



G77 AND CHINA STATEMENT DELIVERED BY MRS. MARÍA DE LOS MILAGROS DONNA RABALLO, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES OF ARGENTINA ON BEHALF OF H.E. DR. ANÍBAL FERNÁNDEZ, MINISTER OF JUSTICE, SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS OF ARGENTINA, AT THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE 52ND SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS, ON 11 MARCH 2009 IN VIENNA, AUSTRIA (CND, 11-20 MARCH 2009)

Madam Chair,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. I would firstly like to renew our congratulations to you and the members of the Bureau for your election. We have witnessed the balance, professionalism and sensibility that, with the excellent support of the Secretariat, Ambassador Ashipala Musavyi has observed during the long, strenuous and sometimes delicate process for the preparation of this meeting.

Madam Chair,

The event that reunites us these two days, as well as next week, is of double historic significance to all those involved in the fight against illicit drugs. In fact, we are commemorating the International Conference celebrated a century ago in Shanghai, where countries from different regions and cultures became aware for the first time of the need to address the illicit drug activities as a global issue.

We are also assessing the commitments and objectives set out more recently, in 1998, when a much larger international community, in the realm of the General Assembly of the UN, similarly understood the need to join forces to counter a world drug problem that had augmented both in magnitude and complexity. Furthermore, we must renew our political commitment to the global fight against drugs and set clear policy directives thereupon for the years ahead.

The Declaration and Plan of Action that the high level representatives will adopt at the end of this meeting represent the results of such assessment. Having participated actively in the long and intense negotiating exercise that led to their elaboration, the Group of 77 and China expresses its overall satisfaction with these instruments and wishes to highlight three elements.

Firstly, the Group of 77 and China values the very concept of having these two instruments reinforcing each other and constituting a whole: a Declaration that takes stock of achievements and identifies challenges, coupled with a Plan of Action providing clear, specific and comprehensive orientations to address those challenges. For the Members of the Group, who constantly pursue awareness-raising and education as critical elements in a successful fight against illicit drugs, these orientations are of particular utility.

Secondly, within this structure, the Group of 77 and China appreciates that the Declaration and its Plan of Action confirm the set of basic values and tenets that the UN proclaimed in 1998, and which are reflected in the Political Declaration and Plans of Action adopted at that time, and subsequently instrumented in the three international drug control conventions. Of these values and tenets, the Group reiterates the centrality of the fight against illicit drugs as a common and shared responsibility requiring an integrated and balanced approach, in particular in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the referred conventions. In this regard, it is particularly stimulating to note the careful and balanced intertwining in the Plan of Action of all the aspects of the world drug problem, and their equal importance. We reiterate, in particular, that any approach on combating drugs, focused only on the supply side in origin and transit countries, is unlikely to succeed without commensurate and proportional efforts for

demand reduction in destination countries.

Thirdly, the Group of 77 and China shares the view, reflected in several parts of the Declaration, that an effective fight against illicit drugs at the international level requires a solid institutional scheme, as embodied in the CND, the INCB and UNODC. In this sense, the Group endorses the importance assigned to the follow-up of the Declaration and the Plan of Action. Additionally, the Group supports the request in the Declaration to reinforce the governance and financial situation of UNODC, so as to ensure adequate and stable financial resources to implement its mandate effectively.

Madam Chair,

The elements highlighted, as well as the commitments embodied in the Declaration and the Plan of Action, may translate in practice into a worthless effort if they are not supported effectively by a crucial element: a coordinated and sustainable scheme of international cooperation grounded in a renewed commitment to multilateralism and increasing technical and financial assistance. The possibilities for developing such scheme are multiple; the only non-admissible option is denying it.

In fact, without such scheme the "world drug problem" "shared responsibility" and "integrated approach" are mere elegant expressions, devoid of substance. As the Group of 77 and China has observed repeatedly, our societies are at the frontline in the fight against drugs. The efforts that are made in this fight, most of the time with a high cost for our people, require a sustained investment, particularly in terms of equipment, infrastructure and capacity-building, to counter illicit activities that are constantly refined and updated, and regrettably continue to be funded with formidable resources. The Group stresses that means should be provided to combat poverty and social marginalization as well as to improve the quality of life at the grass-root level through education and economic support, in conjunction with sustainable development.

In particular, the Group is deeply concerned about the continuous increase in the consumption of illicit drugs and the deviation for illicit uses of psychotropic substances. In order to ensure the overall efficiency of the international drug control system, the Group reaffirms that measures for demand reduction should continuously be improved, both at the national and international level, always in full compliance with the three drug control conventions and lead to a reduction in consumption.

