



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MARIA LAURA BRAIZA, NATIONAL DIRECTOR FOR YOUTH OF ARGENTINA, AT THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON YOUTH (New York, 26 July 2011)

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

1. It is an honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China in this United Nations High-level Meeting on Youth, which is the highlight event of the International Year of Youth. The decision to hold this event originated from an initiative of the Group of 77 and China and from the constructive engagement of all Member States. We have agreed on having this important high-level meeting and a substantive outcome document, which surely will contribute to youth development.

2. The overarching theme of this high-level meeting - "Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding", provides all of us - Member States, the UN System, youth organizations and other stakeholders - the opportunity to exchange views on the challenges related to youth, to discuss how to better address them and to commit to taking concrete actions. This overarching theme - Dialogue and Mutual Understanding - should inspire all our endeavours in this regard.

Mr. President,

3. The Group of 77 and China would like to stress the need for further efforts to support young people in developing their potential and to tackle the obstacles they face. In this regard, the primary responsibility for ensuring youth development lies with States, which should develop comprehensive policies and action plans that focus on the best interest of youth. The Group of 77 and China encourages the international community to support Member States, through enhanced international cooperation and the fulfillment of all ODA commitments, in their efforts towards eradicating poverty as well as achieving full employment and social integration.

4. Additionally, the Group of 77 and China reaffirms the importance of the World Programme of Action for Youth as the framework for youth policies, while recognizing the urgency of further developing it in order to fully address all current challenges affecting youth.

5. The Group of 77 and China also acknowledges that problems faced by youth today have to be dealt with within a broader context of coordinate actions based on a holistic approach by tackling upfront problems encompassing a vast array of multidimensional aspects. Thus the very nature of problems that distress youth today demand overlapping actions such as ensuring the best possible education, providing access to employment opportunities, enabling adequate food supply and nutrition, generating a healthy physical and social environment, granting the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms and also the participation in decision-making processes. Moreover, the Group firmly believes that by managing to bridge the gap on all forms of inequalities - social, regional, racial, gender and others - we shall be contributing considerably for the much-needed worldwide achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

6. Youth unemployment is a clear example of a challenge affecting youth that requires new ideas and renewed efforts from Member States and the international community. Unemployment has

become a global problem affecting youth worldwide. The Group of 77 and China urges all Member States to consider undertaking efforts towards the development of a global strategy to effectively address this issue.

Mr. President,

7. The Group 77 and China underscores the need to ensure that all of our citizens, including our youth, enjoy the highest attainable standards of health and will continue to undertake efforts to realize this objective.

8. The Group also recognizes the importance of protecting youth from violence and crime, as well as preventing and addressing their involvement in criminal activity, including drug related activity. These issues remain on our agenda as we strive to provide healthy environments for our younger generations.

9. The Group of 77 and China urges Member States to take concerted actions in conformity with international law to remove the obstacles to the full realization of the rights of young people living under foreign occupation to promote the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

10. Additionally, the Group condemns the recruitment and use of youth in armed conflict in contravention of applicable international law, deplores the negative consequences that it has on involved youth and calls upon Member States, in cooperation with United Nations entities, to take concrete measures and continue to support programs to ensure effective social and economic reintegration and rehabilitation of demobilized young people.

Mr. President,

11. The Group of 77 and China remains committed to working to improve the lives of young people in each of our States to assist them to realize their fullest potential and to make valuable and positive contributions to the development of our societies.

Thank you.