



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY THE
DELEGATION OF IRAQ AT THE INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON THE 2025
ECOSOC HLS AND HLPF MINISTERIAL DECLARATION
(New York, 6 March 2025)**

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. We extend our sincerest appreciation to the Co-Facilitators, the Distinguished Permanent Representatives of the Czech Republic, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, respectively, for guiding us through this important process.

The Group reaffirms its strong commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and underscores the urgent need for urgent accelerated action to ensure that no one and no country is left behind.

The Group recommends that this year's ministerial declaration should follow the same format from previous years. Moreover, the G77 expects that the negotiation process will uphold the excellent precedent of last year and that there will be no backtracking. Hence, we look forward to engaging in line-by-line text-based negotiations, which will ensure a truly intergovernmental, transparent, open, and inclusive process. We must also avoid overlap with other ongoing processes. The zero draft needs to be balanced to form a basis for the intergovernmental consultations.

On substance, Distinguished Co-Facilitators, the Group emphasises that the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and must be at the centre of our work. We also emphasise that our work must be guided by all the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Regarding emerging and persistent challenges, developing countries continue to face structural and emerging challenges that hinder progress toward achieving the SDGs. These include:

1. Insufficient financing for sustainable development, exacerbated by global economic volatility.

2. Weak healthcare systems, lack of universal health coverage, and growing health inequities.
3. The digital divide and technological disparities, difficulties in accessing innovation and AI.
4. Persistent unemployment and labor market challenges, particularly in the informal economy.
5. Climate change, environmental degradation, and ocean-related challenges, requiring enhanced action.
6. The special challenges and needs facing countries in special situations, in particular, African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing States, as well as specific challenges faced by many middle-income countries, conflict and post-conflict countries and countries and peoples living under foreign occupation.
7. The severe difficulties faced by countries and peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation and strive to remove the obstacles to the full realization of their right to self-determination and right to development, which adversely affect their economic and social development. Reaffirmation that, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the need to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of States.
8. The impact of unilateralism and protectionism, including unilateral economic, financial or trade measures,

As for key priorities for the SDGs under review this year, the Group emphasizes the following priority areas for action:

1. Financing for Development, Means of Implementation and partnerships (SDG 17)
 - The financing gap for SDG implementation remains a fundamental concern.
 - We call for developed countries to scale-up financial assistance, meet their ODA commitments and provide debt relief to developing countries. This must be in addition to greater South-South and triangular cooperation.
 - We also call for a strengthened and equitable global financial architecture with the meaningful participation of developing countries.

- Enhanced access to technology transfer, capacity building, and investment in data and research is critical to ensuring that developing countries can fully leverage evidence-based solutions.
- The Financing for Development (FFD4) process must be closely linked to the 2030 Agenda, reinforcing international solidarity and more equitable economic policies.

2. Strengthening Health Systems and Universal Coverage (SDG 3)

- Investing in primary healthcare, universal health coverage, and pandemic preparedness is essential to ensuring resilience against future global health crises.
- Greater cooperation in medical research sharing experience and best practices, technology transfer, and early warning and response systems is needed to strengthen health system resilience in developing countries.
- We must address the global shortfall of health workers through training, recruitment, development, and retention programs.
- Recognize that health financing requires global solidarity and collective effort and urge Member States to strengthen international cooperation to support efforts to build and strengthen capacity in developing countries, including through enhanced official development assistance and financial and technical support to development and innovation programs.

3. Advancing Gender Equality, the empowerment of all women and girls and Social Protection (SDG 5 & SDG 8)

- The need for tangible actions to address all forms of violence and discrimination,
- Invest in economy, including care-economy, and promote equal labor market opportunities.
- The Declaration should highlight the role of fair and equal wages, reskilling programs, and decent work policies in promoting economic stability, and gender responsive social protection systems.
- The need for strengthening investment in social protection, fostering social inclusion, and promoting the transition to formal employment.

- Promoting international solidarity through initiatives, such as the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transition, to support the extension of social protection systems and job creation.

4. Promoting Sustainable use of Oceans and Marine Resources (SDG 14)

- SDG 14, Conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development, remains the least financed of all the SDGs.
- We stress the need for enhanced action on marine conservation, sustainable fisheries, and reducing marine pollution.
- We highlight that ocean-based economy presents a crucial opportunity for developing countries to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth.
- As negotiations are ongoing for the outcome document of the third UN Ocean Conference, the review of SDG 14 should take into account the discussions from the UN Ocean Conference (UNOC) to ensure policy coherence.

5. Strengthening Multilateralism and Policy Coherence

- The adoption of the 2025 HLPF comes at a critical juncture. The Ministerial declaration shall build on the political momentum created by key intergovernmental agreements and frameworks, and create synergies with the upcoming outcome documents of the 4th Financing for Development Conference, the 3rd UN Conference on Oceans and the Second World Summit for Social Development.
- The Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) should be strengthened as a tool for sharing knowledge and tracking progress. We recognize the valuable work of the Group of Friends of VNR, co-chaired by Morocco and the Philippines, and encourage greater support for developing countries in preparing comprehensive VNRs.

The Group stands ready to engage constructively in the upcoming negotiations. We urge our partners to support a process that is transparent, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of those most at risk of being left behind.

Thank you.