



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JORGE ARGENTINO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ARGENTINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE INFORMAL THEMATIC DEBATE OF THE 65TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (New York, 9 February 2011)

Madame Moderator, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates:

I have the honor of addressing this thematic debate on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. At the outset, allow me to congratulate the President of the General Assembly on taking the initiative of convening this Thematic Debate on Disaster Risk Reduction, topic of crucial importance for sustainable development and for our Group.

Madame Moderator,

Over the years the humanitarian challenges resulting from complex emergencies and natural disasters continue to increase especially in developing countries. The last year has been unprecedented in this regard. As a result, millions of people were killed and millions are displaced. Thousands of houses and farmlands were destroyed. A large number of people are suffering from diseases and living with unmet health needs. Moreover, these challenges have been compounded by the impact of the global economic and financial crisis, world food crisis and continuing food insecurity, energy crisis and the challenges posed by climate change.

One single event occurring in developing countries can sweep away all efforts in infrastructure and urban planning undertaken for developing countries to eradicate poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals

Preexisting economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities can affect the ability of developing countries to cope with the adverse impacts of disasters.

These facts are widely recognized in the Report of the Secretary-General (A/65/388) on the Implementation of the Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy: "Developing countries are less resilient to large or recurring shocks. Natural hazards kill more people in developing than in developed countries, and disaster related economic losses, measured against a country's wealth, are relatively much larger in poor countries. Disaster impacts undermine vulnerable livelihoods, countries' economic growth and progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals."

The Group of 77 and China fully supports the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for action, and is committed to further promoting their principles and objectives. In this regard, last year the Group presented a draft resolution on agenda item 20 c) Sustainable Development, entitled: "International Strategy for Disaster Reduction", that was adopted by consensus by the General Assembly.

The Group of 77 and China would like this General Assembly to convey a message of strong support and urgency to the member States meeting at the third session of the Biennial Global Platform for disaster risk reduction, which will convene in Geneva in May, 2011.

There is no doubt that the following measures to address disaster risk reduction must be further

pursued:

1. Strengthening coordination among UN agencies and governments to achieve a more efficient response, care and coverage.
2. The promotion of public awareness and commitment, the expansion of networks and partnerships, the improvement of knowledge about causes of disasters through risk assessments and options for risk reduction, as well as building resilience and strengthening coping capacities;
3. Encouraging the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, to continue to support the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action.

Additionally, and regarding the indispensable international cooperation and investment that Governments need to urgently make at all levels so that humanity can have a safe future tomorrow, further efforts are needed, including:

1. The provision of new and additional financial resources and transfer of technology, from developed countries to developing countries, to promote the implementation of programs aimed at disaster risk reduction; and the enhancement of their national and regional capacities for the implementation of plans and strategies for prevention, including early warning systems, preparedness, rapid response, recovery and development in relation to natural disasters;
2. Scaling up the availability of timely, stable and predictable resources for the implementation of the Strategy and the operation of the Secretariat of the Strategy.

Finally,

We highlight the need for the international community to maintain its focus beyond emergency relief and to support medium- and long-term rehabilitation, reconstruction and risk reduction, and stress the importance of implementing and adopting long-term programs related to the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and disaster risk reduction management in developing countries.

I thank you.