



STATEMENT BY MR. ABDELLAH BENMELLOUK (MOROCCO), ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA, DURING THE COORDINATION SEGMENT OF THE SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (GENEVA, 8 JULY 2003)

Mr. President,

At the very outset, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China we should like to thank you and the other members of the Bureau, together with the Secretariat for the efforts you have made and the arrangements you have organized in order to ensure that this segment is a success. We would also like to thank you for the informal consultations that you convened for this segment. We would like to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate the facilitator, Madame Zarah Sharifa Ahmed from Malaysia for the way in which she conducted the consultations on the draft resolution we have before us.

Mr. President,

On behalf of my Group I should like to thank Mr. Patricio Civili for his exhaustive presentation of the Secretary-General's report for the coordination segment. I would also like to thank His Excellency, the Ambassador of Ghana, Mr. Nanah Effah Appentag and His Excellency, the Ambassador of Belgium, Mr. Jean de Ruyt, the Vice-Chairmen of the Ad hoc Working Group on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow up to major United Nations conferences and summits who kindly came to share with us and speak to us about their conclusions and their appraisal of the working group's work once it completed its work. We thank them for their contributions and explanations and we entirely agree with them.

Indeed, as it was emphasized by the two Vice-Chairmen, His Excellency the Ambassador of Ghana and His Excellency, the Ambassador of Belgium, the coordination segment is taking place now just a few weeks after the culmination of the Working Group's work on Integrated and Coordinated Implementation of and Follow up to major United Nations Conferences and Summits in the Economic and Social Fields.

One of the main issues dealt with by the Working Group was to strengthen the role of the Economic and Social Council in coordination. In this connection, we welcome the results that have been achieved by the Working Group as those results apply to the Economic and Social Council.

However, not to repeat what was done by the Working Group, the Group of 77 and China believes that the Council should now focus its attention on the implementation of the conclusions of the Working Group that were adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/270 B.

In fact, the adoption of a horizontal thematic approach to considering progress in the implementation of commitments adopted by various United Nations conferences and summits is one of the most important achievements of this Working Group.

This new approach should not be confined to repeating the current practice of the coordination segment. This new approach should represent an instrument for evaluating tangible progress made in the implementation of commitments and the impact of that implementation on the achievement of the development goals set by the United Nations.

Clearly, as has been emphasized, this approach will be based on a list of cross-sectoral issues

common to major United Nations conferences and summits that are still to be determined to establish a multi-year programme of work to make the work of the Economic and Social Council much more predictable.

These are two major objectives, which the Council must focus on this year and next year. The Group of 77 and China are prepared to work full steam ahead starting at this session to achieve these two objectives in the time available to us.

The Economic and Social Council must seek to ensure the participation of all subsidiary bodies and other stakeholders in the United Nations system in the exercise of assessing progress made in achieving progress through the crosscutting approach. All functional commissions and various follow-up mechanisms must be involved in the work of the coordination segment in order to give their input into the discussion for their own perspectives and mandates.

The decision of the General Assembly to involve UNCTAD's Trade and Development Board in this exercise is extremely important. What we are trying to achieve here is that we must take into account all inputs and dimensions in this new approach. In addition, the participation of the private sector and civil society are particularly important in this exercise.

Mr. President,

If this exercise is to succeed, it will serve to strengthen the Economic and Social Council in its role in considering progress made in implementing commitments made at various United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields.

Furthermore, one of the other important decisions relating to the Economic and Social Council is the reform of the working methods of the functional commissions and the other subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council. The purpose is for these bodies to focus their work on assessment and monitoring of the implementation of the commitments made by Member States.

It is important for all mechanisms to have the necessary tools in order to carry out such an assessment. In this connection, we welcome the work being done by the Statistical Commission in elaborating indicators and also the most recent report of the Statistical Commission, which will be considered in the general segment.

Indicators are of crucial importance in the monitoring and implementation by all countries of their various international commitments. The General Assembly, in resolution 57/270 B, also highlighted the importance of developing and applying indicators for means of implementation.

One of the key objectives of the Council is indeed to ensure that such indicators are developed for monitoring of policies and efforts made by developed countries to achieve Millennium Development Goal 8.

We would like to emphasize here the urgency for developed countries to implement their commitments related to market access, debt relief and debt cancellation, official development assistance, technology transfer, investment and assistance to developing countries in their efforts to promote economic growth to eradicate poverty and to achieve sustainable development.

It is also important for the developed countries to live up to the commitments they have made in terms of consistency and coherence of their trade, monetary and financial policies. The Group of 77 and China believes that it is of overriding importance for the Council to continue to improve its cooperation and coordination with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade

Organization. The spring meeting of the Council with these institutions for the follow up to the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development is a vital forum for coordination and implementation of the Monterrey Consensus and for achieving the development goals, particularly those contained in the Millennium Declaration.

In this connection, we welcome the decision of the General Assembly to include UNCTAD's Trade and Development Board in this meeting so that this body can also participate in the follow up and implementation of the Monterrey Consensus.

Another one of the other important elements dealt with by the General Assembly in its resolution is the interaction among the various components of the United Nations system for integrated implementation. United Nations funds and programmes must reflect, in their programmes of work and operational activities, the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits, as well as the legislative work done by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions.

Inter-institutional coordination is also of vital importance for integrated and coordinated implementation. The role of the Chief Executive Board and its mechanisms and the United Nations Development Group is also relevant for this integrated approach. The interaction of the Economic and Social Council with these mechanisms must be systematic, taking into account that these mechanisms are accountable and must report to the Council on their contributions to the follow up and implementation of international commitments.

The Group of 77 and China believes that it is extremely important for the Council to draw conclusions from the working group's work and to look at progress since 1995 in examining cross-cutting issues relevant to various United Nations conferences and summits and promoting interactive relations with various intergovernmental mechanisms and also interactive relations with institutional mechanisms.

It is important to build on past experience and to focus our attention on building on results achieved by associating all United Nations bodies and all stakeholders in the monitoring and implementation process. The Economic and Social Council must have an overview. It must place this exercise in the context of repetition of work and responsibility within the United Nation system. The Economic and Social Council, on the one hand must complement the work of the General Assembly which is, in fact the intergovernmental body which is first and foremost responsible for policy making and evaluating follow up to conferences and on the other hand, the Council must coordinate the various organisms of the United Nations system while also laying down guidelines for further progress in implementation.

Thank you.