



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA  
BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MOURAD BENMEHIDI, PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVE OF ALGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND  
CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE 56<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE  
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

**New York, 27 February 2012**

**Madam Chair,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,**

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. At the outset, allow me, on behalf of the Group, to extend our warmest congratulations to you and the other members of the Bureau on your election and for the excellent manner in which you are steering the proceedings of the 56<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The Group of 77 and China wishes to assure you of its full cooperation during the deliberations of this very important session.
2. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for the reports submitted under the priority theme which will certainly enrich our discussions.
3. This fifty-sixth session is the second one since the establishment of UN-Women. In this regard, the Group takes note of the progress that has been made in its institutional consolidation under the leadership of its Executive Director Mme Michelle Bachelet and looks forward to the valuable contribution of UN-Women in achieving the fundamental goal of economic empowerment of women, in particular in rural areas, besides its involvement in promoting women's political participation.

**Madam Chair,**

4. The Group of 77 and China welcomes this year's priority theme, entitled "**The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges**", which constitutes an excellent opportunity to focus on this larger segment of the population which must remain a priority given that the overwhelming majority of the world's women and girls live in rural areas. This theme also challenges us to highlight the established linkages between the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Beijing commitments. We strongly believe that the empowerment of rural women has a direct impact on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration in all areas and particularly in relations to poverty eradication and hunger.

5. The Group is deeply concerned, as pointed out in the Secretary-General's Report, that rural women and girls are still facing gender specific constraints to have access to productive resources, such as land, finance, information, extension services and technologies. We fully agree with the conclusion that the empowerment of rural women is dependent on several factors, including ownership and control over land, access to diverse types of employment and income generating activities, access to public goods, infrastructure, education, training, health care, financial services, markets and opportunities for participation in political life and in the design and implementation of policies and programmes.

**Madam Chair,**

6. The Group of 77 and China is of the view that despite the progress made thus far on the status of women, we are still faced with a myriad of challenges and obstacles that need to be thoroughly addressed and effectively overcome in order to achieve full and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Those obstacles include high incidences of poverty and gender based violence, high levels of HIV and AIDS, as well as the widespread of unemployment and the lack of access to social services such as social protection, education and health. The persistence of gender stereotypes, trafficking in women and girls, women's under-representation in decision-making processes, violation of fundamental women's rights and the effects of climate change and global warming are also identified among the main impediments to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women.

7. In line of these persistent challenges, we recognize the need to expand efforts and coordinate all necessary actions to address these important issues at the national and international level, and we call upon international organizations and developed countries to support national programs for women, including women and girls with disabilities. In this respect, the role of UN-Women is of utmost importance in promoting better coordination within the UN System in order to address all these multiple barriers that impede the advancement of women.

**Madam Chair,**

8. In addition to those persistent obstacles, new threats and challenges are emerging. In this context, the Group of 77 and China would like to stress the importance of adopting appropriate measures to identify and address the ongoing negative impacts of the global economic and financial crisis, including the food crisis and continuing food insecurity, energy access and the challenges

posed by climate change on women and girls, including women and girls with disabilities, and to design stimulus packages taking into account the needs, priorities and contributions of women, as well as greater awareness of the need for gender-responsive budgeting initiatives that are designed to determine resource needs and financing gaps at the national level.

**Madam Chair,**

9. The Group of 77 and China firmly believes that the achievement of peace, equality and development are crucial for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the MDGs, particularly in the area of the advancement of women. In this regard, we would like to urge once again the international community to give priority attention to the plight of women living under foreign occupation and put an end to their suffering.

**Madam Chair,**

10. The Group of 77 and China is of the belief that national efforts must be complemented by those of the international community which has a share of commitments to fulfill in order to create an enabling international environment for the full implementation of the Platform for Action, including the fulfillment of all commitments on official development assistance, debt relief, market access, financial and technical support and capacity building.

**Madam Chair,**

11. The Group of 77 and China will be presenting during this session a Draft Resolution before our Commission, entitled "**Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women**", based on the Secretary-General's Report contained in document E/CN.6/2012/6.

12. In conclusion, the Group reaffirms its commitment to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and looks forward to having a successful session with a productive outcome that contributes to achieving the goals of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

I thank you.

