



REMARKS ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AMBASSADOR KINGSLEY MAMABOLO AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM (New York, 7 July 2015)

Mr President,

From the moment of the conceptualization of the High-level Political Forum, member states of the Group of 77 and China have consistently and earnestly engaged in it in a spirit of constructiveness and with an objective of having a strong Forum that would bring added value to the universal efforts of achieving sustainable development and the integration of its economic, social and environmental dimensions.

With poverty eradication underpinning our development efforts, the HLPF has an important role, not only as our follow up and review mechanism on the implementation of the post 2015 development agenda, including the SDGs, but also for giving guidance, recommendations and political leadership in the task ahead to take the global sustainable development agenda forward.

Within the UN system, it can serve as a useful tool to improve coordination of efforts aimed at supporting sustainable development. It can assist and promote the sharing of best practices, expertise and lessons learnt, and a system-wide coherent approach to sustainable development policies.

This is an enormous undertaking that can only benefit from our ownership of the process and the outcomes thereof.

It is in this regard, Mr President, the Group would like to emphasise the point made at the beginning of this year's HLPF session that every step we take should be geared towards strengthening the Forum to fulfill the mandate and role that was envisioned for it.

It is important that, going forward, all member states should participate in the preparatory process to inform both the content of the programme of the forum and its outcomes. This would have the added benefit of creating a bottom-up approach, more transparency and understanding, and ownership of decisions arrived at.

The post 2015 development agenda that will be adopted by our leaders in September presents an opportunity to address the multi-faceted development challenges that all of us face. It is of particular importance that the HLPF create space for an adequate engagement on sustainable development challenges faced by developing countries as agreed under the General Assembly resolution 67/290 on the format and organisational aspects of the HLPF.

Mr President,

One of the challenges facing developing countries is inadequate capacity towards implementing and achieving sustainable development. There is thus an urgent need for capacity building for developing countries in accordance with national priorities and strategies. Going forward, we would therefore hope that this Forum will have sessions dedicated to addressing issues related to building the capacity of developing countries.

When addressing the capacity of developing countries, it would be important to take into consideration and devote adequate time to the diverse needs and challenges faced by countries in special situations, in particular African countries, least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), as well as the specific challenges facing middle-income countries (MICs) and people and countries under foreign occupation.

A Forum whose mandate is to follow on the implementation of sustainable development can ill afford to avoid a discussion on building and strengthening the capacity of developing countries to sustain healthy levels of growth and development, while ensuring effective engagement in the work of the Forum.

In conclusion, there is a need for adequate interlinkages to be made between the various processes and outcomes on sustainable development, including outcome documents of conferences for groups of countries in special situations. For developing countries, it is of utmost importance that these linkages be made, to ensure coherence, and to reduce the reporting burden on States, especially in the context of limited capacity. The HLPF, when considering the review and follow-up of the post 2015 development agenda, should take these into consideration.

The extent to which the forum is fulfilling its mandate will in no small measure be reflected by how well it is supporting those in most need of development assistance.

Thank you.