



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. DR. JOHN ASHE, AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, PERMANENT MISSION OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE UNDP/UNFPA EXECUTIVE BOARD SECOND REGULAR SESSION, UNDP SEGMENT (New York, 9 September 2008)**

Mr. President,  
Mr. Administrator,  
Members of the Executive Board,  
Distinguished colleagues,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. At the outset Mr. President, let me say that it is a pleasure to see you once again presiding over the meeting of the Executive Board. Throughout your presidency we've appreciated your leadership and guidance. Your leadership of the Board has helped to infuse the sort of outlook on development that the organization needs to stay effective in the current development environment.

2. Allow me to also take this opportunity to thank the UNDP Administrator, Mr. Kemal Dervis, for his presentation on the organization's financial, budgetary and administrative matters.

3. Mr. Administrator you are no doubt aware that we consider you a friend of developing countries. With you at the helm of the UN's Development Programme, a vital partner in the fight against poverty and hunger and key to achieving sustainable development, we are of course keen to keep you close as a friend and we hope and trust that you value your relationship with developing countries as much as we do. The G77 and China hopes to continue the spirit of constructive engagement with the organization, the Board and with all our development partners as a means of improving coordination and cooperation and for greater development effectiveness.

Mr. President,

4. On behalf of the Group I take this opportunity to underscore the importance of the work of UNDP within the UN development system and at the country level to eradicate poverty and hunger, achieve sustainable development and the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals.

5. Given today's complex international environment there are multiple and multi-faceted challenges to development at all levels. The organization continues to be called upon to demonstrate greater effectiveness in achieving development goals, and of course as programme countries, and with the support of our partners, the Group continues to advocate for greater progress in achieving development results at the country level.

6. The food crisis, energy crisis and climate change compounded by natural disasters present unprecedented challenge to building, developing and sustaining capacity in many developing countries, and brings a sense of urgency to the need for greater aid effectiveness through improved partnerships for productivity, inter alia.

Mr. President,

7. The annual meeting of the Board in June resulted in the approval of a Strategic Plan that makes

clear the organization will take a human development-based approach to programming, which has certain basic prerequisites if it is to be effective, in particular national leadership and ownership of development interventions so that development solutions reflect and adapt to local circumstances and national objectives. This sort of approach to and perspective on development we underscore as vital for the success in delivering development results on the ground.

8. As the Strategic Plan is being implemented, on the understanding that it is a living document, guided by the 2007 TCPR resolution, the Group takes this opportunity to again underscore the importance of the development perspectives focused on human development, sustainable development and poverty eradication, and urge that these be the guiding perspectives throughout implementation of the Plan.

9. Mr. President, responding to the priority development needs of programme countries requires operationalizing the principle of national ownership and leadership, including through capacity-building, and we will be looking to the organization to ensure that this is realized every step of the way.

10. The 2007 TCPR provides clear inter-governmental guidance to the UN System and to UNDP and so shapes the parameters for management and operational actions and activities, while highlighting the principle of national ownership and leadership. We trust that the organization will rely on such guidance to the fullest extent possible.

11. Success in achieving programmatic results of course also depends on adequate provision of resources and it is important that the resource targets set out in the plan be met to facilitate full implementation through timely, adequate, predictable and unconditional funding.

Mr. President

12. It is crucial that developing countries continue to have a strong voice in the governing bodies of the funds, programmes and agencies of the UN System. This is vital for good and effective governance at the regional and global levels, just as national ownership and leadership is vital for effectiveness at the country level. It is equally important in the organization's approach and response to what is now commonly referred to as a "changing aid environment." New aid modalities and a dynamic aid environment actually increases the importance of a true partnership between the programme countries, donors and the organization, buttressed by national ownership and leadership of development programmes. As UNDP maneuvers its way in this "changing aid environment" it is important that the views and perspective of recipient countries be given full consideration, and the principle of national ownership be adhered to.

13. In conclusion Mr. President, I wish you a successful session, and you can continue to count on the Group for support throughout the rest of your presidency.

Thank you.