



**STATEMENT BY MS. JANIL GREENAWAY, MINISTER COUNSELLOR,
DELEGATION OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP
OF 77 AND CHINA, DURING THE INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON THE
UNDP'S OPERATIONS AND PROGRAMME IN THE DPRK (New York, 9
September 2008)**

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

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The Group welcomes this consultation following-up on the discussions of the Executive Board in June during the annual session, at which time the Board was presented with the report and findings of the Independent External Review Panel. It is important that the Board, in exercise of its governance role, take the necessary actions to ensure the UNDP remains active and operational in all recipient countries where there is a need and demand for the development assistance it is mandated to provide.

Mr. President,

2. After three exhaustive, intensive and costly investigations into the UNDP's operations in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), all of which have proven that allegations were groundless, unsubstantiated, and politically motivated, the UNDP-DPRK programme remains suspended. This situation continues to be of serious concern to the Group of 77 and China.

3. As stipulated in the organization's strategic plan, "both the programmatic and coordination roles of UNDP should be demand-driven and guided by United Nations tenets of impartiality and universality. The UNDP approach to development issues at the country level is one of support to national capacity development, not of political conditionality."

4. Further, the Plan as well as the General Assembly resolution 62/208 "reaffirms that the fundamental characteristics of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system should be, inter alia, their universal, voluntary and grant nature, their neutrality and their multilateralism, as well as their ability to respond to the development needs of recipient countries in a flexible manner, and that the operational activities are carried out for the benefit of recipient countries, at the request of those countries and in accordance with their own policies and priorities for development." Such tenets and approaches to development should be more than words, they should be illustrated in when, where and how the UNDP carries out its activities.

Mr. President,

5. The Group attaches a high degree of importance to the work of UNDP in developing countries. UNDP's core development mandate, that of capacity building, capacity development and support for national processes, is the lynchpin of sustainable development and represents the UN's values and goals enshrined in the Millennium Declaration, the MDGs and other IADGs. UNDP's work is central to the human development needs of the people of the DPRK, as it is to people all over the developing world.

6. Since the release of the Panel's report, the organization has had significant time to consider the findings. Moreover, there continues to be overwhelming support by the members of the Executive Board and Member States in general, buoyed by the positive results of the report, for UNDP to resume its activities in the DPRK as soon as possible. So far the Group of 77 and China has and continues to rely on the positive assurances from the organization - including the Administrator, the Associate Administrator, the regional director of the Bureau for Asia and the Pacific - that concrete actions and activities are taking place expeditiously, aimed at the resumption of normalcy of the organization's operations and the country programme in the shortest time possible.

7. In this regard we acknowledge the efforts by way of a roadmap outlined by the Regional Director and urge that any further steps that can be taken to result in the full resumption of operations on the ground and a resumption of programmatic activities as soon as possible be taken as a matter of priority. It is time for concrete action in this regard. An overwhelming majority of countries displayed an eagerness to see the organization resume its activities when we met in June, and by now the organization should have had sufficient time to put any necessary measures in place to return its operations to normalcy. We view the roadmap not so much as a stimulus for further discussions but rather as a stimulus for immediate action.

Mr. President,

8. The G77 and China underscores the need for particular attention to be paid to safeguarding the relationship and the policy dialogue between the organization and the countries within which it operates, in particular those developing countries where there is a strong need and demand for its services. Further, the organization's work should be driven by the human development needs of programme countries and not the political imperatives of those Member States who would rather politicize the work of the UNDP and compromise a country's development programme in the pursuit of narrow political interests.

9. As a Board it is our responsibility to see that substantial and concrete actions are taken to return operations to normalcy to meet development needs and in pursuit of development goals. The period of suspension has been an extremely uncomfortable one for the Board and for all involved. As the Executive Board we cannot and should not allow this to continue any longer. It risks setting precedence and encourages further politicization of other country programmes. Therefore, the objective of the roadmap should be full resumption of operations and programme in the shortest possible time.

Mr. President,

10. In conclusion the Group of 77 and China encourages all Board Members and all Member States in general to recognize the exigencies of the UNDP's activities, and strongly urge UNDP to effect resumption of its operations in the DPRK and the resumption of programmatic activities. As an Executive Board it is our responsibility to take whatever decision is necessary for this to happen, so that the organization can be guided and governed in the interest of human development and exercise its full mandate.

Thank you Mr. President.