

G-77 Handover Ceremony delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica and Chairperson of the Vienna Chapter during 2021

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

Your Excellency, Mr. Gerd Müller, Director General of UNIDO;

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

Your Excellency, Mr. Robert Floyd, Executive Secretary of CTBTO;

Your Excellency, Ms. Anna Joubin-Bret, Secretary of UNCITRAL;

Distinguished Ambassadors, members of Permanent Missions in Vienna, dear colleagues.-

Let me at the outset welcome you all to the handover ceremony of the Chairmanship of the Group of 77 + China between Costa Rica and Morocco. I would like to seize this opportunity to present to you all my best wishes for this year 2022.

My appreciation to the heads of organizations and their representatives for being here, strong political signal that underscores our shared commitment and common mission. Special welcome to Mr. Gerd Müller and Mr. Robert Floyd who are here with us for the first time, as they assumed their offices recently.

I would like to start my final statement as a chair by congratulating you, Ambassador Azzeddine Farhane of Morocco, for assuming this new position as Chairperson of our Group. I am confident of your commitment and diplomatic skills, well known since our times in Geneva 2 decades ago, certainly the Group will be in the best hands. Dear Azzeddine, I wish you all the best and pleased, be assured of my full support during your tenure.

A year ago, Costa Rica had the honour and the privilege of taking over the Chairmanship of the Group for the first time and also first time for a Central American country in Vienna. We committed to honour this challenging but prestigious task, to safeguard the interest of our Group and consolidate its well-established values. We hope that we have contributed to the fulfillment of these aspirations.

Allow me to pay special tribute to the different chairs of the Task Forces who performed their duties in an outstanding manner. Their dedication, professionalism and outstanding hard work in convening task force meetings, drafting statements and in providing overall substantive support for the work of the Group, mainly contributed to our achievements. My recognition to Bolivar Bao from the Philippines for ONUDI matters; Ms. Metsi Letlala from South Africa and Mr. Mahmoud Hamdy from Egypt for AIEA matters; Mr. Carlos Garcia from Guatemala for UNODC matters; Mr. Mfundo Majazi from South Africa who took over from Mr. Elyes Lakhel from Tunisia in CTBTO matters; Mr. Patricio Urueña from Argentina for UNOOSA matters and Mr. Zainal Izran Zahari from Malaysia for UNCITRAL matters.

During 2021 and despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the G-77 holds numerous meetings at the Plenary and at task force level. In total we had 11 plenary meetings, 84 Task Force meetings and 3 Working Groups; it means in total 98 meetings. In term of statements, we delivered 39 statements, 6 in UNIDO, 16 in AIEA, 8 in CTBTO, 6 in ONUDC (CND, CCPCJ AND KYOTO CONGRESS) and 3 in UNOOSA.

Also, let me thank the VBOs for their continued assistance provided to Members of the Group in regard to the COVID-19 pandemic and the excellent cooperation we have had and the continued dialogue with the different Secretariats. The Group actively participated in the policy-making organs processes of each of the VBOs. I hope that the Group is proud of our collective accomplishments in 2021.

In term of our work, some brief ideas. We need to reinforce our Groups continued engagement to the work of the Vienna-based Organizations and strengthen multilateralism in these difficult times. Therefore, the high-level attendance during the Group meetings must be maintained and delegations must continue to participate actively in the process, to keep evolving common positions and advancing new ideas and strategies to respond to the current challenges. Unfortunately, I couldn't convene a retreat to discuss our present or future as I expected last December. Ideas like the establishment of a troika, substantive approach with concrete targets, fostering the synergies among the regions, ways to interact with others non member States and even the improving of our methods of work, could be considered.

Dear Directors/ Dear Ambassadors.-

I would like to express our particular appreciation to UNIDO for their support to the Group in hosting the Vienna Chapter since its establishment in 1998 and for supporting the Group by providing us with an effective and dynamic Secretariat. At the same time, my sincere appreciation for the excellent cooperation along the year by the IAEA, CTBTO, UNODC, UNCITRAL and UNOOSA, this facilitated our endeavors. With this in mind, I invite Executive Heads of all VBOs to explore ways to support the functioning of the Office.

If you allow me, I would like to dedicate one particular message to one special person, Annemarie Heuls and her team of interns. Annemarie is no just the memory of the group, is the soul and the support of all who had served as a chair. Her competence, knowledge and dedication had contributed to the smooth preparation and coordination of the activities of the Group. Thank you Annemarie, thank you for your hard and dedicated work for our Group over the last 24 years.

Finally, I wish to thank all of you for your cooperation and solidarity and for having worked with me closely during the last year. I want to thank once again your trust in our delegation and I sincerely hope that we were able to live up to your expectations.

Before I invite my successor, Ambassador Farhane to come forward and take over the position of Chairperson of G-77 Vienna Chapter for the year 2022, if you allow me Ambassador, I would like to call personally to Ms Annemarie Heuls and all the G-77 Task Force Coordinators 2021 here presented at the podium:

I thank. Ambassador Farhane, please come to the podium. The floor is yours.
Congratulations.