



**STATEMENT OF H.E. MR. MOHAMED BENAÏSSA, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND COOPERATION OF THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO, AT THE TURN-OVER CEREMONY OF THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE GROUP OF 77 FOR THE YEAR 2003 (New York, 16th January 2003 )**

Mr. President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela,  
Mr. Secretary General of the UN,  
Mr. Administrator of the UNDP,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like, first of all, to thank the members of our Group for having entrusted my country with the chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China for this year. We value this trust and the exalting responsibility behind it. I would also like to assure you that Morocco will spare no efforts to deserve this trust and promote, with determination, pragmatism and imagination, the collective interests of our Group in the agenda of the year 2003.

Our effort will be made in the continuation of the remarkable work accomplished during last year by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Allow me, Mr. President, to pay tribute to the remarkable efforts of your diplomatic team under the able leadership of our colleague and friend, H.E. Mr. Roy CHARDITON and extend to you the expression of all our gratitude.

I would like also to congratulate H. E. Ambassador ALCALAY, who has accomplished an untiring work by leading our Group in an intricacy of conferences and meetings that have been succeeding in the course of last year.

The adoption of the Monterrey Consensus and the implementation plan of Johannesburg and Madrid Plan of Action are historical achievements for developing countries. We have to be proud of these achievements and congratulate Ambassador ALCALAY who knew how to unify and guide the 134 members of our Group during the difficult negotiations, which enabled us to reach such success. My congratulations go, also, to his team for having served our Group with competence and devotion.

I would like also, to thank the Secretary General of our Organization, Mr. Kofi ANNAN, for his benevolence, his thoughtfulness and availability towards our Group since he took office at the head of United Nations. Our thanks go as well to Mr. Malloch Brown, Administrator of UNDP, partner devoted to the cause of development. We hope that we could rely on their support and commitment in order to advance the causes, which we hold dear in our hearts: development and peace in a world reconciled with itself.

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary General of the UN,  
Mr. Administrator of UNDP,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In his statement, H.E. Mr. President Hugo CHAVEZ has drawn up a complete assessment of the

commitments taken by the international community towards developing countries. These commitments had as a setting Monterrey, Johannesburg and Madrid. They determine, largely, the mandate which my country will strive to accomplish, with your cooperation, during this year.

The greatest challenge which confronts our Group lays in the adaptation to globalization. In fact, if globalization offers chances for development, no one could deny that it continues, at the moment, in deepening inequalities between the poor and the rich and the most vulnerable societies have been marginalized. In fact, few developing countries were able to improve their export sectors and win places in the international market, by opening more broadly their economies. This had, even, perverted effects, by exposing some of them to acute financial crises.

It is, then, high time to remedy dysfunctions of the global economy and imbalances of international structures in the fields of finance, trade, technology and investment so that globalization could be beneficial to all : Because globalization cannot do without a minimum of globalization of the rules in a way that international law and adapted institutions protect common interests of the entire international community and particularly, those of destitute countries, unable to participate in the global economic competition on their own.

Monterrey conference has tried to provide some responses by calling for coherence in monetary, financial and trade policies and for the enhancement of the participation of developing countries in decision and normative processes.

It goes without saying that the United Nations, as a Universal organization, has a central role in the implementation of a multilateral approach associating all the parties to consolidate international peace and security, promote the coherence of the global policies of development and favour a balanced sharing of benefits and advantages of globalization.

Reinforcing multilateralism, particularly, through the reform of United Nations, remains the only way to ensure that the opening of markets have as ultimate finality, the improvement of the fate of the human person under all latitudes and without discrimination.

The Millennium Summit was a historical occasion to reaffirm the principles of international law, solidarity and cooperation and to set development goals with targets and deadlines. The Millennium declaration is a reference for all of us and a framework for assessing the efforts undertaken at all levels, national, regional and international.

The Monterrey Consensus allowed us to adopt an integrated approach of development where issues of development, trade, debt, Official Development Aid, investment and systemic questions of global coherence of trade, monetary and financial policies are apprehended in a global manner.

All the parties, developed countries, the Bretton Woods Institutions, and developing countries have taken political commitments in favour of development financing. Civil society and private sector, on the other side, will take on their responsibility and play a substantial role to fulfill these commitments.

The Monterrey consensus marks the beginning of a new phase. Besides, we have to gather our efforts and unify our position to ensure the implementation of the Monterrey political commitments. Discussions will continue within the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and dialogue will be carried on with Bretton Woods Institutions and World Trade Organization as well as in the context of meetings with G 8.

