

**GROUP OF 77
NAIROBI**

Statement by H.E. Mrs. Bibiana L. Jones, Ambassador of the Argentine Republic to the Republic of Kenya, and Permanent Representative to UNEP, UN-HABITAT and UNON, Chairperson of the Group of 77 and China, Nairobi Chapter, at the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme Second Meeting (UNON, Nairobi, 15 February 2016)

Excellency and my good friend Mahmoud Talaat, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the Republic of Kenya and Permanent Representative to UNON, UNEP and UN-HABITAT,
Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives,
Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning to you all and I think we are still in time to wish you a very fruitful, happy, peaceful and prosperous New Year. I extend these wishes your loved ones and to all and each one of your countries.

Please allow me to begin by thanking you all for commending Argentina to chair the Nairobi Chapter of the Group of 77 and China during 2016. It will be a most active year for us here in Kenya and we will have to work hard. Argentina will greatly rely on your support and expertise in coordinating the group during this very busy period.

In this context, may I also express our most sincere gratitude and congratulations to you, Ambassador Talaat, and all your team at the Egyptian Embassy for your able leadership and the exceptional work carried out as Chair of the G77 and China during 2015, and I really look forward to and will very much require your continued support.

As I mentioned, the UN agenda in Nairobi will be quite a full one this year. We are very close to the 133rd meeting of the CPR to UNEP next week, which will be followed by a series of substantial meetings of its subcommittees related to the preparation of UNEA 2, leading to the Open Ended CPR in February, the 134th meeting of CPR in March and the much awaited for Second Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in May.

We have important pending issues to agree upon in the light of these meetings. We look forward to working closely with the Group members, seeking to highlight the common ground in our positions which, of course, may present certain nuances from one country to another. In this regard, we shall remain much committed to our strong stance regarding sustainable development, integrating the social, economic and environmental dimensions in a balanced manner with the ever present target of eradicating poverty, one of the main goals of our Government. We will continue stressing the Rio principles and, in particular, the one of "common but differentiated responsibilities". We will work actively with a view to reaching an agreement on the amendment of the Rules of Procedure for UNEA and the adoption of the "Stakeholders Engagement Policy", always bearing in mind the inter-governmental nature of the organisation and the interests of all member states.

UN-HABITAT will also focus our attention this year and we look forward to a productive and close consultation with the Group members with a view to a successful HABITAT III, following the corresponding regional meetings and Prepcom III which will take place later this year.

Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

It has not been my intention to make a detailed presentation of the task which lies ahead. I have only wanted

to assure you of Argentina's commitment to the G77 and China group and of our determination to work hard and in sustained and close collaboration with you all for the benefit of the Group as such, and for the benefit of our countries.

Argentina will be open to all your suggestions and requests and I trust that, with your support and cooperation we will be able to fulfil the Group's expectations to the best of our abilities.

I thank you for your attention.