



STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MOURAD BENMEHIDI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ALGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS SEGMENT OF THE 2012 SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (New York, 18 July 2012)

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to thank you and other members of the Bureau for organizing this very important Humanitarian Affairs Segment.
2. The Group also wishes to reiterate its support for the dedicated work of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Valerie Amos, as well as for all OCHA team which plays a key role in coordinating international humanitarian assistance.
3. This year's theme entitled "Working in partnership to strengthen coordination of humanitarian assistance in a changing world", is particularly timely and appropriate given the increasing challenges that the humanitarian system is facing as well as the need to bring together the various actors involved in providing humanitarian assistance.

Mr. President,

4. We take note of the report of the Secretary-General and its recommendations which have formed the basis for some inputs to the draft resolution to be adopted during this session, including the reference to the importance of strengthening partnerships at all levels as well as the necessity to base humanitarian decision making on evidence from reliable data and exchange of information. We hope to have fruitful discussions on these two issues since two round tables are dedicated to them during this session. We welcome the attention given in the report to the need to further invest in building resilience and preparedness.
5. With regard the reference in the report to the issue of the Inter-agency Standing Committee's Transformative Agenda (ITA), the Group considers that the IASC's outcome on this issue is a relatively new development in the field of humanitarian assistance. While we believe that consensus and consultation are essential ingredients for effective change in humanitarian system, we request the Emergency Relief Coordinator to further enhance dialogue and consultation with all Member States not only on this specific issue but also on all the current humanitarian reform agenda.

Mr. President,

6. The Group of 77 remains deeply concerned that the humanitarian challenges resulting from complex emergencies and natural disasters continue to increase dramatically especially in developing countries. Furthermore, these challenges have been exacerbated by the ongoing negative impact of the global economic and financial crisis, continuing food insecurity and the challenges posed by climate change. We must redouble our efforts to strengthen the capacity of all stakeholders to better cope with these challenges.

Mr. President,

7. The Group of 77 and China wishes to reiterate its commitment and support to the guiding principles contained in the annex to General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 as the framework for the provision of UN humanitarian assistance. These principles, namely humanity, impartiality and neutrality, should remain the basis of all responses to humanitarian emergencies and guide the efficiency and coordination of humanitarian assistance by the UN and all relevant organizations.

8. Particular attention also needs to be paid to the respect of sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of States, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, in all efforts for coordination of humanitarian assistance. We emphasize in this regard the primary role of the concerned State in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of humanitarian assistance. We also emphasize that the United Nations has a central and unique role to play in providing leadership and coordinating the efforts of the international community to support the affected countries.

Mr. President,

9. While we acknowledge the efforts deployed to improve the humanitarian response, the Group of 77 considers that more work still needs to be done. We urge in this regard the United Nations system and the international community to assist developing countries in the enhancement of their existing humanitarian capacities, knowledge and institutions, including by, inter alia, through the transfer of technology, funding and expertise, in order to facilitate appropriate preparedness and to strengthen resilience, prevention and response capacity to these increasing humanitarian emergencies.

10. Another important issue which merits the special attention and support of the international community is the need to insure predictable, flexible and adequate funding for an effective provision of humanitarian assistance. In this regard, we would like to stress the importance of increased funding through enhanced partnerships and strengthened financial mechanisms for humanitarian assistance.

11. The Group of 77 and China reaffirms that Member States must comply fully with their obligations under international humanitarian law, in particular the Fourth Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 to protect and assist civilians in occupied territories and call on the UN system and the international community to strengthen their efforts to provide the humanitarian assistance to those civilians.

Mr. President,

12. The G77 and China welcomes the increasing focus which the issue of transition from relief to development has generated in recent years, including this year's ECOSOC event dedicated particularly to address the theme "Humanitarian needs in the Sahel and the importance of building resilience". We strongly believe that provision of the emergency assistance to an affected country should not be seen as an isolated mechanism in the overall effort for humanitarian response. We consider that there is a clear relationship between emergency relief, rehabilitation and development in order to ensure a smooth transition from relief to development. Humanitarian assistance must therefore be provided in ways that will support recovery and long-term development. We call in this regard for the urgent need to further enhance coordination between humanitarian and development actors. Furthermore, we reaffirm the view that humanitarian assistance must not be seen as a

replacement for international development cooperation.

Mr. President,

13. In closing, I would like to express that the Group of 77 and China has engaged actively and constructively during the negotiations on the resolution entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations". We take this opportunity to thank the co-facilitators Mr. Andy Rachmianto from Indonesia and Ms. Kathryn Yarlett from Australia, for facilitating this draft and all delegations that have lent their support and contributed to the outcome of this final text and as in the past years, we look forward to the adoption of this draft resolution by consensus.

I thank you.