

Statement by Mr. Mochamad Slamet Hidayat of the Indonesian Delegation, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, on agenda item 93(a): Sustainable development and international economic cooperation: (i) Implementation of the commitments and policies agreed upon in the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of the Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries; and (ii) Implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, before the Second Committee of the 53rd session of the General Assembly (New York, 19 October 1998)

New York, 19 October 1998

Mr. Chairman,

1. Let me begin on behalf of the Group of 77 and China to express our sincere appreciation to the Secretary-General for excellence of his report on this important issue: the implementation of and follow-up to the major consensus agreement on development. We would also like to extend our thanks to Mr. Nitin Desai, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, for his informative introductory remarks on the report, and to Ms. Nina Sibal, Representative of UNESCO to the United Nations and Director of the New York Office of UNESCO, for her introductory remarks on UNESCO's report on communication for development programmes in the United Nations system

2. Almost a decade ago, Mr. Chairman, the General Assembly, meeting in its Eighteenth Special Session, adopted a Declaration calling for the revitalization of economic growth and social development including the sustained growth of the global economy and favourable external conditions. Later that year the International Strategy for Development was adopted and strongly reflects many of the same principals. The Special Session was convened and the IDS was adopted in response to the lost decade to development of the 1980s and they both addressed this major challenge within the context of a rapidly changing world and globalization. Two years ago at its Fifty First Session, the world economy was recognized as picking up a strong pace and for the first time in a decade, as noted in the report, the total output of all three major country groups, developed, developing and those in transition had increased. Yet, that Session noted the implementation of both the Declaration and the IDS had fallen very short of expectations. As a result, the General-Assembly called on the membership to strengthen their implementation by, among others things, identifying and taking follow-up action on those commitments that were left unimplemented.

3. But since then, Mr. Chairman, particularly with the onset of the currency and financial crisis the immediate and possible long-term prospects for the developing countries has been totally altered. As a result and now almost ten years since the adoption of both the Declaration and the International Strategy, the challenges and objectives proposed at that time are still critically relevant. With the advent of globalization and particularly due to its deepening and spread throughout the world, traditional multilateral cooperation for development has been adversely impacted. This is clearly seen by the shift away from multilateralism towards the free play of market forces. Despite vigorous efforts through the major UN conferences in the 1990's and the initiative of an Agenda for Development to revamp international cooperation for development, these initiatives of the United Nations were sidelined and thus unsuccessful. In addition, as is now well recognized, the opening up of economies and their attempted integration into the mainstream has exposed numerous developing countries to the high risks of being either marginalized as is attested to by many Least Developed Countries (LDCs) or dangerously destabilized as many Asian countries subsequently crippled by the financial crisis clearly demonstrate.

4. Thus, to-day against these reversals and bleak back-drop, many of the objectives adopted by the Declaration and Strategy may now seem too optimistic. For instance, the goal of achieving a sustained growth of 7 percent to provide the necessary conditions for a genuine transformation of the economy, is not

now very realistic. Moreover, the six interrelated goals outlined in the report may not be easily achievable under current conditions. Yet, it is still crucial that the international community vigorously seeks to implement these goals, including: a decisive strengthening of international development cooperation, a surge in the pace of economic growth in the developing countries, sound macro-economic management, nationally and internationally, an improvement the international systems of money, finance, and trade as well as a special effort to deal with the problems of least developed countries. In this regard, we believe that if these principals and commitments undertaken in the Special Session and the International Development Strategy, are faithfully pursued and implemented, they could go a long way towards containing and reversing the crisis and putting the developing countries back on a sustainable path of development. Likewise, this help to strengthen the global economy and benefit all countries, both developed and developing alike.

5. As we approach the new millennium, the role of the United Nations for promoting international cooperation for development and the critical objective of eradicating poverty world wide, is more critical than ever. Thus, the General Assembly, in building on the outcome of the recent United Nations conferences and other relevant agreements, adopted the Agenda for Development to invigorate a renewed and strengthened partnership for development, was an important step, as it provides an all encompassing framework for international cooperation for development. This framework could prove important for implementing many of the goals and objectives of the Declaration and the Strategy. Given the rapidly changing international context, it is patently clear that concerted action at both the national and international levels are absolutely crucial. For, without such action on both of these fronts, it will be impossible to restore growth and development in this globalized economy.

Thank you.