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Ministerial Declaration of the Group of 77 and China on the occasion of UNCTAD XIII

The road to Doha: A world of constancy; a world of change

1. We, the Ministers of the member States of the Group of 77 and China, met in Doha, Qatar, on the occasion of the thirteenth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). We express our appreciation and gratitude to the State of Qatar and its people for the excellent organization and hosting the Ministerial Meeting and the warm hospitality that has been bestowed on us in the city of Doha since our arrival.
2. We also express our appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development for the secretariat's continued support extended to the Group, which has enhanced our effectiveness, especially the Geneva Chapter. There is an organic and symbiotic link between UNCTAD and the Group of 77 and China, and we look forward to the continuing strengthening of this bond. We reaffirm our commitment to strengthen our ability as a Group to collectively promote our interests.
3. We also reaffirm the central role of UNCTAD as the focal point within the United Nations for the integrated treatment of trade and development and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development. UNCTAD is pre-eminently placed to respond to the current and emerging *global* challenges facing developing countries. We call for the strengthening of UNCTAD's three pillars; research and analysis, consensus-building, and technical cooperation, as well as the intergovernmental machinery. We underscore the need of further enhancing the role of the United Nations in international economic and financial governance, and its centrality on the global development agenda.
4. Since our last meeting in Accra, Ghana, on the occasion of the twelfth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, events have highlighted challenges and opportunities facing the international community. The global economic, financial and trading system, including the multilateral trading system, remains unbalanced. The global economic and financial crisis has revealed new vulnerabilities. High volatility of food and energy prices is a persistent challenge, global inequality remains, and many are still in the abyss of poverty. The threat from climate change seems to grow more pressing, even more so when combined with the effects of other man-made environmental degradation.

5. To reaffirm the Accra Accord, greater focus is required in development policy on building productive capacities while avoiding the use of economics as a tool to achieve political ends. Policy space for developing countries remains constrained. There continues to be a need to move away from the one-size-fits-all approach to development, which remains persistent.

6. On the other hand, opportunities have emerged in the international community for the elaboration and articulation of more effective approaches to development cooperation. Information and communications technology has made the world smaller and has made it easier to share experiences and best practices.

7. These challenges and opportunities have highlighted the need for continued and strengthened solidarity among developing countries, and the need to further enhance and strengthen the Group. We recognize that we face common external and systemic threats to our efforts to improve the economic and social welfare of all our citizens. This recognition enables us as developing countries to demonstrate our solidarity as the embodiment of South–South cooperation to act more effectively. We reiterate that South–South cooperation does not replace, but rather complements North–South cooperation, and along with triangular cooperation, may contribute to inclusive and sustainable growth and development. This includes addressing the persistent challenges whose solution has continued to be elusive, while affording developing countries, in particular least developed countries (LDCs), greater opportunity to overcome the new challenges to development.

8. The Group therefore needs to focus on how to mitigate crises or avert the fallout, and more importantly, how to achieve the development levels needed to create a truly balanced world and propel itself into a new level of development by addressing systemic and entrenched inequalities, including in the areas of information and communications technology, as well as the Internet. The expeditious and effective transfer of appropriate technology and the promotion of innovation in developing countries remain important, in particular in addressing the existing digital divide.

9. As part of the response, the Group needs to be a proactive force in the global effort to solve global issues. It needs to build on its solidarity and maximize its competitive advantage. Our collective capacity to address the main constraints to a better future for our people – such as poverty, hunger, food insecurity, unemployment, inequality, energy insecurity and lack of access to renewable energy and relevant technologies, the adverse effects of climate change, imbalances in global trade, the spread of communicable diseases, inadequate technology transfer and reforms of the international trade and financial architecture, should be enhanced. The United Nations' contribution to the global effort should be consistent with the profile, needs and development goals of the peoples of the South. Fresh and clear ideas are needed to address the needs and challenges of developing countries, in particular LDCs, as they graduate from every step of the development process. We also underline that the enhanced and effective role of the State is crucial to lead and promote development.

10. On this basis, the key message of UNCTAD XIII is of particular resonance in today's world: that in order to build sustainable and inclusive development the international community should enhance its support to development. In this direction, we must ensure that the approach to development is one that takes into account the needs, priorities and objectives of individual developing countries and its peoples.

From Doha to the future: Towards more effective approaches to development

11. We recognize that in order for the Group to play its rightful role in the international community, it must be better equipped, in terms of ideas and in terms of capacity. The objective is a simple one: to accelerate development to make the world a better place for humanity – through the articulation and pursuit of ideas and initiatives to make the global economic and financial system, and models for development, more effective and more rooted in the experiences and priorities of developing countries.

12. We must work collectively as a Group to redefine the development agenda. Through the force of our ideas, and through the effectiveness of our action, we must remain resolute as we continue to pursue the Millennium Development Goals and bring about development goals after 2015 that will enable us to realize a more prosperous and better future for humanity. In this regard, we reiterate the need to meet, in an expeditious manner, the internationally agreed targets for official development assistance of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) of donor countries to developing countries and of an additional 0.15 per cent to 0.2 per cent of GNP to the LDCs by 2015 as well as further enhance the resources for the LDCs.

13. We must articulate a more comprehensive and contemporary view of the global economic and development situation. In so doing, we must update our platform. We must continue to show that ours is a Group of ideas, of pragmatism and of effective action. As we refine and redefine development in the post-2015 world, we should engage with our partners and stakeholders that will support us in our development needs. It is vital that the international community work towards achieving the graduation of half of the LDCs by 2020, as envisioned in the Istanbul Programme of Action. In short, we should reposition ourselves to adapt to the global changes as well as to continue improving the standard of living in developing countries. To achieve this, we need the support and assistance of our key partners, such as UNCTAD and the South Centre, as well as through new partnerships with other multilateral and regional institutions, and other stakeholders that share our causes.

