

POINTS MADE BY H.E. MR STAFFORD NEIL, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAMAICA, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA, ON THE DEVELOPMENT CLUSTER OF THE PROPOSED OUTCOME DOCUMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 28 July 2005)

General Comments

1. The G77 values the principles of inclusiveness, transparency and openness and for this reason is deeply appreciative of the opportunity to engage in this exchange of views on the revised outcome document for the High-level Plenary Meeting in September. We believe this process should be continued with these objectives in mind as we advance to the September meeting.
2. By way of general comments, the G77 and China wishes to thank you and your Facilitators for your efforts in preparing the revised outcome document before us. We acknowledge that there have been significant improvements in the text for which we are appreciative. The development cluster has been given increased coverage. The following comments are with a view to further improve the text.

Global Partnership for development

3. This section of the document is fundamental. It defines the important principles to attain goal 8 of the MDGs. In order to improve this section we would like to propose:

" the inclusion of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities in paragraph 18, given that there are different levels of development and different accompanying levels of responsibility; and

" the need to ensure more balance in paragraphs 20 and 21 to take account of responsibilities at the national and international levels. There should be, for example, corresponding obligations under both paragraphs regarding combating corruption, including in the corporate sector, and promoting good governance. We have concerns about the elements identified in the first three sub-paragraphs of paragraph 20 which we deem unduly prescriptive in how they address national responsibilities vis-à-vis the private sector and the free market ideology. They run the risk of violating the principle of national policy space which must be safeguarded. This is not to say that some of the advice advanced might not be good, but developing countries must be free to choose as there is no single development model. There is also need for re-ordering sub-paragraphs 1, 2 and 5 of paragraph 21 which address national level responsibility.

Financing for Development

4. There have been encouraging signs with respect to financing for development. We welcome the commitments made, especially by the EU and others, to increase resources both in the short-and long-term. However, we believe it is important to reaffirm the long-standing commitment of 0.7 per cent target of GNI for ODA and to urge those which have not yet taken positive steps in this regard to do so to ensure that this target is achieved, preferably by 2015.

5. We are puzzled by the inclusion, both qualitatively and quantitatively, in sub-paragraph 3 of paragraph 22, of the private sector contributions to development and humanitarian relief. We do not belittle such contributions from philanthropic organizations, but they are not part of the framework of economic cooperation of which we speak when we refer to development financing. Reference to the latter is in the context of ODA and the benefits from trade and debt relief, among others. We would therefore propose that this sub-paragraph be deleted.

Debt

6. The G77 can generally go along with the proposals in this section. However, we remain unhappy with the reference to the IMF/World Bank debt sustainability framework given that the process would not have included many developing countries. We would therefore not want to give an explicit endorsement of the framework in this document.

Trade

7. The G77 would have liked to see more expansive treatment of trade issues, given its importance in economic development. We believe the WTO Ministerial meeting in Hong Kong is an important opportunity to indicate the direction which trade negotiations should take. Accordingly, a more expansive treatment should address:

- the arbitrary and abusive use of non-tariff barriers, including technical standards, which unfairly restrict access of developing countries' products into developed countries' markets;
- the elimination of export subsidies by developed countries;
- enhanced market access for goods and services of developing countries in the markets of developed countries;
- special and differential treatment for developing countries;
- the question of commodities and the need for corrective measures to address the problem of price volatility;
- small and vulnerable economies; and

- the integration of the development dimensions in rule-making in the intellectual property regime and to facilitate transfer of technology and knowledge to developing countries (TRIPS Agreement).

Global Governance and Systemic Issues

8. The issue of global governance and systemic issues is of primary importance. Paragraph 28 provides an important opening vis-à-vis the role of the UN but it should specifically mention its role in international development policy formulation.

9. Unfortunately, paragraphs 26 & 27 of the outcome document do not go beyond Monterrey. There are, for example, no calls for reform of the BWIs which are in urgent need of reform to ensure accountability, transparency, openness and democratization. Calls for reform are seen as subversive and as a challenge to the established order. Instead, it is at the UN where developing countries have a voice that trenchant voices - sometimes threatening voices- are raised that the UN must reform. In some instances, such reform is called for with the proviso that if it is not attained, funding will be withheld.

Employment

10. There is the need to include in paragraph 32, the goal of full employment, in accordance with commitment 3 of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development, 1995

Sustainable Development

11. Having reviewed the contents of this section, we question whether the current title is the most appropriate since we have extensive references to the environment. We will provide an alternate proposal for consideration.

12. We would also like to propose language to replace paragraph 33 subparagraph 10 on forests, to avoid any controversy and to keep the focus on the importance of forests, inter alia, in the attainment of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs:

Strengthen the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests for the benefit of current and future generations, including through enhanced international cooperation, so that trees and forest contribute fully to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, taking full account of the linkages between the forest sector and other sectors

13. We should also recognize and promote the sustainable development of indigenous peoples and the protection of traditional knowledge and practices.

14. We believe that it is important to fully reflect paragraph 14 of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) on sustainable consumption and production patterns, with emphasis on the lead to be taken by developed countries in pursuing this objective.

15. With respect to paragraph 33 sub-paragraph 4, we would like to propose the inclusion of language on the need to combat land degradation, address the cause of desertification and land degradation, and to provide the necessary financial resources to implement the UN Convention to Combat Desertification.

HIV/AIDS and other health issues

16. The G77 welcomes support to launch a global initiative to strengthen national health systems in developing countries, as indicated in paragraph 34 sub-paragraph 3. It is one recommendation from the Panel which was positive. We would propose a re-ordering of the paragraph so that the emphasis is first on the launch of the initiative in 2006 and the strengthening of health systems by 2010. We would also like to see more emphatic language regarding the provision of resources for the initiative.

Science and Technology for Development

17. The Sachs report had called for the launch of a global initiative for research and development. However, the wording of paragraph 37 dilutes the initiative. It needs more emphatic support in terms of resources.

18. We would also like to see language in recognition of the establishment of the Digital Solidarity Fund which aims to narrow the digital divide and promote sustainable development.

Special Needs

20. We have some concern about the reference to the Peace Building Commission in paragraph 42 and the link between the work of the Commission and countries affected by natural disasters, given that the Commission is likely only to be involved in post conflict situations.

21. We remain concerned that there is nothing on countries under foreign occupation and on the corrective measures to be taken in that regard.

22. There is also no mention of the unilateral coercive economic measures taken by wealthy countries which use economic power to strangle and create impoverishment in developing countries. We recommend paragraph 102 of the JPOI which addresses this issue.