



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. SULTAN AL-MAHMOUD, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE STATE OF QATAR TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 39(A): STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF EMERGENCY HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE FIFTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 20 December 2004)

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution entitled "International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development", contained in document A/59/L.26/Rev.1.

Mr. President,

Natural disasters bring problems of a varied nature in their wake and create a particularly adverse impact, with long lasting consequences for the affected populations especially in the developing countries. Natural disasters also affect the social and economic development of countries where they occur. While it may not be possible to completely eliminate the suffering caused by natural disasters, efforts towards relief and development assistance could help in the recovery and long-term rehabilitation of those affected by such disasters.

The Group of 77 and China have once again attempted to reiterate the importance of strengthening the international cooperation, especially through effective use of multilateral mechanisms, in the provision of humanitarian assistance during all the phases of a disaster - from relief and mitigation to development, including through the provision of adequate resources.

As in the past, this resolution highlights the principles of the resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, whose annex contains the guiding principles for the strengthening of coordination of the emergency humanitarian assistance of the UN system. The resolution emphasizes the importance of international cooperation in support of the efforts of the affected States in dealing with natural disasters in all their phases. The resolution is also mindful of the effects that shortfalls in resources can have on the preparedness for and response to natural disasters. It emphasizes the importance of enhanced international cooperation to assist developing countries in their efforts to build local and national capacities and stresses the need to promote the access to and transfer of technology and knowledge related to early warning systems and to mitigation programmes to developing countries affected by natural disasters. The resolution encourages the very important use of space based and ground based remote sensing technologies and the sharing of geographical data including remotely sensed images etc.

Like last year, this year too, over 150 countries, including the members of the G-77 and China, have co-sponsored this important resolution. In addition to countries listed in the document, we are happy to announce the names of the following countries who have also co-sponsored the draft resolution: Hungary, USA, Andorra, Austria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Ireland, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Moldova, Romania and UK.

The following corrections may be made in the Rev.1 to make it consistent with the language agreed during negotiations:

In PP17, in the second line from the top, a comma may be inserted after the word "Secretariat", and in OP2, the word "high" may be inserted in the first line before the word "number".

Thank you, Mr. President.