In today's increasingly globalized world, not caring for this frontline - that is, remaining indifferent to the sufferings inflicted by illicit activities related to drugs, for instance because these activities appear to take place far away or seem not relevant to specific interests- is simply suicidal. In this historical gathering, let us all remember that if we do not respond jointly and consistently to the drug problem, the drug problem will end up knocking at everybody's door.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

G77 and China Statement delivered by the H.E. Ambassador Eugenio María Curia, PR of Argentina on item 3 of the 52nd session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Vienna on 17th March 2009

Madam Chair,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Let me first and foremost renew our satisfaction for your coordination of our activities, which we extend to the other members of the Bureau. After the successful adoption of the Political Declaration and the Plan of Action last week, it is time to start working on the issues addressed in both instruments, which relate to the world drug problem.

Madam Chair,

In this regard, the Group of G-77 and China takes note with interest of the issue selected for the thematic debate of this year - that is, a discussion on the tools for enhancing the effectiveness of international drug control and international cooperation in the fight against illicit drugs, specifically (a) Data collection for effective drug control, including on the misuse of cyberspace, and (b) Strengthening of regional and cross-border cooperation, including data-sharing.

The Group shares the view that in order to make an adequate diagnosis of the world drug problem it is necessary to ensure reliable and updated quality and quantity of data, including its adequate interpretation and use, on the basis of which such diagnosis and evaluation are made.

Hence, the Group calls for taking particular care on three aspects it considers critical to ensure any effective reinforced scheme of data collection. Firstly, a scheme of this nature should be state-driven - in other words, data collection, sharing and interpretation concerning a given State should be entrusted to its competent governmental authorities, and no evaluation methods should be imposed on such State.

Secondly, as the title of the thematic debate suggests, such a scheme should be construed in the context of the overarching principle of cooperation - in particular between neighbouring States and States belonging to the same sub-region. It seems of little use, in fact, to reinforce the collection of data if such data then is not shared among concerned States. Let us all recall that fragmentation can only operate to the benefit of drug traffickers.

Finally, and as a corollary of a permanent concern of this Group, any scheme of this kind must be developed in consultations with Member States and supported by adequate technical and financial assistance, including equipment, as well as capacity-building and awareness-raising on the importance of having such scheme. We reiterate the critical role of UNODC in this regard.

It is on the basis of the referred framework that the Group of G77 and China is prepared to discuss the reinforcement of data collection.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

G77 and China Statement delivered by the H.E. Ambassador Eugenio María Curia, PR of Argentina on item 10 of the 52nd session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Vienna on 19th March 2009

Madam Chair,

The Group of 77 and China considers imperative the strengthening of the financial capacity of UNODC. The Group reiterates that the continued over-reliance on extra-budgetary resources and in particular earmarked funding has led to highly fragmented, unpredictable and constrained funding patterns. In addition, it limits the UNODC ability to make strategic decisions and leads to donor priorities rather than multilateral mandates determining the actions of UNODC, which undermines country ownership. Therefore, the Group of 77 and China reiterates the importance of providing UNODC with sufficient, predictable and sustainable funding and determining technical assistance programs in accordance with national and regional priorities.

The Group would like to stress the fact that the assignment of mandates to UNODC which are subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources has deterred UNODC to adequately implement the mandates given by the CND.

In this sense, the Group would like to reiterate its objection to the inclusion of phrases like "subject to extra-budgetary resources" and "within existing resources" in resolutions and decisions of the Commission. The use of these phrases impedes the budget proposals of the Secretary-General from reflecting the resource levels commensurate with UNODC's mandates and hinders their full, efficient and effective implementation.

This practice violates, among others, General Assembly resolutions 41/213, 42/211 and 45/248 B; which clearly state that the "Fifth Committee is the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters". The CND should refrain from the inclusion of such phrases in its decisions and resolutions.

Although available information shows an increase in total funding, let us not be misled, this growth is only in Specific Purpose Funds, which are tightly earmarked to specific projects and leave little operating flexibility to respond to complex programmatic and management challenges.

The Group reiterates that the core activities of UNODC should be funded from the regular budget. While not discouraging provision of voluntary funding to the UNODC, there should not be heavy reliance on the extra-budgetary resources to finance the core activities.

The Group also reiterates that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs must reassert its role as the governing body of UNODC in drug related issues, including budgetary matters relating to the UNDCP Fund.

The Group reiterates that the reality of UNODC as an integrated office with a unified medium term strategy is neither reflected in its budget and funding structure nor in its governance arrangements. In other words, its current fragmented budget and funding structure is costly and burdensome to administer.

The Group requests the Executive Director to pay due regard to the equitable geographical distribution in the recruitment of UNODC staff, particularly from developing countries in accordance with the provisions of the UN Charter.

The Group is confident that the standing working group on finance and governance we are about to establish at this session will substantially contribute to the solution of these matters. In this regard the Group conveys its readiness to actively contribute to the work of the aforementioned Working Group.

Finally, but not less importantly, the Group reiterates the importance of having available the reports requested in resolutions of the Commission. In this regard, the Group regrets that the reports requested in operative paragraph 9 of resolution 50/14 are not available at this session, and requests to make them available at the 18th session of the CCPCJ.

Thank you, Madam Chair.