The mechanisms of follow-up which have been set will enable us to make an assessment of the

progress achieved in the implementation of these commitments by member States, the United Nations system and the international financial institutions, on the national, sub-regional, regional and international levels.

At Johannesburg, we have deepened the thought on sustainable development and raised awareness on threats to our planet. And even though Johannesburg Implementation Plan does not respond totally to developing countries aspirations, it represents a first firm commitment for the achievement of the goals set by the International Community since Rio Summit. It needs to be implemented with the fight against poverty as a central goal.

During this year, we will have then, the occasion to take up discussions on environment and development issues, at the meetings of the Commission on Sustainable Development. But, from now on, we have to start our consultations in a manner to ensure the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Action. In this respect, a particular attention should be granted to the establishment of a working program reflecting the interests of our Group. If our first goal consists in the implementation of Johannesburg commitments and the results of the major international Conferences since Rio, we have to be ready to examine any new question, representing a particular interest to our countries.

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary General of the UN,  
Mr. Administrator of UNDP,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Doha Conference decided to place developing countries interests at the heart of negotiations and make them a development cycle. Member states of the United Nations, as well, committed themselves at Monterrey, then at Johannesburg to give effects to the Doha Declaration and improve access to markets to developing countries.

Nevertheless, the evolution of the world economic situation and the stalemate in negotiations, as well as, the worrying rise of protectionism may seriously hinder the achievement of the goals set forth in the Doha Declaration.

Moreover, during last year, the Heads of State and Government of countries members of the United Nations conveyed their support to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and recognized that its success will depend on the support of donors as well. The United Nations also decided to adopt NEPAD as a new political frame of cooperation with Africa.

In fact, NEPAD constitutes a clear and courageous response to multiple challenges to which the African continent is confronted and a resolute will of African countries to strive, together, for democratization of their political systems and reform of their economic policies. This development program represents a reference for regional integration, by trying to integrate countries and sub-regions, to widen trade areas and create large scale economies.

Consequently, we have to follow very closely its implementation and call on the international community and donors to keep the promises made to Africa, which remains a disaster-stricken and marginalized continent, in spite of its huge potentialities. For this reason, efforts should be redoubled to enhance growth and reduce poverty.

Furthermore, a particular attention must be given to peace consolidation and reconstruction of African countries emerging from conflicts. We welcome the adoption in last July, by ECOSOC, of the resolution on African countries coming out of a conflict and the consecutive setting of the ad hoc Group on Guinea-Bissau. We look forward to examining the conclusions and recommendations of this working Group, very soon, so as to lend the necessary support to our brotherly country, Guinea-Bissau, which we assure of our solidarity.

Such example is a test which we hope will be extended to other countries in a way to associate, closely, peace keeping and peace building in order to ensure sustainable stability in the African continent.

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary General of the UN,  
Mr. Administrator of UNDP,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are pleased with the creation of the Bureau of the high Representative for the least developed countries, landlocked countries and small island developing States, and we hope that the creation of this structure will ensure the effective and coordinate implementation of the new program of Action in favour of LDCs for the decade of 2001-2010. We are of the view that it will be difficult for the High Representative to fulfill its assigned tasks, if it is not provided timely with the required means.

We congratulate this Group of countries which have created their own coordination Bureau. We are sure that, under the guidance of our brotherly country, Benin, this initiative will enhance cohesion, and coordination among all countries and components of the Group of 77 and China. We all have to show solidarity with LDCs and make the implementation of the program of Action in favour of these countries among our priorities.

The LDCs need an increased support in ODA and debt cancellation or its substantial reduction, for debt continues to absorb a big part of their financial resources. They also need better access to the markets of developed countries, if we want to give them a chance to achieve the Millennium development goals.

Many developing countries have cooperation and assistance programs in favor of this category of countries. It is the case of my country, which decided to cancel the debt of the least developed countries in Africa, and allow free access of their exports into its market.

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary General of the UN,  
Mr. Administrator of UNDP,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the social and humanitarian fields, the World Conference against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance, held at Durban in September 2001, was the occasion for the international community to mobilize all good wills to eradicate these degrading and shameful phenomena.

The holding of the World Conference and the adoption of the Declaration and the action Program

are not ends in themselves. They need an effective implementation through a firm political support and appropriate financing of all follow-up mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels.

The same problems arise in the implementation of the commitments taken within the Copenhagen Declaration on social development and the program of Action which has as a major goal to place the human being in the center of sustainable development and to strive for the construction of societies based on stability, security and equity for all.

