



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS. SAHAR NASSER, FIRST SECRETARY AT THE MISSION OF THE STATE OF PALESTINE TO THE UN, AT THE FIRST INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON THE POLITICAL DECLARATION FOR THE 2019 HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (New York, 15 May 2019)**

Distinguished Co-facilitators,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. Allow me, at the outset to congratulate you on your appointment as Co-facilitators for the informal consultations on the Political Declaration for the 2019 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). We also wish to thank you for convening today's informal meeting.
3. The Group would like to assure you of its commitment to engage actively and constructively throughout the upcoming process, with a view of reaching a concise yet powerful and substantive consensus-based outcome document encompassing all the relevant issues.
4. With regard to the proposed timeline, taking into account the limited time foreseen between the release of the zero draft and the second informal meeting scheduled on Wednesday, 22 May 2019, and given that the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) is yet to be released on Friday, 17 May 2019, we call for due consideration to be given to the need of member states to consult their capitals and for adequate time for internal coordination of the Group, especially as we all know, the GSDR will be a very long and extensive report.

Distinguished Co-facilitators,

5. While we took note of the SG report on the progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, we positively look forward to the GSDR report and appreciate its contribution to this process.
6. Hence, at this stage, we wish to highlight the following initial elements for inclusion in the political declaration, and ask for some clarifications.
7. We acknowledge that 2019 is a very important year, as we will be rounding up the first four-year cycle of the HLPF, and for the first time, we will hold both sessions of the HLPF under the auspices of the GA and the ECOSOC. As mandated in Resolution A/70/299, in particular OP19, which states that "the forum shall have only one negotiated political declaration, covering the different and complementary functions of both sessions of the forum when the forum is convened twice in the same year", the Group would like to seek clarification on how do you, distinguished co-facilitators, envisage the structure of this outcome document, while taking into account the necessity of including and reflecting on the six SDGs that are under in depth review this year, as well as the means of implementation.

Distinguished Co-facilitators,

8. The Group reiterates that poverty eradication in all its forms and dimensions is the overarching goal of the 2030 Agenda, and remains the greatest global challenge and an indispensable

requirement for sustainable development.

9. The zero draft should also reaffirm the principles recognized in the 2030 Agenda, in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and the need to take into account different national realities, capacities, and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities.

10. Moreover, it is imperative to address the challenges and needs faced by developing countries, especially countries in special situations, in particular, African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States as well as specific challenges faced by many middle-income countries, and countries that are close to surpassing or have recently crossed the upper middle-income threshold but still have structural gaps and vulnerabilities, conflict and post-conflict countries and countries and peoples living under foreign occupation, which continue to adversely affect their economic and social development and their ability to achieve and implement the SDGs, and to ensure that no country and no one will be left behind.

11. It is also crucial to reaffirm, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the need to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of States.

12. The Group believes that the international community should commit to translating ambitions set out in the 2030 Agenda into real actions. In this regard, the group urges developed countries to honor their ODA commitment and provide greater support especially regarding the transfer of technology, capacity building and financing to developing countries.

13. The Group believes that the zero draft should address the three dimensions of sustainable development, while underscoring the integrated, indivisible and universal nature of the SDGs, restating the importance of its linkages, and balancing its three dimensions.

14. We must also redouble our efforts to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, resolve or prevent conflict and to support post-conflict countries, including by ensuring that women have a role in peacebuilding and State-building.

15. We acknowledge the important contribution of women and girls to sustainable development and reiterate that gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and women's full and equal participation and leadership in the economy are vital for achieving sustainable development.

Distinguished Co-facilitators,

16. The Group further reaffirms that the right of peoples and nations to permanent sovereignty over natural wealth and resources must be exercised in the interest of their national development and of the well-being of the people of the State concerned.

17. While emphasizing the sovereignty of countries and peoples over their natural wealth, the Group is also aware of the duty to respect protect, conserve and sustainably manage and use these resources and ensure the conditions for nature and ecosystems to have the capacity to regenerate, for the benefit of present and future generations. We also recognize that the sustainable use of natural resources is an effective way to achieve economic growth in harmony with nature while contributing to the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions and environmental degradation.

18. States are strongly urged to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic,

financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries.

19. The Group stresses that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time and its widespread, unprecedented impacts disproportionately burden all developing countries and in particular the poorest and most vulnerable among them.

20. We commit to devoting ourselves collectively to the pursuit of global development and of "win-win" cooperation which can bring huge gains to all countries and all parts of the world.

21. The Group believes that it is crucial to note that almost four years have passed since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, and, while significant effort is being exerted on implementing the Agenda, yet, we must acknowledge the disturbing reality that the pace of implementation is still quite distant from achieving sustainable development for all, in particular for the poorest and most vulnerable.

22. Therefore, the outcome document will be the crucial opportunity for our leaders to reaffirm commitments made in 2015, and send a strong message that we will continue to move forward in a more accelerated, robust, and action-oriented manner, and continue to make progress together. It will also be the chance for our leaders to strongly reaffirm the belief and commitment in multilateralism that is currently being challenged.

Distinguished Co-facilitators,

23. Finally, on the procedure, the Group would like to seek some clarifications on the process of negotiations ahead; in particular, how do you plan to proceed in the upcoming informal meetings? and which approach do you plan to follow during the upcoming readings of the text?

24. The Group reaffirms its readiness to engage in the consultation process with an open-mind and a spirit of cooperation. We would also like to call on all sides to engage in this important process with the same spirit.

I thank you.