14. This work also requires that the global economic and financial system post-2015 will be an architecture that is truly fair, democratic and supportive of sustainable development. In this regard, the impact of the current global economic and financial crises needs to be addressed, while reform of global economic and financial governance structures with the participation of all is crucial. It is therefore imperative that the global monetary and financial system fully supports sustainable development, and that the multilateral trading system truly ensures that trade, among other factors, serves as an engine for development.

15. We express serious concern at the lack of progress in the Doha Round of World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations. All WTO members should uphold and reiterate their commitment for WTO to promote an open, equitable, rules-based and predictable multilateral trading system, with development as a core element of WTO's work. The Group of 77 and China reiterates the call for the necessary flexibility and political will required to break the current impasse in the negotiations and conclude in a balanced, ambitious, comprehensive and development-oriented outcome of the Doha Development Agenda, with the necessary special and differential treatment for developing countries, in particular LDCs. We emphasize the importance of facilitating accession to WTO. The accession process should be accelerated without political impediments and in an expeditious and transparent manner for developing countries. This would contribute to the rapid and full integration of these countries into the multilateral trading system.

16. While preserving our policy space, the Group shall endeavour to fight against all threats to economic growth and development, including all forms of protectionist measures and unilateral economic pressures, especially by the leading industrial economies.

17. We express concern about the adoption of unilateral actions that are not consistent with International Laws, Rules and Principles of the World Trade Organization. These measures harm the exports and impede the full achievement and further enhancement of the economic and social development of all countries, particularly the developing countries. Therefore, we firmly reject the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic, financial and trade measures, including unilateral sanctions against developing countries. We urge the international community to take urgent and effective measure to eliminate the use of such measures.

18. Likewise, attention should be given to analysing and monitoring how subsidies of developed countries have historically affected and continue to undermine the development of productive capacities in the agricultural sector of developing countries.

19. We reaffirm the need for the Government of the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to resume negotiations in accordance with the principles and the objectives of the United Nations Charter and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, in order to find, as soon as possible, a peaceful solution to the sovereignty dispute relating to “the Question of the Malvinas Islands”, which seriously damages the economic capacities of the Argentine Republic and the need for both parties to refrain from taking decisions that would imply introducing unilateral modifications in the situation while the Islands are going through the process recommended by the General Assembly.

20. We reaffirm the need to find a peaceful solution to the sovereignty issues facing developing countries, including among others the disputes over Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia, which was unlawfully excised from the territory of Mauritius in violation of international law and United Nations General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 and 2066 (XX) of 16 December 1965. Failure to resolve these decolonization and sovereignty issues would seriously damage and undermine the development and economic capacities and prospects of developing countries.

21. The Palestinian people continue to endure hardships on daily basis as a result of the occupation. We are alarmed by the harsh economic conditions and the Israeli-imposed illegal measures, which include closure, blockade and destruction of property, appropriation of Palestinian natural resources and land, and restrictions on movement. All of these measures aim to prevent the Palestinians from pursuing economic development, sustaining their basic needs, and violate the basics of human rights in the occupied territory of Palestine.

Building from Doha: strengthened capacities for a stronger Group

22. Along the way to 2015, we have an important double golden jubilee. In 2014, we will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Group of 77 and China. We will also celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of UNCTAD. In its almost 50 years of existence, the Group has accomplished much. As the world has changed, the Group of 77 and China in Geneva needs to continue to evolve to strengthen the Group and enhance its impact. Likewise, UNCTAD has accomplished much. Yet so much more remains to be done.

23. The double golden jubilee should recall, recognize and build on past accomplishments, and should be celebrated in a forward-looking spirit. The Group should bring together in Geneva – the birthplace of the Group of 77 and China, and UNCTAD – an

unprecedented assembly of leaders and intellectuals to recommit the international community to the ideals of development and a better future for all.

24. We recognize that our endeavour is ambitious, and that it will not be easy. In order to embark on such an ambitious task, it is necessary to build on the most important resource of the Group – its people, its solidarity and capacity to act united. We therefore resolve that the Group should embark on a major program of capacity-building measures to strengthen the Group as a whole and reinforce the Group's role as a united and influential force in multilateral for a and global economy.

25. We therefore strongly encourage all Chapters of the Group to undertake specific capacity-building initiatives in partnership with the relevant institutions and organizations, be they multilateral or regional organizations and think tanks, to strengthen their capacity to generate new ideas, build consensus around them and operationalize them through the multilateral process. This should include enhanced training of negotiators of the Group in strategic planning, negotiations and consensus-building.

26. We also encourage closer coordination by all Chapters to strengthen their work, and that of the Group of 77 and China, by making use of new means of communication, to enhance the sharing of information, experience and expertise, as well as consolidating negotiating positions.

27. We also look forward to the Group working more closely with UNCTAD, South Centre, and other development-oriented think tanks and regional organizations to build further the intellectual capacity of the Group. In this regard, we encourage the New York and Geneva Chapters to initiate immediately the organization of an annual senior-level forum of officials and intellectuals, on the sidelines of the annual substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, for the exchange of innovative ideas on development issues, which could then directly contribute to the broader work of the Group of 77 and China.

28. We also look forward to the Group engaging with the various entities of the United Nations system, including the regional commissions, as well as other international organizations, regional organizations and development banks, and other think tanks in the South, to enrich and deepen the work of the Group. Such interaction can include, but not be limited to, capacity-building activities, substantive dialogue and other activities consistent with advancing the interests and the priorities of the Group.
