



STATEMENT BY MR. AJAI MALHOTRA, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, AT THE THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING OF MINISTERS FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE GROUP OF 77 ON SEPTEMBER 27, 2007

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset I would like to congratulate Pakistan on the leadership it has provided to the Group of 77 since the beginning of 2007 and for promoting the Group's interests at UN fora.

I would also like to greet Antigua and Barbuda on its election as the Chairman of the Group of 77 for the year 2008. We wish Antigua and Barbuda a very productive tenure as our Chair and reiterate India's whole-hearted support to it in pursuit of our common goals and objectives.

Mr. Chairman,

At the Millennium Summit seven years ago, we set ourselves the target of achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. We are at the half-way mark today. Yet, despite best efforts and notable successes, it is clear that many developing countries are unlikely to achieve the targets that were set. Full implementation of MDG 8 – the global partnership for development - remains an imperative in order to assist developing countries in their efforts to achieve the MDGs, and other internationally agreed development goals. To do so, the commitments made by developed countries regarding official development assistance, trade, technology transfer and enhanced market access must be fulfilled expeditiously. Unfortunately, this has not happened and the trend is now in the opposite direction.

We note with concern the drop in ODA that has taken place during 2006. Moreover, a substantial part of ODA is being channeled towards

debt relief, with no additional or new resources being made available. Given that the process of debt relief has been largely completed for most donors, the prognosis remains grim for a future increase in aid so as to reach the targeted 0.7% of GNI. Moreover, there is an upward trend in overall resource transfer from developing to developed countries. Real and effective technology transfer needs to take place to developing countries, and it is time that the IPR regime looks at balancing the rewards for the innovator with the benefit to humankind. In this regard, we fully support the newly strengthened Economic and Social Council playing its due role in promoting awareness and giving policy guidelines in the area of development cooperation, and to follow-up major UN Summits and Conferences.

In this context, the implementation of the outcomes of the Monterrey Conference, on creating an international economic environment conducive to development and ensuring that predictable and sufficient resources are made available to developing countries to pursue their development policies, remain a central objective. Unfortunately, progress remains limited. The recent crisis in the financial markets has demonstrated yet again the potential threat to the 'real' economy and, consequently, to development policies, posed by esoteric and speculative financial products, and the need for effective surveillance for such transactions through a financial system that has greater legitimacy than current structures.

At the same time, a comprehensive review of the international economic and financial architecture, so as to ensure a greater voice and increased participation by developing countries in decision-making and norm setting processes, continues to elude us. There is a need to redouble our efforts in order to achieve tangible progress in this area. We express our appreciation to the Government of Qatar for offering to host the Monterrey Review Conference in 2008, and we hope that it will provide an opportunity for a detailed review of progress made and enable us to chart the way ahead. We also look forward to the biennial High-level dialogue on Financing for Development to be held in October 2007 and the preparatory process for the Review Conference to provide useful inputs for it.

Mr. Chairman,

The Doha round of trade negotiations needs to ensure the primacy of the development dimension. Subsistence farming in developing countries cannot be compared with the enormously subsidized farming that takes place in developed countries. It is unfair to link progress on this issue with NAMA. It is important for developing countries to

maintain flexibilities and preserve policy space particularly in the context of NAMA, in order to avoid the danger of deindustrialisation for some developing countries. The overarching principle of special and differential treatment remains a categorical imperative. We hope that our developed country partners show the necessary flexibility so that progress in the negotiations can be achieved.

The recent meetings in the UN General Assembly and other fora have served to highlight the urgent need to address the issue of global warming and climate change. We look forward to the meetings of the UNFCCC in Bali later this year and hope that developed countries will commit to, and implement, sharper emission reduction targets for the post-2012 period under the Kyoto protocol. We also underline the need for additional financial resources, technology transfer, and capacity enhancement in developing countries in order to assist them in addressing climate change and related concerns. Sustainable development must be addressed in a holistic manner through its three pillars of economic development, social development, and environmental protection.

Mr. Chairman,

The need for solidarity among developing countries continues to be important. The singular success of this Group has been in its ability to project our common interests with one voice and the continued cohesiveness of the Group remains key to ensuring that the interests of developing countries are adequately protected and promoted. It gives me great satisfaction to note that even on areas where some of our members have somewhat varying concerns, the Group has been able to coalesce around common elements.

Our diverse membership in turn brings diverse concerns to the fore. However, we must be cognizant of the need to specifically address the concerns of the Least Developed Countries, the Landlocked Developing Countries, the Small Island Developing States, the African countries and others who need our support. In this regard, we also look forward to the Review Conference of the Almaty Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries next year.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 has a special role to play in promoting the common interests of developing countries and in fostering South-South cooperation. India is already active in sharing its developmental experiences with several partner countries, as also its expertise in

certain areas of capacity building and technology. India remains ready to expand such cooperation with our developing country partners in future as well. We believe that the Group of 77 has been a most valuable asset for the developing countries. We shall remain fully engaged in exploring cooperative solutions both among ourselves and with the wider international community. I would like to reiterate India's full support and involvement in this effort.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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