The achievement of the Copenhagen goals and of the 24th Special Session of the General Assembly requires the existence of a genuine will on the part of international community. This ought to be conveyed, particularly, by an appropriate financing of all the activities relating to social development, on national and international levels. It is, in fact, certain that governments themselves should, on the first place, ensure the improvement of the social situation of their populations, but also efforts of developing countries in this field should be supported politically and financially so that they can reach their goals.

It is also certain that the achievement of the goals of international Conferences, held recently, will largely favor the achievement of the Copenhagen commitments.

Mr. President,  
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It is, thus, obvious that the challenge to be taken up consists in the implementation of the results of these Conferences and Summits in order to reach the agreed goals in the economic and social fields. The United Nations are invited to find a unified, practical and innovative approach with regard to the follow-up.

We are hereby satisfied with the establishment of the ad hoc committee on integrated and coordinated follow-up of the United Nations Conferences and Summits, which is, needless to say, an initiative of our Group. We will actively and efficiently participate in the discussions of the Ad hoc Group with the aim to reaching conclusions which meet with the aspirations of our countries.

In our perspective, if this Committee should, as per our wish, forge a global and horizontal approach for the follow-up of the United Nations Conferences results, the first goal of this exercise would have to be effective implementation of the commitments made. Nevertheless, this integrated implementation should not at all be

at the expense of the specificity and identity of each process. Each conference has, in fact, anticipated a specific mechanism of follow-up and implementation.

From now on, we have to start preparations, within our Group, for the meeting of this Committee. The Group of 77 and China will have as a task to seriously look into the follow-up mechanisms of these Conferences in order to see, in the spirit of dialogue and mutual concertation, how all United Nations Member states and all international development partners fulfill their respective obligations and commitments.

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary General of the UN,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Reaffirming the role of multilateralism and reinforcing the role of the United Nations in the economic and social fields, as well as the implementation of the commitments of the recently held Conferences, in particular, those of Monterrey and Johannesburg could only be achieved within a partnership with developed countries. The traditional approach of the international cooperation based on the grant of conditioned financial and technical assistance is out-dated. The current challenges impose on us the adoption of a new cooperation approach, based on partnership and mutual respect.

To that effect, we have to pursue North-South dialogue and improve consultation efforts on issues of common interest. We will continue to promote a dialogue based on a spirit of partnership and mutual interest and also on shared but differential responsibilities.

We wish to continue dialogue with Member States of G 8 to further reinforce our relations and cooperation in order to come out with appropriate solutions to the difficulties facing developing countries.

We have to further explore, at the highest possible level, the means to implement common commitments in development financing, sustainable development and, particularly, regarding access to markets, as it is admitted by everybody that trade is the mainspring of economy and social development, given that it generates important financial resources and stimulates growth.

We reiterate our call to developed countries in order that results of the trade multilateral negotiations within the World Trade Organization should be balanced and take into consideration developing countries specific interests. We will continue our dialogue with rich countries so that free access to their markets and without quotas, by the least developed countries, should be assured on a consolidated basis.

We will continue to plead for the increase of Official Development Assistance which is so important to our countries and, particularly, to the least developed among us. We welcome with satisfaction the announcements of contributions made by some countries at Monterrey Conference and Johannesburg Summit. We will continue to call on developed countries, which have not yet done so, to reach the agreed target of 0.7% GDP and devote 0.15 % to 0.20 % of it to the least developed countries.

We will continue, as well, to call on the developed countries to adopt incentive measures in order to encourage foreign direct investment and improve development perspectives of developing countries so as to reach growth and sustainable development.

The current international context forces us to cooperate in order to lay the foundations of a new North-South partnership for development based on mutual respect and co-responsibility. The ultimate goal is to create an international environment which enables each country or a group of countries to integrate in the world economy.

The challenges we face, at the moment, impose on us the exploration of new forms of cooperation for a better future and a world where all countries and peoples in their diversity of culture, religion and political system, will find their place.

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary General of the UN,  
Mr. Administrator of UNDP,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Maintaining and enhancing our unity and solidarity are two cardinal principles which should continue to guide our action at all circumstances.

Within this context, my country will spare no effort during his mandate to reinforce this unity and solidarity with the precious support of all members so as to set the bases of a coordinated position on issues of common interest.

This solidarity is expressed by defending common interests at international fora by setting North-South relations which promote harmonious and balanced development for all, as a foundation of international peace and security.

Solidarity is expressed, also in the promotion of South-South relations under a renewed form through, among other things, regional and sub-regional cooperation and integration. Partnerships development in economic, social and environmental fields, as well as, joint-ventures encouragement are important and promising assets for the integration of developing countries in the world economy.

Our Heads of State and Government have agreed at the Havana Summit on priorities for our Group in this field and identified the frame for our action. We have to continue our efforts for the implementation of the Havana Plan of Action by encouraging all initiatives and programs in order to reinforce South-South relations.

On the other hand, the Havana Program of Action has scheduled the holding of a high level Conference in 2003. Morocco is looking forward to host this Conference and intends to strive to make it represent an opportunity to, even, invigorate South-South relations in the perspective of the next summit of the Seventy Seven and China in 2005.

The Moroccan government is determined to make of this Conference, at mid-term, a productive and successful meeting and a starting point of a new era in South-South cooperation, and suggests to make it focus on the following themes:

- Assessment of the action programs of Buenos-Aires on TCDC and of Caracas on ECDC to update them and adapt them to the world context, marked with globalization, liberalization and predominance of information and communication technologies,
- Reexamination of the General System of Trade Preferences among developing countries to make it more performing,
- Mid-term review of the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations and decisions of the Havana Summit,
- The search for ways and means to reinforce South-South cooperation in favour of LDCs, particularly, in Africa, the most vulnerable members of the Group, in a way that could translate into facts the solidarity principle between all its members.

The Conference will be a propitious occasion to proceed to an assessment of the state of implementation of Havana Plan of Action and examine necessary orientations to be taken in light of the evolution in world economy, international financial system and multilateral trade negotiations, as well as, in the international economic relations, in general.

We would have to launch a reflection on the means to promote partnerships in the main sectors and fields favoring full employment and poverty reduction.

Development of projects and regional and sub-regional development programs in the fields of basic infrastructures, education and health and in other fields should, as well, occupy a central place in our relations and in the elaboration of our development strategies.

Furthermore, the participation of civil society and the private sector in the economic and social development is, more and more, an unavoidable reality.

We have to continue our efforts, to further improve the role of civil society and private sector in the economic and social development, encourage them in their activities and associate them to the elaboration and implementation of national development policies.

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary General of the UN,  
Mr. Administrator of UNDP,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our Group's mandate and ambitions contrast with its financial and human resources. In fact, it is time to examine the institutionalization of a real Secretariat of the Group and the improvement of coordination between its different chapters. Despite the commendable efforts undertaken by my predecessors, our Group didn't succeed in taking concrete measures in this regard.

The evolution of the international economic relations, the unprecedented increase of United Nations activities, difficulties encountered by our countries, our diplomatic missions size and the human and financial resources at our disposal, as well as, the importance of the goals we have set, impose on us the establishment of a reinforced Secretariat, well structured, capable of serving the Group with good secretariat work.

In this respect, we have to explore other solutions, particularly, the possibility for countries, that are in a position to do so, to lend professional staff to the secretariat of our Group, at short or medium term. We intend to examine seriously this issue during this year.

The other problem we are faced with is the payment of contributions. The majority of our Group members have not yet paid their contributions and I would like, here, to encourage them to do so without delay.

We also have to reflect upon the manner to enhance the Group's working methods. Obviously, consensus remains at the basis of our Group unity and solidarity, but other ideas, particularly the creation of ad hoc groups, could be explored to improve our deliberations and reinforce our negotiation and dialogue capabilities with our partners in different international arenas.

Mr. President,



Mr. Secretary General of the UN,  
Mr. Administrator of UNDP  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The United Nations remain the appropriate setting, by their universality and general competence, to deal with world affairs. But it is to be feared that this setting would be in part inadapted to the new stakes.

Our Group supported the efforts and initiatives of H.E. Mr. Kofi Annan to reinforce the Secretariat effectiveness in a way to better serve all member States so as to achieve common goals. But beyond the administrative machinery, our group has to continue its commitment in favour of General Assembly's revitalization, Security Council Reform and ECOSOC restructuring.

It is in the interest of all the United Nations members, but, particularly, in the interest of our Group to have a more performing organization, more effective but also more attentive to our people's needs and aspirations, in the economic and social development and peace keeping and international security.

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary General of UN,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you have, undoubtedly noticed, my statement does not exhaust the list of all the activities of the Group of 77 and China for the year 2003. Other themes hold our attention, such as, the preparations of the ministerial meeting on transit transport cooperation and the information society World Summit.

In conclusion, I would like to assure our Group members that Morocco will spare no effort to strive for the achievement of the goals that our Group agrees to identify as having priority during this year.

We will draw from the values of unity and solidarity of our Group, necessary strength to bring highly and strongly our Group's aspirations and serve its interests.

Our constant concern will remain the strengthening of our Group's capability and its cohesion so that it could continue playing the role of the privileged and unavoidable interlocutor in developing democratic, fair and interdependent international relations.

Thank You.