

United Nations  Nations Unies

THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LE PRESIDENT DE L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE

25 January 2005

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Jean Ping,  
President of the 59th Session of the General Assembly,  
at the Ceremony of the Change of Presidency of the Group of 77 and  
China**

Mr. President of the Group of 77 and China,  
Mr. Minister for Foreign Affairs of Qatar,  
Mr. Secretary-General,  
Mr. Associate Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme,  
Mr. Executive Secretary,  
Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am especially honoured to be present at this ceremony, in which, for the first time, you have chosen to make the President of the General Assembly of the United Nations a participant.

Mr. President,

I would like to begin by congratulating you on your distinguished election to the presidency of the Group of 77 and China.

I have no doubt that your rich experience will be an asset in advancing the concerns of the Group. My best wishes for success go with you, as you put into effect the priorities you have just outlined.

I would also like to pay tribute to Qatar, which, throughout its term at the head of the Group, worked tirelessly to promote South-South cooperation and equitable international trade relations as major factors in development and in the battle against poverty.

I would like to call to mind the 2001 Doha Declaration adopted during that cycle of international trade negotiations within the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Doha High-level Forum on Trade and Investment held on 5 December 2004, and the forthcoming South-South Summit to be held in Doha in June 2005.

Mr. President,

You take up your mandate at a turning point in the history of the United Nations, which is engaged in a process of radical reform on which the Heads of State and Government of its Member States will have to give their views in the course of the High-level Plenary Meeting in September 2005.

As you know, on that occasion the issue will be to assess the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, to which your Group - our Group - rightly attaches particular importance. I am convinced that the Group of 77 and China will, under your enlightened leadership and with the dynamic support of your secretariat, continue to play an active role in the preparations for that important Meeting.

With that in mind, I wish to assure you that I stand ready to work in close cooperation with you yourself, Mr. President, and with the Group of 77 and China.

I thank you.