



STATEMENT BY MR. NIRUPAM SEN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, AT THE  
HANDOVER CEREMONY OF THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE GROUP OF 77 ON  
JANUARY 10, 2007

Mr. Chairman,

First of all let me congratulate you and Pakistan on a well deserved election as Chair of G-77. We would like to convey our deep appreciation to South Africa for the effective leadership it has provided to the Group of 77 in the past year, when the developing countries had to deal with many important and complex issues. These have been ably detailed in the statement of Her Excellency Dr. Nkosazana C. Dlamini Zuma, Minister for Foreign Affairs for South Africa prior to her handing over the gavel to Your Excellency.

2006 was indeed a challenging year during which several developments of great significance to developing countries took place. First and foremost, the challenge before the Group was to build on the momentum generated by the 2005 World Summit not only in terms of promoting international cooperation for development but also in addressing systemic issues – creating an international economic governance conducive to development. Representing the Group of 77, South Africa articulated the concerns and interests of the developing countries forcefully and effectively. We would like to convey our special appreciation to Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo and his team for the competence and dedication with which they served the Group during the 61<sup>st</sup> session of UNGA, ECOSOC and other important meetings as well as during the follow-up to the 2005 World Summit Outcome in the areas of development and management reforms so important for the developing countries.

The developing countries still find their policy space increasingly circumscribed. If globalisation is inevitable, multilateralism has to be its life sustaining mechanism. Hence the voice of developing countries and their further empowerment in the international arena remains vital. The Secretary General accurately said that it is the developing countries that need the UN more; clearly the developing world is more in need of a rule based multilateral order which

would help to even out uneven playing fields. Hence the Hon'ble Foreign Minister of South Africa in a striking and important address emphasized the much needed reform of international economic institutions whose policies impinge on the developing countries and appositely quoted the Noble Prize winning economist Stiglitz. Agreements reached in the past year in the context of development follow-up to the 2005 World Summit Outcome and the strengthening of the ECOSOC assume significance in terms of strengthening the role of the United Nations in the promotion of international cooperation for development, through monitoring the fulfilment of commitments especially by the developed countries, and in the review and assessment of international economic policies, in particular the performance of the international financial and economic institutions, and make recommendations where needed. The latter is particularly significant as most of the developing countries have capacity constraints to assess the impact of such policies. The challenge now is to consolidate the gains that developing countries made in 2006 and work towards the implementation of the agreements reached. Developing countries would also need to be vigilant to proposals relating to enhancing the effectiveness of the delivery of development assistance by the United Nations in the context of system-wide coherence. At a time of some exhaustion, it was difficult to mobilize the energies and cohesion of the Group on issues like the real strengthening of ECOSOC or scales of assessment etc. South Africa, as Chairman, contributed substantially to achieving this mobilization and cohesion: this is the true light in its laurels for the memory of future time. It is this work that needs to be maintained and continued. As the great Latin American writer Eduardo Galeano once said, collective efforts and cohesion is necessary in order not to give way to "indignity, amnesia and resignation".

In the context of Secretariat and management reforms the Group of 77 performed admirably in the past year. On issues like lifting of spending cap, proposals of the Secretary-General in his report on 'Investing in UN for a stronger Organisation', in particular governance and oversight, human resources management, financial management, ICT and procurement, substantial progress was made largely reflecting the positions taken by the Group. It was once again a victory reflecting the cohesion and solidarity of the Group. There are unfinished agenda items which are of significant interest to developing countries, especially relating to governance and oversight so critical for developing countries, which would be coming up in the course of this year. My good friend Ambassador Kumalo quoted a beautiful poem. This reminded me of another poem (which speaks of the love and solidarity referred to in the poem quoted by Ambassador Kumalo) written to Toussaint L'Ouverture who led the revolution in San Domingo in the eighteenth century which set up the first independent black republic: "Thy friends are exultations, agonies/And love and man's unconquerable mind". The G-77 has experienced both exultation and agony but

the most important has always been love and solidarity and the unconquerable mind. You had doubted, Mr. Minister, Ambassador Akram's love for poetry but I am sure he would have to develop it because, in the context of G-77, poetry and love and solidarity are indivisible.

We welcome Pakistan and its able Permanent Representative Ambassador Munir Akram their taking over the Chairmanship of the Group of 77. We are confident that they will provide effective leadership to the Group this year in collectively meeting the challenges that confront the developing countries and wish them every success in guiding and leading the Group of 77.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)