



**STATEMENT BY Mr. A.GOPINATHAN, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE AT
THE HANDING OVER CEREMONY OF THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF G-77 ON 25TH
JANUARY 2005.**

Mr. Chairman,

We express our appreciation to the State of Qatar for providing effective leadership to the Group of 77 in the past year when the developing countries had to deal with many important questions. The Minister of States for Foreign Affairs of Qatar, H.E.Mr.Ahmad bin Abdullah Al-Mohmoud gave a detailed account of the Group's activities and achievements this morning prior to his handing over the Chairmanship to Your Excellency.

2. We also convey our appreciation to Ambassador H.E. Mr.Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser and his team for their patience and dedication during the 59th session of General Assembly, ECOSOC sessions and other important meetings including the International Meeting to review the Programme of Action for the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States held recently in Mauritius.

3. We congratulate you, sir, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica, Hon'ble Mr. Keith Desmond Knight on taking over the Chairmanship of the Group of 77 and for outlining the priorities Jamaica would wish the Group to pursue during the coming year. We are confident that Jamaica will provide effective and purposeful leadership to the Group this year in collectively meeting the several challenges that confront us. We have several important tasks before us for promoting further the collective interests of developing countries including in the context of the High level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly to be held in September 2005 at the commencement of the 60th session for review of this implementation of the Millennium Declaration and efforts for the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals. We assure Ambassador Stafford O.Neil and his team of our support and cooperation and wish them every success in leading the Group of 77 this year.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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