

H.E. Ambassador Omar Amer Youssef, Permanent Representative of Egypt and Chairman of the G-77 Vienna Chapter for 2019 Handover Speech

Your Excellency, Ms. Ghada Waly, Director-General of UNOV and Executive Director of UNODC

Your Excellency, Mr. Li Yong, Director General of UNIDO

Your Excellency, Mr. Rafael Grossi, Director General of IAEA

Your Excellency, Mr. Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary of CTBTO

Distinguished Ambassadors, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honour to be here today to officially hand over the Chairmanship of the Vienna Chapter of the Group of 77, to the able hands of the Distinguished Permanent Representative of Malaysia for the first half of the year 2020, and the Distinguished Permanent Representative of the Philippines for the second half of the year. Last year, as I received the Chairmanship, I asserted to all of you the importance of standing together as a Group, united by our shared goals of peace, prosperity, and sustainable development for our countries, and the world at large.

Throughout the year, we all set out together to advance the interests of the Group of 77 and China in the Vienna-based organizations. Thanks to our unity and solidarity, our collective efforts enabled us to reach significant milestones along that path.

The role and presence of the Group in Vienna is best reflected in the leadership of our most important organizations. I am immensely proud to welcome my fellow Egyptian, Ms. Ghada Waly, to her new position as Executive Director of UNODC and Director General of UNOV, an enormous responsibility that was entrusted to her by the Secretary-General of the UN last year, and which I have every confidence she will fulfil in an exemplary manner. I am equally proud to recall that last year, Mr. Rafael Grossi of Argentina was selected to carry out the monumental task of leading the International Atomic Energy Agency during a crucial and historic time for the Agency. Along with Director General Yong of UNIDO, and Executive Secretary Zerbo of CTBTO, this means that the four main Vienna-based organizations are now led by candidates from our Group, who have proven themselves the most able and qualified leaders for these positions.

The G77's central role in Vienna was similarly reflected in the most important meetings held during the past year, as we developed and promoted our positions and took significant strides forward in advancing our interests.

The Group continued to be the leader in promoting technical cooperation and peaceful uses of nuclear technology in the IAEA. In parallel, the Group stood united in promoting effective measures to combat crime and corruption, and address the world drug problem, and to call for a stronger and more effective UNODC. In the context of UNIDO, the Group continued to be a leading force in enhancing the work of the organization, and advancing the Programme for Country Partnership. In the different CTBTO meetings, the Group made progress towards the formulation of a comprehensive and focused capacity-building framework. In the COPUOUS, we defended and advanced our joint position on the need to promote the contribution of the peaceful uses of outer space to sustainable development.

In the same vein, I would like to share with you some excellent news, representing another milestone along our road. After extended efforts, and building upon the work of the preceding Chairmanship, Ecuador, we are ready to announce the official launch of the new G-77 Vienna Chapter website. I have no doubt that this website will constitute a valuable platform to promote and advance the interests of the Group.

These endeavours and achievements were only possible as a result of our enduring unity, which I have had the pleasure of witnessing throughout my time as Chair. I would like to thank every one of you, Distinguished Permanent Representatives and Delegates, for lending me the greatest possible support along the way, and for showing the utmost degree of solidarity and cooperation in defence of the Group's interests, as well displaying admirable wisdom in the interest of compromise, whenever it best served our collective goals.

I would also like to express our sincerest gratitude to UNIDO, for generously bearing the financial costs of the G77 Office in Vienna, something the organization has done since 1998. I take this opportunity to call upon the other Vienna-based organizations to share this burden, particularly in light of the need to reinforce the Office, and the leading role that the Group plays in Vienna.

The Vienna Chapter of the Group of 77 stands at a crucial juncture. Together, we have achieved many victories, but the road towards realizing the aspirations of our countries remains long and filled with challenges. We are now ready to hand over the torch to Malaysia, the incoming Chair of the Group for the first half of the year, and the Philippines, for the second half of the year. I am fully confident in their ability to light our path forward with conviction and leadership. Today, we stand more united than ever in our readiness to walk that path and face its challenges. Let us walk this road together.

Before I conclude my speech, and with it, my Chairmanship, may I kindly take this opportunity to highlight the efforts of our G77 Taskforce Coordinators, and ask them to come forward to the stage to receive a small token of our gratitude for their services to the Group:

- 1- Mr. Amin Saeed of Pakistan, Taskforce Coordinator for IAEA
- 2- Mr. Taghi Ferami of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Taskforce Coordinator for IAEA
- 3- Mr. Mahmoud Movahed of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Taskforce Coordinator for COPUOUS
- 4- Mr. Carlos Garcia of Guatemala, Taskforce Coordinator for CTBTO
- 5- Mr. Ahmed Maaty of Egypt, Taskforce Coordinator for UNODC

I would also like to express our gratitude to Mr. Milton Cohen of Panama, and Ms. Jane Makori of Kenya, our Taskforce Coordinators for UNIDO, who have finished their postings in Vienna and are not with us here today, but whose contributions are not forgotten.

Lastly, I would like to say a special thank you to Ms. Annemarie Heuls, the guardian angel of the G77 in Vienna, as well as Ms. Laura Aichelburg, who has supported her throughout the year. I also ask them to come forward to the stage.

And now, it is my pleasure to officially hand over the Chairmanship of the Group of 77, Vienna Chapter, to H.E. Ambassador Ganeson Sivagurunathan, Permanent Representative of Malaysia.

I thank you all.