



STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR CONROD HUNTE, DELEGATION OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA, ON AGENDA ITEM 13(C): STATISTICS, AT THE ECOSOC SUBSTANTIVE SESSION (New York, 23 July 2008)

Mr. President,

1. The Group of 77 and China welcomes this opportunity to discuss Agenda Item 13(c) on Statistics during this session of the ECOSOC, particularly in relation to the issue of development indicators and indicators for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We thank the Secretariat for the presentation of the report of the Statistical Commission.
2. Mr. President, securing the effective and full implementation of the agreed goals and commitments of the major United Nations conferences and summits continues to be the highest priority of the Group of 77 and China. During the Thirty-ninth meeting of the Statistical Commission in the early part of this year the Group expressed its views on the need for a sound legislative framework for pursuing a more structured and coherent approach to implementation of the MDGs and the other internationally agreed development goals (IADGs), building on the basis provided by General Assembly resolution 60/265.
3. The Statistical Commission, as the intergovernmental focal point for the elaboration, refinement and the review of the implementation indicators has an important role to play in this regard, and so does the ECOSOC, to which the Commission reports and from which it takes policy guidance and direction. In this regard, the Group repeats its call for a strengthening of the Commission's mandate as provided by General Assembly resolutions 57/270 B, 60/265 and the Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/6.
4. The Group again underscores the need to evolve an intergovernmental agreement to develop a monitoring mechanism to track and promote implementation of goals and commitments, as was mandated by resolution 60/265. We find that there is need for a more thorough and comprehensive treatment of this both in the work of the Commission as well as in the ECOSOC. In this regard we welcome the inclusion of the item on development indicators for discussion on the agenda of the next meeting of the Statistical Commission.
5. Furthermore, the group of 77 and China is of the view that the ECOSOC has a role to play in promoting greater consistency in effectively monitoring the implementation of the individual MDG's and the IADG's. Notably, there are some indicators to measure progress achieved with regard to the first seven MDG's but specific benchmarks and targets are not so far available to measure the implementation of Goal 8 on global partnerships for development. We have been calling on the UN and its relevant bodies to contribute to the elaboration of such specific benchmarks to facilitate the monitoring of the implementation of the MDG 8, and other IADG's. We therefore urge the ECOSOC to take a greater and more proactive role in addressing this issue.
6. Mr. President, as we approach the target year of 2015 for the achievement of the MDGs, we repeat the call for the ECOSOC and other relevant bodies such as the Statistical Commission and the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Millennium Development Goal Indicators to redouble efforts to develop a coherent and integrated system of implementation indicators based on intergovernmental consensus, which, among other things, should give a clear and complete sense

of progress on the implementation of all the MDGs and IADGs.

7. In addition, Mr. President, the G77 and China urges the ECOSOC to ensure that the Inter-Agency and Expert Group and the Statistical Commission fully address the inadequate treatment of MDG 8 on global partnership for development. This is an issue that was raised in the Commission and which should also be addressed here in the context of our discussions in ECOSOC. There needs to be a more focused and strategic approach to monitoring MDG 8, ensuring the indicators adequately capture the targets, assessing progress on this specific goal, strengthening its targets and strengthening its implementation.

8. Mr. President, Given the importance of global partnership for development to the achievement of all the MDGs, we are concerned that inadequate attention to implementation of millennium development goal eight (MDG8) and its attendant indicators will frustrate our efforts to raise the profile of the MDGs and make greater progress on implementation of all goals at all levels. The Group of 77 and China therefore urges the ECOSOC to undertake a review MDG 8 and its targets and indicators, with a view to strengthening its implementation, and to encourage further action on this issue.

9. In this regard, the Group looks forward to an updated report of the Secretary-General on indicators for monitoring the MDGs during the next session of the Statistical Commission, as per its decision 39/114, taking into account the serious concerns expressed by many member states on the issue of development indicators during its Thirty-ninth Session. We also look forward to greater engagement of the ECOSOC on this issue in future sessions.

Thank you Mr. President.