



Statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China by the Representative of the Republic of South Africa at the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, 26 June 2015

Mr President,

Let me start by thanking you on behalf of the Group of 77 and China for your efforts in convening this High-level Political Forum on sustainable development.

The High Level Political Forum was born out of the need to have an improved and more effective institutional framework for sustainable development and was thus set up as the key forum for the anticipated follow up and review progress in the implementation of sustainable development commitments. Towards the fulfillment of this mandate, it is important that every step we take strengthens the forum for the envisioned role of follow up and review of progress.

In this regard, the Group would like to make the following points:

Firstly, it is the Group's considered view that the preparatory process for the HLPF could benefit from more participation by member states in a timely and transparent manner. The current practice of the preparatory process being the sole preserve of the ECOSOC Bureau tends to create uncertainty about the process and outcomes thereof. Increased and better participation by member states could make for more transparency, understanding and ownership of decisions arrived at.

Part of the uncertainty emanating from this non-participation of member states in the preparatory process relates to how decisions on the outcome and contents of the programme were arrived at. This includes the decision not to adhere to Operative Paragraph 7(g) of Resolution 67/290 which states that meetings of the forum "*Shall result in a negotiated ministerial declaration for inclusion in the report of the Council to the General Assembly*". A clear and understood process of arriving at decisions during the preparatory process would have been useful in dispelling the perception that adherence to the rule of law is a matter of convenience.

Mr President,

The second point relates to the substance of the programme. There are issues that are important to us developing countries that we would have liked to have seen reflected in the programme and engaged on by the forum.

One of the directives given to the HLPF through Operative Paragraph 11 of Resolution 67/290 is to "*devote adequate time to the discussion of the sustainable development*

challenges facing developing countries". We think that the overall thrust of the programme of this year's HLPF does not address the development challenges faced by developing countries.

One of the challenges facing developing countries is inadequate capacity towards implementing and achieving sustainable development. There is an urgent need for capacity building for developing countries in accordance with national priorities and strategies. We would therefore have expected that this forum would have a session dedicated to addressing the issue of building the capacity of developing countries.

A forum whose mandate is to follow on the implementation of sustainable development can ill afford to avoid a discussion on building the capacity of developing countries to sustain healthy levels of growth and ensure effective engagement in the work of the forum.

A third point that is also related to the issue of capacity building is the glaring omission from the programme of a discussion on the technology facilitation mechanism. This is an issue which members of the Group of 77 and China consider one of the most transformative means to implement sustainable development. In an environment and context where access to technology and innovation is unevenly spread, it is the view of the Group that a technology facilitation mechanism can enable developing countries and the poor to tap into and benefit from technological innovations to widen the possibilities for sustainable development. It is important that this issue be a feature in the programme and engagements of the forum.

In conclusion Mr President, it is the Group's hope that the summaries of the High-level segment and the High-level Political Forum will have a balanced reflection of the delegations' engagements.

Thank you