

**SPEECH BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF PARAGUAY,  
AMBASSADOR LEILA RACHID COWLES, ON THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
THE GROUP OF 77 – SAO PAULO- JUNE 11-12, 2004**

Mr. President,

Please allow me, first of all, to state that it is a great honor for Paraguay to utter these words on behalf of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, comprising thirty one countries in all continents. We also would like to convey to you our warmest congratulations as we watch you chair this Special Ministerial commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the Group of 77, and through you; we would like to as well extend our best wishes to all the Members of the Group of 77.

This Ministerial has a special meaning and importance due to the convergence of the birth four decades ago of both the G-77 and the UNCTAD, committed from its inception to articulate and promote the collective economic interests of the Group as well as to reinforcing our negotiating capacity on main international economic matters within the United Nations System, and for the promotion of cooperation among Member States.

Mr. President,

To think about development in today's world, first of all, we must take into account the international context and the comparative dimension which could lead to realistic goals. When we think about our countries making a great effort to reach the desirable development, we are not only thinking about a specific level of per capita income. We are not only defining a country by its level of sustainable economic growth but also by its outstanding improvement in the level of income distribution, socially integration, with a democratic solid state, with high levels of efficiency, public responsibility, and with active citizens and more than anything with a tolerant cultural society

The history of the G-77 reflects its growth both quantitatively as well as qualitatively, working actively to reach formulas that could allow all our nations achieve our precious goal of development. There are four decades of very tough economic and trade negotiations with the most developed players of the world economy aimed at gradually overcoming the asymmetries in the share of wealth allotted to the developing countries in a highly competitive world which generally sets aside the benefits of international markets for some to the exclusion of others.

But even in that guarded scenario, the G-77 remained united where it came to achieving its goals of defending and making advances in the collective and economic interest of the United Nations System while advocating for technical and economic cooperation among developing nations. The G-77 has become the mouthpiece and the main negotiator of the countries to the South in international conferences as well as in other meetings sponsored by the United Nations, which resulted in a most appropriate formula to achieve space and recognition corroborated today by the commitments agreed upon in those conferences and world summits dedicated to development.

An example of this is the adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations of the Declaration and Action Plan for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. The G-77 has also made significant contributions to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations by acting as a defender of multilateralism.

Despite all the achievements, there is still a lengthy way to go and we must remain joined together and upholding the common cause within our own diversity while maintaining the vision of a fair and equitable international relation put at the service of the development of our countries.

Mr. President,

We ought neither to neglect nor to ignore the fact that amongst our diversity there are some groups which are more vulnerable than others. One of them is the group of Landlocked Developing Countries, as they were acknowledged by a hefty number of United Nations General Assembly resolutions beginning in 1957, and specially by its Resolution 214 of 1989, which calls upon the world community to adopt political and economic measures aimed at fostering an economic growth model that would mitigate the vulnerability of their economies and the adverse consequences of their status as landlocked countries.

The Landlocked Developing Nations consider that the G-77 is the natural forum whence to gather solidarity and the necessary understanding, to obtain support for our claims and it has so demonstrated in the past.

That solidarity was translated at Almaty, Kazajstán, in August of last year, in the International Ministerial Conference where was agreed the Plan of Action of Almaty to address the needs of the landlocked developing nations within a global framework of cooperation in matters of transit transport between landlocked developing nations and transit developing nations, fixing the commitment into five priorities.

With this Plan of Action, we have inserted definitively into the international agenda the urgent attention of one of the most vulnerable groups within the small economies belonging to the G 77 as are the landlocked developing nations. Now more than ever we need the support and accompaniment of the G 77 in order to effect the implementation of the Almaty commitments, especially in such aspects where there is still plenty to negotiate, such as the special consideration for market opening in the

absence of which the other priorities, like the improvement of the transportation infrastructure, betterment of public policies and the rest shall never reap the expected results.

Mr. President,

The expectations of the landlocked developing nations count on the support that the G 77 shall display, especially within the framework of the Doha Round of the WTO as well as in the realm of the supporting structure to such negotiations as is precisely the case with this 11<sup>th</sup> UNCTAD. To this end, the landlocked developing nations shall require the understanding and solidarity of the G 77 so that, faced with its real disadvantage and vulnerability, they may obtain a differential treatment, be that for a larger share in international trade as well as in the attraction of investment to complement our endeavors to achieve social and economic development

Mr. President,

Allow me to leave on record our congratulations to Ambassador Nassir Abdulaziz Al.Nasser, for the excellent job performed in the role of Coordinator of the G77 in New York, which resulted in the approval of a Ministerial Declaration that incorporates the concerns of all its Members and does justice to the negotiating capacity of the Group vis a vis the developed world.

Likewise, I wish, on behalf of the thirty one landlocked developing countries, to express our special appreciation to our sister transit developing nations, for their solidarity and understanding during the negotiation stage of the Ministerial Declaration and to make it extensive to all the other Member States of the G77

Mr. President,

I wish to finalize this intervention quoting a phrase by the famous German novelist Hermann Hesse: "Don't ever say that any feeling is small or insignificant. We live among beautiful and magnificent feelings and when we commit an unfair act to any of these feelings, we eclipse our star".

The feeling and dream of our people, is to compete in a world that recognize our disadvantages and that cooperate in its improvement. Let's not allow anyone to state in the future that an act of injustice was done against the vindication of our nations. Let's not allow our star to be eclipsed.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH