



STATEMENT BY H. E. AMBASSADOR STAFFORD NEIL, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, ON THE REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ENTITLED "IN LARGER FREEDOM: TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT, SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL" (A/59/2005) (New York, 6 April 2005)

Mr. President,

I take this opportunity on behalf of the Group of 77 and China to thank you for organizing this Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly and to congratulate you in general for your efforts to ensure that we prepare effectively for a successful High-Level Plenary at the Sixtieth Session.

The Group of 77 and China also wishes to thank the Secretary-General for the timely submission of his Report, thus discharging the mandate given to him in resolution 58/291 to prepare a comprehensive report as a basis for the consultations leading up to the High-Level Plenary meeting in September.

The Secretary-General has given us his analysis of the current global situation and has made a number of recommendations for our consideration. He has emphasised that 2005 presents a historic opportunity to address the challenges of a changing world. If this is so and the political conditions are favourable, then we should seize the opportunity. The developing countries will be ready to do so but it must be understood that the recommendations that we support and the decisions we take will be geared to strengthen multilateralism, to uphold the principles of international law and policies which promote equity and protect the rights and interests of all states. We should seek to have, at the end of the day, a stronger United Nations with improved institutional arrangements and the political orientation to deliver programmes and policies to advance welfare throughout the world, in all its constituent parts, without the application of selective and discriminatory criteria.

With these objectives in mind, we are studying the recommendations of the Secretary-General. There are differing perceptions of the orientation and philosophical approach taken in the Report and the relative emphasis with respect to development issues, security concerns and human rights. For the time being, we will limit our comments to general issues of concern which we intend to address more substantively at a later date.

Mr President,

In paragraph 4 of his Report, the Secretary-General informs us that in its preparation, he has drawn on his eight years experience as Secretary General, on his conscience and convictions and on inspiration from the High Level Panel Report on Threats, Challenges and Change as well as the Millennium Project Report. What is missing is a reference to the views and proposals of member states expressed in the discussions in the General Assembly over the past three months. It would have been reassuring if there was an indication that these were taken into account.

Mr. President, at this stage, the G-77 and China will only make general comments on the Report and its overall approach to development issues. We are looking first of all at the overall balance and areas of emphasis in the analysis and recommendations. We do so recalling that General Assembly resolution 58/291 requires the High-Level Plenary to “undertake a comprehensive review of the progress made in the fulfilment of the commitments contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, including the internationally agreed development goals and the global partnership required for their achievement, and of the progress made in the integrated and coordinated implementation, at the national, regional and international levels, and of the outcomes and commitments of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields...”

I have quoted from the resolution so that we can focus our minds on the priorities that have been set and the expectations to be fulfilled at the High-Level Plenary. The Secretary-General rightly emphasises the inter-relatedness of current challenges and threats. This only confirms and reinforces the fundamental importance of what is the foremost challenge facing the global community – reversing the widening gap between rich and poor and reducing the appalling and unacceptable levels of poverty, hunger and infectious disease, which are taking a heavy toll on human life in the developing world.

Flowing from the conclusions drawn from the Millennium Project, the Secretary-General clearly recognises the urgency, scale and dimensions of the problem. His recommendations in Section I of the Report are steps in the right direction; they are useful and merit serious consideration. Our main concern is that they do not go far enough. If

there is to be real change we need more concrete, action-oriented measures for a more adequate treatment of the development agenda. Bolder and more far-reaching decisions can and should be taken by our leaders. We look principally to three areas.

First, to the mobilisation of resources. The Millennium Project Report has calculated current and future needs and the real question is not so much how to gain new commitments but rather for ensuring implementation in relation to those already made on ODA and debt relief and to improve mechanisms for the transfer of resources. Our leaders should not be content to issue another series of exhortations. It is time for concrete measures for implementation. The achievement of the undertakings in the Rio Declaration, the conventions on Climate Change, Biological Diversity and Desertification, Agenda XXI, The JPOI and the Kyoto Protocol; the commitments in the conferences of Beijing, Copenhagen, Cairo, Istanbul and Monterrey as well as in the Brussels, Almaty and Mauritius Programmes in favour of the Least Developed countries, Landlocked Developing countries and the Small Island Developing States, respectively, and the special commitment to Africa, are all of critical importance.

Second, the Secretary-General's Report does not adequately cover the broader range of systemic economic issues and policies beyond the narrow framework of the MDGS. The major constraints to development flowing from existing global policies in trade, finance and technology need to be removed in favour of policies which promote development. It is also imperative to move away from the policy conditionalities which restrict policy options of developing countries as well as to remove coercive measures that are unilaterally applied against developing countries.

Third, change is needed with respect to international economic governance. The Secretary-General is moving in the right direction with respect to measures to strengthen the role of the ECOSOC which should lead to the creation of a better balance in the overall functioning of the different organs of the UN. However, we also need bolder action on a wider front extending to those institutions directing policies relating to trade, money and finance and technology. The time has come for steps to be taken for reforms which will open up the way for developing countries to exercise greater influence on the formulation of policies affecting global economic relations. More inclusive decision-making arrangements are needed to facilitate a more sensitive and responsive approach to development needs, especially among the Bretton Woods Institutions.

These are the broad outlines of our position which we will expand on when we discuss in greater detail the elements in Cluster I on development issues. We can use the Secretary-General's recommendations as a foundation on which to build, using other inputs and reports to make more substantive recommendations for our Heads to consider. As the Secretary-General has emphasised the opportunity should not be lost.

I thank you.