



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS. FARHAT AYESHA OF ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN ON AGENDA ITEM: 4 UNDP STRATEGIC PLAN 2008-2011 DURING THE ANNUAL SESSION OF UNDP EXECUTIVE BOARD (New York, 19 June 2007)**

**Mr. President,  
Distinguished Delegates,**

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on the UNDP draft Strategic Plan.

2. Allow me, Mr. President, to express our thanks to the Associate Administrator for presenting Draft Strategic Plan of UNDP 2008-2011.
3. Yesterday and today, we benefited from the perspectives of the UNDP Administrator on the draft Strategic Plan. We have also received a response from the Administrator to the letter addressed to him by the Group on the draft Plan on June 12, 2007.
4. We are grateful to the Administrator for his response and are encouraged by his readiness to revise the draft and his assurances to be responsive to the guidance provided by the Board members in finalizing the draft and to respect and uphold the multilateral nature of UNDP. We are examining the Administrator's response with the seriousness that it deserves and would come back with our considered response later.
5. The Group would like to take this opportunity to stress that we are neither pushing our views on any one nor would we let anyone else do the same in the name of "Consensus".

**Mr. President,**

6. Since the Draft Strategic Plan is being formally presented under this agenda item, I might be repeating some of the points that we expressed in our statement yesterday. Moreover, the Strategic Plan is important for 130 member countries of G-77, who are hosting the largest number of UNDP country offices, and in the hope of seeing full reflection of the views expressed by the Group of 77 and China, let me take this opportunity to reiterate our detailed views on the draft Strategic Plan as under:

7. First, we reaffirm the importance of the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities, through which the General Assembly establishes key system wide policy orientation for the development cooperation and country-level modalities of the UN system including the UNDP. The TCPR "determines" the course of action for UNDP rather than "informing it". The language used in the Plan should, therefore, be in line with the language agreed inter-governmentally including in the UN resolutions.

8. Presently, we are engaged in inter-governmentally reviewing the recommendations of the Secretary General's High Level Panel Report on System Wide Coherence and preparing for the TCPR 2007. It is our hope that our deliberations in the Executive Boards would not supersede or pre-empt those processes.

9. The Group stresses that UNDP activities and its Strategic Plan should focus on delivering

effectively in development related areas. We have noted with concern that through this draft Plan UNDP would deviate from its core development mandate, particularly as regards poverty eradication. We feel that UNDP is trying to bring this shift and change in mandate both at country level and headquarter level.

10. The Group of 77 and China is seriously concerned over the selection of: respect for human rights, promotion of gender equality and encouragement of civic engagement, as the three “operational principles” of the draft Strategic Plan. We do not recall any discussion in the Board or in the context of TCPR specifically mandating this shift. We are particularly concerned as to how these three principles are going to be actually applied to UNDP’s development work and how these will be the sole basis on which development effectiveness will be determined and assessed. We strongly believe that, in order to maintain neutrality of its work, UNDP should work on the basis of “operational principles”, which have universal acceptance and application.

11. In addition to introducing these new “Operational Principles” we are also surprised to see the six drivers of development of current MYFF 2004-07 having been completely ignored in the draft Plan. We believe that future Strategic Plan should be based on the lessons learnt and results achieved during current MYFF, in order to improve the work of UNDP as well as maintain its continuity. We would like to know as to which lessons learnt in the current MYFF have been used as the basis of draft Strategic Plan.

12. Respect for national sovereignty is the key principle of UN and its operational activities and must be fully reflected in the Strategic Plan. There are, however, elements in the draft Strategic Plan that amount to undermining the principle of national sovereignty and could entail an encroachment in the internal affairs of States.

13. Similarly, the principle of national ownership should also be clearly reflected in all aspects of UNDP’s development cooperation activities. Obviously, UNDP should contribute to the realization of the national priorities of programme countries, rather than determine these.

14. South-South cooperation, we believe, is complementary to North-South cooperation, and is a way to enhance exchange of best practices and support among developing countries, regardless of their levels of development. The attempt to shift the focus and to create different categories of countries under South-South Cooperation, in the draft, is a source of concern for the Group.

15. On the financing issues, we would stress that resources should not be directed from the programme budget to meet the management costs. Rather, we believe, UNDP cost cutting exercises in the Strategic Plan should be aimed at making more savings, which could be directed to programme budget.

16. We have noted with concern (ref. para 183 b&c) that coordination and management costs would rise in the draft Plan. We want clarification as to how savings would be made through the Plan. We also like to know if additional resources will be provided to meet the costs of implementation of draft strategic plan?

17. We want to reaffirm our position that funding for development activities should not be tied to any conditionalities, or earmarked for certain focus areas. Instead, it should be allocated according to the respective national priorities and plans of programme countries.

18. We have noted that UNDP assistance is being tied to certain focus areas, which are: Poverty reduction and MDG achievement, Democratic governance, Crisis prevention and recovery and

Environment and sustainable development. The draft Plan is not providing policy space to the developing countries.

19. We have noted that much prominence is being given to Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, which is not universally agreed Declaration. We have noted that the spirit of Paris Declaration is also undermined by not giving policy space to the programme countries.

20. While identifying the “Global Development Challenges” (paras 4-10) in the Plan, there is much focus on challenges at national level. The challenges related to the Global Partnership for Development are completely ignored.

21. There is tendency to mix countries affected by natural disasters with countries that have suffered from conflicts. Though we have noted some effort to separate the indicators, text in the Plan as well as the outcomes and outputs are merged, with an unbalanced treatment. The causes, challenges and requirements of these two types of countries are different from each other and both deserve special attention in their entirety.

22. We feel that Annexes of the draft Strategic Plan should also be adjusted/ revised in the light of our comments to the main text of the Plan. We would be happy to share our comments on the details with the Secretariat.

23. In conclusion, let me reiterate that there is urgent need to thoroughly review the draft Strategic Plan and to revise it responding to the comments made by the Group of 77 and China in its various interventions to date and in the light of the comments outlined above. We also feel the need to hold further informal briefings to better understand each others views and perspectives on the Plan. It is very important to reach agreement on all the aspects of the Strategic Plan, before we approve it for UNDP to carry out its implementation.

**I thank you.**