



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DELIVERED BY MR. ABDULLA EID AL-SULAITI, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE STATE OF QATAR TO THE UNITED NATIONS IN NEW YORK, AT THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE FIFTY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON ITEM 93: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY; AND ITEM 95: FOLLOW-UP TO THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF OLDER PERSONS: SECOND ASSEMBLY ON AGEING (New York, 4 October 2004)**

Mr. Chairman,

Please allow me, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, to extend to you our warmest congratulations on your election as Chairman of the Third Committee. We are confident that your personal and professional experience will guarantee the success of our work. I would also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau. And I assure you, Mr. Chairman of our full support and cooperation in order to guarantee the success of the work of the Committee during the 59th session. And I take this opportunity to thank the Secretariat for their comprehensive presentation of the Secretary-General's reports.

Mr. Chairman,

The commitments made by heads of State and Government at the World Summit for Social Development, contained in the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action, for the eradication of poverty, achieving full and productive employment and enhancing social integration, has been the cornerstone for a new consensus to place people at the centre of development policies and placed them at the centre of development efforts. The General Assembly at its twenty-fourth special session sought to achieve social development for all through taking further initiatives in this regard.

Despite the efforts made and the progress achieved in some areas of economic and social development, they do not fulfill the spirit of the text adopted by States in the WSSD and the 24th Special Session of the General Assembly. Vast sectors of our societies, in particular in the developing and the least developed countries, are still facing a serious challenge, due to serious financial crises, insecurity, poverty, unemployment, inequality in income growth, and the spread of deadly diseases like AIDS.

The Group of 77 and China is convinced that achieving social development, or the movement towards equitable societies with equal rights and equal opportunities, continues to be characterized by a gap between intentions and actions, between proclaimed objectives and the actual orientation of national and international policies. Adopting policies that focus solely on people, is still extremely unrealistic. We are confident that the issue of achieving progress in the realization of long-term goals also requires supportive and coherent economic policies at the national and international levels.

Mr. Chairman,

Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, demands a new partnership between developed and developing countries, following sound policies, establishing good governance at all levels, guaranteeing the rule of law, mobilizing resources, attracting international financial flows, promoting international trade as an engine for development, increasing international and financial cooperation for development, sustainable debt financing and external debt relief and enhancing the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems.

The Group of 77 and China, therefore, urges developed countries to make concrete efforts towards achieving the target of providing 0.7 per cent of their gross national product as official development assistance to developing countries and from 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of their gross national product as official development assistance to least developed countries.

The Group of 77 and China would also like to reiterate its support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and calls on the developed countries and the United Nations system to support this partnership and complement the efforts undertaken by Africa to overcome the challenges of sustainable development.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China is completely convinced that while social development is a national responsibility in the first place, it cannot be successfully achieved without the collective commitment and joined efforts of the international community and within the framework of full respect for national Sovereignty and religious and cultural diversity of different societies.

It is appropriate, in the context of preparing and arranging for the various reviews and events that will take place in the United Nations in 2005, especially the 10-year review of the outcome of the World Summit on Social Development and the review of and the 24th Special Session of the General Assembly to stress the need:

a) to fully and extensively assess the implementation of the ten commitments adopted at Copenhagen in 1995, the further initiatives adopted at the 24th session of the General Assembly, all major UN events and the Millennium Declaration.

(b) to establish a real dialogue for strengthening and advancing North-South partnership within the intergovernmental bodies that entails a comprehensive assessment of the development obstacles encountered by countries, particularly developing countries and Least Developed Countries.

(c) to address the negative impact of globalization on social and economic development particularly in developing countries and Least Developed Countries.

Mr. Chairman,

The critical situation in which many older persons live throughout most of the developing world makes urgent the need to work towards the promotion and protection of their civil political, economic, social and cultural rights. The challenges older persons face need to be addressed from a realistic perspective, in order to ensure their full participation in society. They need to be supported and encouraged in accordance with the provisions of the Madrid Plan of Action. As developing countries, the Group of 77 and China are fully prepared to share our part of responsibility by implementing the Madrid Plan of Action and providing the public sector a pivotal role to play in this process. I would like to take this opportunity to call on our development partners to intensify international cooperation for the effective implementation of the provisions of the Madrid Plan of Action and for the promotion of social development.

I thank you.