

**Statement of H.E. Lourdes O. Yparraguirre
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Philippines
and Chair of the Group of 77 and China
at the Handover Ceremony
17 February 2015**

Excellencies,
IAEA Director General Mr. Yukiya Amano,
UNIDO Deputy to the Director General Mr. Taizo Nishikawa,
UNODC Director Mr Jean-Luc Lemahieu,
CTBTO Preparatory Commission Director Mr Genxin Li,
Esteemed colleagues, ladies and gentlemen: good morning

At the outset, allow me to extend a warm welcome to you all at this handover ceremony of the Chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China, and to extend to all of you my best wishes for the New Year.

Last July, you had entrusted upon my country, the Philippines the great honor and privilege of chairing the Group of 77 and China. It was with deep pride and humility, as well as with a great sense of responsibility, that I accepted the trust you have given us in promoting the collective interests of the Group.

Today it is equally a great honor for me to hand over the torch to its next bearer, the distinguished Permanent Representative of Chile, H.E. Ambassador Armin Andereya LaTorre.

Excellencies, Esteemed colleagues,

Last year, the Group of 77 and China celebrated a historic milestone, the celebration of the 50th anniversary of its establishment. Over the 50 years of its existence, the Group has assumed a visible, forceful and central role as the champion of 4/5 of humanity in advancing the global development agenda.

Here in Vienna, the Group of 77 and China contributed in forging that leadership role through a strong partnership for peace, security, and development with the Vienna-based international organizations.

Last year, the Group took a pro-active role in the IAEA policy-making bodies and sponsored seven (7) resolutions that were adopted at the IAEA 58th Session of the General Conference, including those on technical cooperation activities and nuclear applications. The Group likewise articulated its positions in the meetings of the Board of Governors, the Technical Assistance and Cooperation Committee, the Programme and Budget Committee, as well as in the Working Group on Financing the Agency's Activities, including finding ways and means to render the resources for the Technical Cooperation Fund sufficient, assured and predictable. In its statements, the Group continued supporting the Agency in promoting the dissemination of nuclear technologies for peaceful purposes, while ensuring the necessary balance between promotional and

other statutory activities. The Group maintained its strong interest and made substantive contributions in the Agency's work in nuclear safety and nuclear security.

In the Preparatory Commission of the CTBTO, the Group continued to stress the importance of promoting a balanced approach in its verification regime, which consists of the International Monitoring System, the International Data Center, and On-Sight Inspection. The Group highlighted the importance of the Integrated Field Exercises that took place in Jordan, a member of the Group, in November and December of last year.

The Group has been an important actor in UNODC activities, such as the UNCAC review mechanism; and preparations for the 14th Crime Congress in 2015 and UNGASS 2016 on the world drug problem. At the 7th Session of the Conference of the Parties of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crimes, the Group expressed interest in setting up a permanent, open, constructive, accountable and Member-State driven mechanism to deal effectively with the governance and financial challenges that UNODC continues to face. The Group also expressed its position of promoting geographical representation and gender balance among staff members, especially at the senior and policy-making levels of the UNODC as well as in other Vienna-based international organizations..

In UNIDO, following the adoption of the "Lima Declaration towards inclusive and sustainable industrial development" and the UNIDO Guidance Document at the UNIDO 15th General Conference, which were spearheaded by the Group, the Group requested the Secretariat for further efforts in mobilizing funds for technical cooperation activities, while urging the Director General to continue promoting strong partnerships with all relevant stakeholders. In statements delivered during the Industrial Development Board, the Group also expressed its steadfast support for enhanced cooperation in building capacities for inclusive and sustainable industrial development or ISID.

Excellencies, Esteemed colleagues,

Today, the integral role of the Group of 77 and China in shaping world affairs and in promoting international cooperation for development, is testimony to its continuing relevance in the global development dialogue. Its growing membership and expanding activities manifest its enduring strength.

This year will surely be an important one as the United Nations celebrates the 70th anniversary of its founding. The Group of 77 and China remains all the more relevant, specifically at this important juncture when the international community is considering an ambitious, long-term agenda to improve people's lives and protect the planet for future generations. The post-2015 development agenda is designed to address the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals, with the eradication of extreme poverty taking the highest priority. At the same time, the need to integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions of development is underscored.

Excellencies, Distinguished colleagues,

I would like to conclude by expressing the Philippine delegation's deep appreciation and gratitude to the delegations of the Member States of the Group of 77 and China for your constructive engagement, guidance and support to the Chairmanship of the Philippines. Our sincere thanks also go to the UNIDO, IAEA, CTBTO and UNODC, for their continued support and commitment in advancing the global development agenda.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Ambassador Aliyar Lebbe Abdul Azeez of Sri Lanka for chairing the Group of 77 and China in the first half of last year. Ambassador Azeez' several initiatives in commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of our Group last year showed the Vienna international community a celebration of our solidarity.

I also pay tribute to the excellent work undertaken by the Task Force Leaders namely, Ms. Cinthia Echevarria of the Permanent Mission of Argentina on CTBTO and IAEA matters; Mr. Ahmed El Ghouli of the Permanent Mission of Egypt on UNIDO matters; and Mr. Indra Rosandry of the Permanent Mission of Indonesia on UNODC matters. I commend our Task Force Leaders for their hard work and selfless dedication in convening Task Force meetings, in drafting statements and in providing overall substantive support for the work of the Group.

I extend my gratitude to UNIDO for its generous support in hosting the office of the Group for almost 17 years, as well as in providing very efficient Secretariat support through the highly competent Ms. Annemarie Heuls and Ms. Zsuzsanna Deri.

Finally, allow me to express my sincere gratitude to my hard-working team at the Permanent Mission of the Philippines led by Ministers Mariel Algabre and Elizabeth Te, they were truly a professional and dedicated team throughout. .

Excellencies, Esteemed colleagues,

The time has come to handover the Chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China to the Government of Chile. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate HE Ambassador Armin Andereya LaTorre, Permanent Representative of Chile, and his delegation, on assuming the Chairmanship of the G77 and China in 2015. I assure you the full cooperation and support of the Philippine delegation and I wish you every success of chairing the Group for the year 2015.

Thank you all for your attention.