



Malaysia

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY

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ALTERNATE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND
HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF MALAYSIA**

TO

**THE SPECIAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE GROUP OF 77 TO
COMMEMORATE THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF THE GROUP OF 77**

AT

SAO PAULO, BRAZIL

11- 12 JUNE 2004

(Please Check Against Delivery)

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

At the outset Malaysia would like to extend our warmest congratulations to the Kingdom of Qatar for the excellent and exemplary stewardship that Qatar has demonstrated in leading the Group of 77 during this significant year of its 40th Anniversary. We also wish to thank the Government of Brazil for its generous hospitality in hosting this important meeting.

2. Since its inception in 1964, the Group of 77 has passed through a long and often arduous journey in the effort to defend and advance the interests of developing countries in facing the many challenges confronting the international community in the global agenda. Today, with a membership of more than 130 countries spanning three continents, the Group represents the largest grouping of countries at the multilateral level, in particular at the United Nations forums. Malaysia is particularly honoured to have had the opportunity to chair the Group in 1989.

3. On its fortieth anniversary the Group of 77 can take pride in its remarkable contributions and achievements in promoting the interest of the developing countries concerning economic, financial and developmental issues. The Group has been recognized as one of the principal and dynamic actors in the multilateral system. With the firm support of China, the Group of 77 has attained the ability to assert the necessary leverage and influence in the north-south dialogue on behalf of the developing world. The Group has also attained considerable achievements over the years in promoting south-south cooperation among developing countries.

4. All these have been made possible through the Group's ability in the last four decades to develop, maintain and sustain unity and solidarity among its members in negotiations with other partners. The cohesiveness of the Group has made it possible for the developing countries to take advantage of their numerical superiority under the existing multilateral system to protect and advance their collective interests. Unity has certainly provided the strength and the bargaining power for the Group. Therefore it is imperative that we make every effort to preserve and strengthen this unity.

Mr. Chairman,

5. Four decades have passed and we have witnessed the varying paces and levels of development among developing countries. Some have managed to move to a more comfortable zone in their economic development while others continue to be saddled with a myriad of problems hindering them from achieving the desired progress. In order to provide the necessary and relevant assistance, the developing countries have been differentiated by the level of economic progress and peculiarity of their problems through the categorization of developing countries in groupings such as the Least Developed Countries, the Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing Countries. While such categorization has certainly helped to identify and provide these countries with the precise and necessary assistance, it is prudent to ensure that the solidarity and unity within the Group of 77 be continuously maintained and strengthened. Malaysia supports all efforts aimed at addressing economic and development problems faced by all members of the Group including the categories of countries within the Group.

6. The fortieth anniversary should remind us of the need to reaffirm our cohesion and political unity in the face of an increasingly challenging international environment . This in itself could undermine the very foundation of the Group's strength. We should never allow any possibility to arise or any attempt to

succeed that could threaten to break our ranks and therefore weaken our bargaining and negotiating position.

Mr. Chairman,

7. The start of the new millennium was marked by important summits and conferences culminating in many pledges and crucial programs of action that promise a better world in particular for developing countries. The coming year has been designated as the year for an important review and assessment of the progress of implementation of the set goals and actions. In that connection, this special ministerial meeting is certainly held at a very crucial juncture. This meeting should enable the Group to take stock of the challenges and opportunities available to us. It is therefore important for the Group of 77 to use this occasion to make a strong political statement to ensure that necessary measures are put on track and that the pledges and the set goals are fulfilled as planned.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.