Mr. Chairman,

5. There were 24 LDCs in 1971 and there are currently 48. The number of LDCs has doubled after three decades of attention to development, three United Nations Conferences, and three specific programmes of action. This is unacceptable and cannot continue to be tolerated.
6. It is one of our most important duties to put an end to this tragedy. In this regard, four months ago, Argentina had the honour to introduce, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the draft resolution on the "Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020", which permitted the General Assembly to endorse the Istanbul Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 adopted by the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

7. It was one step, we hope, in order to reduce poverty and promote growth and sustainable development.

Mr. Chairman,

8. Nevertheless, for this step to be a really important one, we call once again upon all the relevant stakeholders to commit to implementing the Programme of Action.

9. Particularly, it is important to highlight the crucial role of the developed countries as "development partners" in implementing the Istanbul Programme of Action, investing in physical and human capital. The United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, other multilateral institutions and regional development banks are also called upon to support the LDCs in these efforts.

10. In that regard, we must bear in mind that the success of the new Programme of Action highly depends on the LDCs taking the ownership and leadership role in making and implementing effectively the relevant policy choices, each according to its own conditions and requirements, with the enhanced, predictable, definite and targeted support of the development partners.

11. As we have already stated and will continue stating, guided by the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities of developing and developed countries and by the spirit of solidarity, we, as developing countries, feel proud of being able to support this Programme of Action through South-South Cooperation. In that sense we would like to highlight the united efforts of developing countries in supporting each other, despite their own social and economic difficulties.

Mr. Chairman,

12. The G77 and China welcomes all the efforts made to address the debt problem of LDCs and, concerned by the negative impact of the ongoing crisis on the weight of their debt, and the consequent difficulty for their development, stresses the need of the International Community to take more and enhanced effective measures in this regard, particularly through cancellation of multilateral and bilateral debts owed by LDCs to creditors.

13. The Group also notes, once more, that duty-free and quota-free market access has not resulted in an increase of the share of Least Developed Countries exports in world trade, which remains marginal at less than 1 per cent. There has not been sufficient focus on raising productive capacities or on economic and export diversification.

Mr. Chairman,

14. Ensuring that the LDCs break out of the "poverty trap" will depend very heavily on the effective implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action and the commitments of development partners, most especially regarding ODA.

15. For this reason, the G77 and China emphasizes once again the importance of the fulfillment of the international commitments, especially ODA.

16. We also stress the necessity of the integration into the global economy of developing countries especially the LDCs and recognize the important role of the United Nations system, funds and programmes, especially the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in assisting the LDCs in this regard and ensuring their active participation in the global economy and equitable benefits from trade, investment and development.

17. The Group reiterates, once more, its strong support to LDCs and hopes that the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action will give place to a strengthened partnership aimed at overcoming multiple development challenges being faced by LDCs, to support them in eradicating poverty and integrating beneficially into the global economy.

**B. Agenda Item 22(b): Specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation**

Mr. Chairman,

18. Let me now turn to Agenda item 22(b), Specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation

19. The G77 and China regrets that the negative impacts of the ongoing economic and financial crisis are also drastically reducing growth in LLDC countries, putting at high risk the progress achieved by these countries in the years previous to the crisis.

20. Moreover, progress had been much slower than economic growth in reducing poverty, hunger and maternal mortality, and in improving the area covered by forests, the proportion of the population using improved sanitation, and gender parity in secondary and tertiary education. Those progresses are expected now to be even slower.

21. The proportion of the population living in extreme poverty in Landlocked Developing Countries is still very high.

22. In this context, the G77 and China reaffirms on the special needs of and challenges faced by the Landlocked Developing Countries caused by their lack of territorial access to the sea, aggravated by the remoteness from world markets and also the concern that the economic growth and social well-being of Landlocked Developing Countries remain very vulnerable to external shocks as well as the multiple challenges the international community faces including the ongoing financial and economic crisis, and climate changes. To this effect, development of a set of vulnerability indicators for LLDCs can be useful for early warning purposes to external shocks.

23. We therefore call for financial and technical support to assist the LLDCs in overcoming their geographical constraints by enhancing intraregional connectivity through investment in transit transport infrastructure, energy and information and communications technology infrastructure as well as promoting trade facilitation projects.

Mr. Chairman,

24. Trade is a vital means of international economic integration, and it is in this area that the LLDCs are at the greatest disadvantage. As such the failure of the Doha Development Round to address the development challenge in international trade is of great relevance to the situation of LLDCs.

25. The Group is also concerned that LLDCs continue to be at a competitive disadvantage in attracting private investments despite creating more attractive investment climate through reforms and policy improvements to reduce bureaucracy, lower costs, and improve business procedures and public services. There is a need, therefore, for conscious policy measures to facilitate and

enhance the flow of investments, both public and private, in LLDCs in pursuit of the full implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action.

Mr. Chairman,

26. The G-77 and China stresses the need for the international community to enhance development assistance to Landlocked Developing Countries to help them overcome their vulnerabilities, build resilience, analytical capabilities and set themselves on a path of sustainable social and economic development. To this effect, an international think tank for LLDCs set up in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, is expected to contribute to the analytical capacity building of LLDCs. We urge those countries that have not yet done so to sign the Multilateral Agreement Establishing the International Think Tank in accordance with the relevant provision.

27. We also stress the urgent need to address the special development needs of and challenges faced by the Landlocked Developing Countries through the full, timely and effective implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, as contained in the Declaration on the Midterm review of the Almaty Programme of Action.

I thank you.