

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA

BY H.E. MR EVO MORALES AYMA, PRESIDENT OF THE PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA AND PRESIDENT OF THE GROUP OF 77, ON THE TWENTY-NINTH EXTRAORDINARY HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS ON THE FOLLOW-UP TO THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

(New York, 22 September 1994)

Mr President,

I have the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

I would like to begin by congratulating you on your election as President of this twenty-ninth special session of the General Assembly.

Twenty years ago, the world met in Cairo and reached a consensus on a Programme of Action that covered a wide range of population, social, development and human rights issues necessary to ensure a healthy and dignified life for all.

Poverty is an affront to human dignity, and its eradication is the greatest challenge faced by the world today. The Group of 77 and China recognizes that the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action drives the international community to take concrete action to fight poverty. Despite progress, the struggle against poverty now faces severe restrictions as a result of the global financial and economic crisis, continuing food insecurity, the volatility of capital flows, and the extreme volatility of the prices of basic goods, access to energy and the problems raised by climate change.

In these circumstances, it is essential to support developing countries in their efforts to eradicate poverty and inequality.

The International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action set the standard for the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Although considerable progress has been made, the Group is concerned by the persistence of inequality and failures to achieve the MDGs, and by the huge socioeconomic and environmental challenges faced by developing countries. We therefore urge the developed countries to observe their commitments with regard to official development assistance and other international aid commitments, bearing in mind that developing countries will require additional, sustainable financial resources to implement a wide range of development activities.

Financial aid should always be provided without being subject to conditions, as development strategies should be led by developing countries themselves, and take into account the conditions, needs and priorities of each country.

It should also be based on the principle of shared but differentiated responsibility, with North-South cooperation as a fundamental component, and South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation as useful additional elements.

A few days ago the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted resolution A/RES/68/304 towards the establishment of a multilateral legal framework for sovereign debt restructuring processes. This historic achievement brings hope to developing countries that wish to restructure their debt on the basis of their actual capacity to pay, with the aim of promoting economic growth and development, and the achievement of the Millennium Development

Goals and the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action.

With respect to the future, the Group of 77 and China is committed to taking a leading role in shaping the development agenda from 2015, and stresses that the eradication of poverty should continue to be its central, guiding objective. We must be capable of eradicating poverty by 2030.

In considering the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development after 2014, the Group of 77 and China stress that population issues should continue to be addressed in an integrated manner and should be at the centre of the development agenda after 2015. The relationship between population, resources, the environment and development must be recognized and managed appropriately and should be in harmonious and dynamic equilibrium.

The gender perspective should guide our decisions and actions. Maternal mortality has fallen substantially in developing countries in some regions; however, women in other regions face a higher risk of dying as a result of pregnancy and birth, and this maternal mortality includes a growing number of girls and adolescents. The number of new HIV infections has fallen across the globe. Unfortunately, in some less developed countries the prevalence of HIV has almost doubled since 2001 and two thirds of those living with HIV in some areas are women.

The Group notes the final document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, reaffirming the central role of women and the need to ensure their full participation and leadership on an equal basis in all areas of sustainable development, and has decided to accelerate implementation of its commitments in this regard, which are set out in the Programme of Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and Programme 21, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the United Nations Millennium Declaration. In this context, we also recall our goal of eliminating all practices that harm women and girls, such as forced and child marriage and female genital mutilation.

The Group recognizes that everyone should have access, without discrimination, to a range of basic medical services covering health promotion, prevention, cure and rehabilitation, together with essential, safe, accessible, effective, high-quality medicines. A high-quality, efficient, health system that is completely functional and provides universal coverage is essential.

We urge developed countries and competent international organizations to provide sufficient financial and technological resources to developing countries, to supplement their efforts to provide universal health coverage and basic health services for all.

The Group believes that the nexus between migration and development should be addressed in an integrated manner, one that takes into account the economic, social and environmental dimensions and includes a cultural and human perspective, recognizing the functions and responsibilities of the countries of origin, transit and destination in promoting and effectively protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants and their families, especially those of women and children, irrespective of their migratory situation.

We are exploring the possibility of a legally binding convention on migration and development to improve the governance of international migration and to protect and promote the human rights of migrants and their contribution to development, whatever their migratory situation.

In conclusion, there is a need for the international community and the Member States and Observers of the United Nations to renew their commitment to the principles and goals of the Action Programme, to evaluate their performance to date, and to redouble their efforts. We call

upon donors, United Nations organizations and other international organizations to strengthen their financial and technical support for developing countries.

Thank you, Mr President.