



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. WALEED ALSHAHARI, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE FORTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE STATISTICAL COMMISSION (New York, 23 February 2010)

Mr. Chairman,

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and recognize the important contributions that the Commission has made in promoting the improvement of international statistical standards and methods, as well as an internationally comparable statistical system, for which statistical capacity building to developing countries remains a key issue.
2. The Group of 77 and China attaches great importance to the follow-up and implementation of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits, including the MDGs, and to the role of the Statistical Commission in developing and enhancing the indicators for measuring all MDGs, including MDG 8.
3. The Group of 77 and China appreciates the work of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Millennium Development Goals Indicators. But as we approach the target year of 2015 for the achievement of the MDGs, there is an urgent need for the Commission and the Expert Group to redouble its efforts to develop a coherent and integrated system of implementation indicators. Such system of indicators needs to be based on intergovernmental consensus, and should give a clear and complete sense of progress on the implementation of all MDGs and IADGs. We call upon the Commission to gear up its work to that end.
4. The goal of developing indicators for monitoring MDGs outcomes would depend on the scaling up of national statistical capacities. The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Millennium Development Goals Indicators has made statistical capacity one of its top priority areas of work.
5. It is important that the existing initiatives for developing national capacities and agency-country coordination and consultations be made more effective on the basis of national demands and priorities. The United Nations Statistical Division should tailor its statistical capacity-building programme to strengthen the institutional statistical capacities of countries on the basis of national demands and action priorities. The partner agencies and donors need to increase financial assistance for national statistical capacity building. As recommended by the Expert Group, the Statistical Division should accelerate its efforts in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The Group would also like to emphasize on the need to involve the Statistical Commission in the discussions on the proposed new set of indicators for measuring the Human Development Index. It is of concern to us that so far no concrete steps have been made in this regard and therefore the Commission will not be able to discuss properly this issue on this occasion.
7. With such little time remaining before the releasing of the Human Development Report of 2010, there is a need to guarantee the effective engagement of governments and national statistical experts in this very important exercise, so we are looking into the possibility of requesting concrete actions in this respect.

8. The G77 and China calls attention to the Report of the Secretary-General on Indicators for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and notes that indicators in the report do not address the issue of indicators that may identify the health and related socio and economic and development aspects of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cardio-vascular diseases, cancer, diabetes and chronic diseases. While there are indicators for a number of communicable diseases, the G77 and China believes that attention should also be paid to this issue as it is also a developmental issue that impacts the achievement of the MDGs, particularly as it relates to Goal no. 6 on Health related issues.

9. The Members of the Group of 77 and China calls further the attention of the Statistical Commission to including indicators on non-communicable diseases into the core MDG monitoring and evaluation system. NCDs, in fact have been identified as the leading causes of 62 percent of all deaths in the Caribbean and 60 percent of deaths worldwide, of which 80 percent occur in low and middle income countries.

10. This request to include the indicators is necessary in order to monitor the magnitude, trend and socio-economic impact of NCDs on the MDGs. The Statistical Commission may wish to consider this issue during its forty-first session. In this regard, it may also be possible to give consideration during the session to examine whether existing indicators related to health and development could be disaggregated so as to address the issue of indicators of NCDs so that it may be included in the upcoming September 2010 Summit of the MDGs.

Mr. Chairman,

11. The Group of 77 and China would also like to reiterate again that the international institutions, including donor agencies, should take the data of the national statistical organizations for their analyses rather than impute data on their own.

12. In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China trusts that the issues outlined here will be given due consideration and appropriate action taken by the Commission. We look forward to continued engagement on the matters outlined in this statement, through the Commission as well as the Economic and Social Council, and to a successful outcome of this current session.

I thank you.