



**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA, DR NKOSAZANA DLAMINI ZUMA, CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF 77, TO THE 30TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE GROUP OF 77 (New York, 22 September 2006)**

President of the General Assembly, H.E. Sheika Haya Rashed Al Khalifa  
Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan  
Administrator of the UNDP, Mr. Kemal Dervis  
Your Excellencies  
Distinguished Delegates

Allow me to begin by conveying on your behalf the warm wishes and congratulations to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his sterling service to the United Nations. We wish him well in his retirement. At the same time, we welcome and congratulate H.E. Al Khalifa to her election as President of the 61st Session of the General Assembly. President Al Khalifa has proven that she is not only a distinguished woman leader, but she has already made a difference at the United Nations by calling upon us to focus on the implementation of a global partnership for development during this Session.

Your Excellencies,

In the past nine months, we believe that one of the greatest achievements for the Group of 77 and China has been our ability to maintain solidarity, unity and negotiate as a collective. We were able to ensure that the interests of developing countries were protected and reflected in the follow up to the World Summit Outcome.

Since assuming the Chair of our Group, we have contributed toward the adoption of a development resolution, the establishment of a peacebuilding support office, the provision of resources to ensure the functioning of the Human Rights Council, as well as progress in the mandate review exercise. We also strongly supported the request by the Secretary-General for additional resources needed to implement the Summit decisions.

We were firm in negotiating a Development Follow-up Resolution which enhances the global partnership for development and seeks to make operational and implement development commitments made at all the major summits and conferences in the economic, social and related fields.

For the first time, a development resolution called for the use of efficient monitoring mechanisms to follow up on commitments by the Bretton Woods Institutions and the World Trade Organisation and for them to inform the General Assembly about contributions to the implementation of the outcomes of all major United Nations conferences and summits.

A historic meeting of the G77 Ministers of Science and Technology met in Brazil and launched the Consortium on Science, Technology and Innovation for the South. Professor Mohamed Hassan, Executive Director of the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World, will brief us later on the Consortium and I warmly welcome him to our meeting.

On the management issues, our Group made sure that the spending cap on the budget of the UN was lifted by consensus and thereby guaranteeing the continued financial solvency of the Organisation. We successfully negotiated the staffing and financing of peacekeeping operations before the end of the peacekeeping financial year on 30 June 2006 and avoided a financial crisis for United Nations peacekeeping activities. Furthermore, our Group was instrumental in making it possible for the refurbishment of the ageing and unsafe United Nations Headquarters to proceed without further delay.

By facilitating the adoption of General Assembly resolution 60/260, we protected the sovereign right of every Member State, as enshrined in the Charter, to participate in the decision-making of the General Assembly and pronounce on budgetary and administrative matters, irrespective of size or contribution. Furthermore, by dealing with this divisive issue in a decisive and unified manner, we were able to turn to the substance of the proposals that were intended to strengthen the ability of the Secretariat to implement mandates and to use resources more effectively, as was originally envisaged by the World Summit.

We also promoted the adoption of new accounting standards for the United Nations, improving the information and communication technology system of the United Nations, strengthened the procurement function of the Secretariat,

and increasing the level of the Working Capital Fund.

Your Excellencies,

In the coming weeks, we will receive proposals to improve the procurement system, strengthen the oversight and audit capacity, enhance accountability of the Secretariat to Member States, reform the human resources management system and improve the system of internal justice. South Africa has received a clear mandate from the Group of 77 and China Ministerial Meeting in Putrajaya on most of these issues and we intend to exercise it fully.

Also before the end of the year, we will commence with negotiations on the new scales of assessment that will determine the apportionment of the expenses of the Organisation from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2009. This is usually a difficult negotiation in which national interests often become an overriding factor. Nonetheless, as Chair we remain committed to ensuring the unity of our Group throughout the scale negotiations.

Your Excellencies,

The major challenge ahead for the Group of 77 and China in the 61st Session will be to continue to insist on the necessity for concrete implementation on all the commitments on trade, agricultural subsidies and the transfer of vitally needed resources to developing countries. This we must do if we are to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and help create a better life for all.

Finally, I wish to convey the appreciation of my Government for the valuable support and co-operation that we have received from all the Member States of the G77 and China as well as from our small but efficient Secretariat.

I thank you.