



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY AMAR DAOUD, SECOND SECRETARY, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SUDAN, AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE JOINT BOARD MEETING OF THE UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF AND WFP (New York, 26 January 2009)

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

1. I am pleased to make this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, as we are concluding the joint Board meeting.
2. The Group appreciates contributions of various experts from these Agencies which have been helpful in providing additional information, clarifications and elaborations of their work programmes and activities in the country programmes.
3. After a careful consideration of the proceedings, the Group of 77 and China emphasizes its commitment to strengthening the independence of oversight bodies of funds and programmes of the UN development system, as well as the oversight role and function of the Executive Boards.
4. Mr. President, As of recent, we have witnessed a deterioration of the integrity of the UN countries programmes especially the aspect of autonomous decisions. We believe that some aspects requires integrity as such, country programmes and related documents must be ensured, with clear safeguards to prevent the politicization of the development work of the UN. Further, with respect to audit, we believe that audit serves an important role of safeguarding best practices in financial and managerial aspect of country programmes as such it should provide an assessment of the extent to which the UN development programmes reflect national priorities and national development strategies in partnership with the national government. We expect the audit report provides qualitative assessment of level of effective collaboration between UN and Country programme.
5. During the Executive Board discussions on Internal Audit and Oversight at the annual Board meeting in June 2007, the Group of 77 and China expected that UNDP could have clarified what specific information would be needed for considerations and that for sharing also it would have been useful if the modality or procedure followed was known in advance. Further, we call for a review of the proposal for disclosure of internal audit reports of which the group expressed strong concerns regarding the approach of making these reports public. So far, to our surprise, these concerns still remain.
6. Furthermore, Mr. President, we need to be clear on the role of the programme country in this process, particularly on consultations and disclosures that pertain to the operations at the country level and on the extent of these disclosures.
7. In this regard, the Group believes that UNDP and UNPFA should not disclose information contained in their internal audit reports, particularly country programme-related audit reports, without the permission of the Executive Board. Such requests should first be based on a justifiable need for disclosure and put to the Executive Board for its consideration.
8. Additionally, Mr. President, the Group of 77 and China beers increased attention to security implications on programming, and looking forward for more discussion on the best way to address

this delicate issue.

9. Mr. President. The Group of 77 and China reiterates its position that the overarching principle of UN operational activities is national ownership and leadership of the process, and results by the programme countries. We would like to appreciate the efforts of UNDP for its increased attention to this issue, and look forward to further improvements. The Group of 77 and China welcomes the facilitation of comprehensive informals, which offered the Board Members and other participants the opportunity to review and analyze the feedback received and the lessons learned.

10. Finally, may I thank you Mr. President for the most effective manner in which you conducted these meetings which culminated into a very productive session. Your leadership and guidance went a long way in helping to achieve this success.

Thank you, Mr. President.