

STATEMENT BY MR. OMAR KADIRI, DELEGATION OF THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO, ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA, ON AGENDA ITEM 110: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN; AND AGENDA ITEM 111: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN AND OF THE TWENTY-THIRD SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ENTITLED: "WOMEN 2000: GENDER EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE FOR THE TWENTY-THIRD CENTURY", AT THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE 58TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 15 October 2003)



Mr. Chairman,

Allow me first to thank the Secretariat and the Chairperson of the CEDAW for their enlightening presentations.

The Universal declaration of human rights proclaims that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, including distinction based on gender. The international Community, through the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and platform of action and of the outcome of the twenty third special session of the General Assembly has committed itself to protect these rights and to strive towards ensuring gender equality, empowering women and their advancement at all levels and protecting and promoting their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Commitments taken in Beijing and its review process are not an end, but they are an important part of a global process aiming at alleviating all kinds of discrimination against women and ensuring that women, just like men, are an integral part and an equal partner in all spheres of life.

Almost a decade after Beijing and despite the efforts made at all levels, women throughout the world are still facing many challenges and obstacles that prevent them from the full enjoyment of their rights. In this regard, the Group of 77 and China calls upon the international Community, individually and collectively, to spare no efforts to overcome these impediments in order to achieve the commitments and goals agreed upon and to accelerate the implementation of the Beijing declaration and Platform of action and the outcome of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly. A sustained and firm political will at all levels is indispensable in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

It is a great source of satisfaction to the Group of 77 and China that the recent UN conferences and Summits such as the Millennium Summit, the international Conference on financing for development, the second world Assembly on Ageing and the world Summit on sustainable development have integrated a gender perspective in their outcomes and have reaffirmed the necessity of gender equality and the imperative role of women in all developmental efforts. Such integration should be translated into action in the policies and programs at the national, regional and international levels.

Regarding the forthcoming world Summit on the information society (Geneva 2003 and Tunis 2005), the Group of 77 and China welcomes the agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission on the Status of women at its forty seventh session on its priority theme entitled "Participation and access of women to the media, and information and communications technologies and their impact

on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women”.

The Commission, while noting the substantial differences in participation in, access to and use of media and information and communications technologies, their content and production and the impact of such differences on policy development at national, regional and international levels, has urged all relevant stakeholders, inter alia, to enhance, for the benefit of women and girls, international cooperation in support of national efforts to create an enabling environment to reduce the digital and information divide between developed and developing countries. Here lies one of the most important issues on the agenda of the world Summit on the information society.

Regarding the implementation and follow up of the Madrid Plan of Action I would like to stress that the Group of 77 and China has presented a draft resolution by which a specific emphasis has been put on the issue of older women and a more sustained effort of cooperation and collaboration is requested at both intergovernmental and United Nations system levels.

Mr. Chairman,

Violence against women is one of the worst violations of their basic rights and fundamental freedoms. Fighting and eliminating such a degrading phenomenon which unfortunately exists in all societies under different forms, should be at the center of national and international efforts for the advancement and empowerment of women. Multidimensional and multisectoral approaches and strategies should be adopted to this end at all levels with the participation of the United Nations and other relevant stakeholders. The Media and civil society among others have also an important role in this regard by raising awareness among the population as to the severe consequences of violence on the physical and mental health of women and on their capacity to participate positively in all activities of the society and also by providing help and assistance to the victims.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China reaffirms that while the primary responsibility for the advancement and empowerment of women lies with governments, international cooperation is indispensable in this regard especially since the process of globalization, in spite of the opportunities it offers, poses serious challenges to developing countries. Such cooperation should include, inter alia, technology transfer, information and data sharing, technical assistance, mobilization of resources and increase in official development assistance.

Policies at the national and international levels should also promote, among other things, participation of women in all economic, political and social spheres, integration of gender perspectives in legislations, public policies and programs, equal access to education and training, participation in decision making processes, especially concerning women issues, creation or reinforcement of mechanisms dealing with issues concerning women, eradication of poverty especially among women.

Unfortunately, women, particularly in rural areas, are the most affected by the consequences of poverty which leads to the feminization of poverty. The Group 77 and China believes that women, when using their full potential, would play a major role in supporting national and international efforts for the realization of the internationally agreed Commitments towards poverty eradication and sustainable development in general.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China thanks the Secretary General for presenting its valuable report

(A/58/166) on the follow up to Beijing and its review process. We note with satisfaction the increasing attention given to issues impacting on women within the United Nations main bodies which proves the international resolve to push forward the issues of empowerment of women and protection and promotion of their rights and freedoms in our organization's agenda.

The Group also notes with appreciation the valuable work and efforts of the office of the special adviser on gender issues and the office of the advancement of women of the department on Economic and Social Affairs to integrate a gender perspective in the UN activities, including peace keeping operations. The Group supports the ongoing activities throughout the UN system organizations to harmonize and coordinate their efforts towards integrating a gender perspective in their programs.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China reiterates their full support to the work of INSTRAW. Last year, we adopted Resolution 57/175 by which the General Assembly endorsed the recommendations made by the working Group on the future operations of the Institute and requested the Security General to implement the measures recommended by the working Group in this regard.

In its resolution A/57/311 of 11 July 2003, adopted by consensus, the General Assembly regretted that the nomination of a director of the Institute, a post classified at the D2 level, has not yet taken place, impairing the capacity if the Institute to function properly.

The General Assembly also unanimously urged the Secretary General to appoint immediately a director at the D2 level, to be based at the headquarters of the Institute in the Dominican Republic and thereafter to inform the working Group on the future operations of the INSTRAW of the designation of the nominee.

The Group of 77 and China stresses the importance of the implementation of this resolution and the appointment without any further delay of the director of the INSTRAW at a D2 level so that the mandates and the functions of the Institute could be fulfilled properly.

We welcome the decision of the ECOSOC to establish an executive Board composed of 10 member states which we believe will have a positive impact on the work of the institute and will facilitate its institutional process.

The Group of 77 and China believes that all the measures that have been taken and those that have yet to be implemented as well as the important work done by the working Group will lead to the revitalization and strengthening of INSTRAW for the benefit of the promotion and protection of all women's rights and the advancement of women. The political and financial support of the international Community is indispensable for the sustainability of the INSTRAW.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.