

## **Reactions during the informal meetings [ 27 - 31 July ] of the plenary on the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda**

*Statement delivered by Miss Al-Daana Al-Mulla, Third Secretary, on behalf of the Arab Group*

Co-Facilitators,

Thank you for giving me the floor. I have the honor to deliver the following statement on behalf of the Arab Group. The Arab Group aligns itself with the statement delivered by South Africa on behalf of the G77 and would like to make the following additional comments:

At the outset, allow me to express our appreciation for the work that has been done in crafting the revised document. We note that some proposals expressed during the last session are reflected in the document circulated last night.

We welcome of the way in which you have drafted language contained in **paragraph 30 unilateral sanctions, and also paragraph 35** on resilience and host communities of refugees.

We also welcome the language introduced in **paragraph 15** on forced displacement. That said, we can also accept the proposal made by the G77 in the spirit of consensus.

Further, there are several outstanding issues which we would like to see addressed:

### **On Family:**

The way that the language contained in paragraph 44 is drafted

inadequately addresses the main thrust of why family needs to be incorporated into our development agenda. Our issue here is that family should not be referred to as a measure of success, and should be seen as a tool for the means of implementation.

As set out in several UN documents (see family resolutions over the last 3 sessions of ECOSOC, the GA, Agreed Conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women), the family plays a fundamental role as a contributor to development. As such, the subject of family should be treated from a second committee, rather than third committee lens. The Arab Group maintains that the language proposed by CARICOM as an alternative paragraph presents a constructive way forward. The proposal is based on language agreed in previous documents including **A/70/61** and reads as follows:

**LANGUAGE PROPOSAL: "We recognize the role of the family as a contributor to sustainable development and the need to strengthen family policy development in international efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals"**

During previous sessions, you requested us to be clear in our articulation of language we can agree and support. The above language is exactly that. Supporting this language is not ideal for us but something that we could tolerate as a compromise.

**RATIONAL:** It has become habit to omit consideration for sensitive subjects in our open debates. The important recognition of how the family act as agents for change and how families are essential to achieving the suggested SDG targets and goals cannot be excluded or politicized in our discussions.

The fact remains that families act as a fundamental building block of society and it is with this recognition that the family can function as an instrument for change. If it is our objective to achieve the world we want, then it is our responsibility to remove

every foreseeable obstacle that may slow or prevent us from reaching our goal.

**Paragraph 12 on "Our shared principles and commitments"** includes reference to review conferences in connection with ICPD. The same language is reflected in the introductory section, para 6 and 5.6 of the SDG targets which, as you know, was contentious then, and remains contentious now. We therefore see the reference to review conferences in paragraph 12 as superfluous.

Paragraph 27 delete the space between "health" and "care"

### **On Climate:**

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change, and it is important that we treat it as such.

For this reason, we call for the deletion of language contained in paragraph 31 which

**reads "holding the increase in global average temperature below 2 degrees or 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels by accelerating the reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions,"**

—-> and ask that it be replaced with the following language **"achieving the objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in accordance with its principals and provisions"**

### **On the subject of Water:**

#### **Section on People, add:**

We want to ensure that all human beings can fulfill their potential. We want to end poverty in all its forms and dimensions;

end hunger and malnutrition; achieve food security; promote human dignity; combat inequalities in and between countries; achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; ensure quality education, (add: **sustainable management of**) water, (add: **water supply**) and sanitation and hygiene, and a healthy life for all; ensure equal access to natural resources, a healthy environment and well-being for all; and secure the participation of all people and groups, including children, persons with disabilities, migrants and indigenous peoples, in the realization of the Goals and targets.

**Para 8, add:** In these Goals and targets, we are setting out a supremely ambitious and transformational vision. Poverty eradication in all its forms and dimensions is the overarching priority and central imperative of the Agenda. We envisage a world free of poverty, hunger, disease and want, where all life can thrive. We envisage a world free of fear and violence. A world with equitable and universal access to quality education at all levels and to health care and social protection, where physical, mental and social well-being are assured. A world where water is (**add: sustainably managed**), where the (**add: human**) right to have access to safe, (**add: clean**) and affordable drinking water (**add: and sanitation**) is universally realized; where food is (**add: accessible**) sufficient, safe, affordable and nutritious; where there is adequate and accessible sanitation and hygiene. A world where human habitats are safe, resilient and sustainable and where there is universal access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy.

**Para 10, add:** Add “all water sources” in the second line after natural resources **Para 15, add:** Amend the last line by adding:

....Natural resource depletion and adverse impacts of environmental degradation, including (**add: land degradation**), desertification, drought, (**add: freshwater scarcity and pollution**), land degradation and ocean acidification, add to and

exacerbate the list of challenges which humanity faces.

**Para 24 delete:** “sections of the population who are vulnerable.”  
we ask that this be changed to people living in vulnerable situations

**Para 26 delete** “supportive and strong families”

**Para 32, add:** We recognize that social and economic development depends on the sustainable management of our planet’s natural resources. We are therefore determined to conserve and sustainably use oceans and seas, **(add: protect and sustainably manage freshwater resources)** as well as mountains and dry-lands and to protect biodiversity, ecosystems and wildlife. We are also determined to promote sustainable tourism, tackle water scarcity and **(add: water pollution)**, desertification, land degradation and drought and to promote resilience and disaster risk reduction. We will achieve this by promoting sustainable development and decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation.

On **Para 33, add:** We recognize that sustainable urban development and management are crucial to the quality of life of our people. We will work with local authorities and communities to renew and plan our cities and human settlements so as to foster community cohesion and personal security and to stimulate innovation and employment. We will reduce the negative impacts of urban activities and of chemicals which are hazardous for human health and the environment, including through the environmentally sound management and safe use of chemicals, the reduction and recycling of waste and more efficient use of water and energy **(add: and reduction of water pollution)**. And we will work to minimize the impact of cities on the global climate system. We will also take account of population trends and projections in our national, rural and urban development strategies and policies.

**On discrimination:**

**Para 21**, delete ‘gender-based’ before discrimination because we should commit and work to eliminate “all forms of discrimination”

**Para 70E:** delete “**marginalized groups**” and add “**official**” before national resources

**Para 36** delete “**shared responsibility**”

In the interest of time, we will submit the rest of our proposals in writing. I thank you for your attention.