

**Embassy of Pakistan**

**Vienna**

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**Remarks by Ambassador Aftab Ahmad Khokher,  
Group of 77 & China Handover Ceremony,  
28 February 2024**

**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. Aarti Holla-Maini Director of UNOOSA;**

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

**Distinguished Ambassadors, members of Permanent Missions, Ladies  
and Gentlemen**

Thank you all for being here today and welcome to the handover ceremony for the Chairpersonship of the Group of 77 & China between Pakistan and Colombia.

I also thank H.E. Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, for his kind message to mark this occasion.

I would like to begin by congratulating **H.E. Ambassador Laura Gil**, the Permanent Representative of Colombia, for assuming the position as Chairperson of the Group. I am confident that with your commitment, experience and diplomatic skills, the Group is in capable hands. I wish you the very best and assure you of my, and my delegation's, full support and cooperation during your tenure.

**Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It was a great honour and a privilege to serve as Chair of the Group of 77 and China in Vienna.

Pakistan has always abided by its commitment to the G77 and the values, ideals and principles it espouses. In this regard, I am profoundly grateful for the support and trust in our work by all Member States of the Group to advance the common political and economic interests of developing countries. I am also grateful to the Member States of the Asia Pacific Group for endorsing Pakistan's candidature for Chair of the Group. I also thank UNIDO for its contribution to the Group in financially supporting the Office of the G77 Vienna Chapter since its establishment in 1998 and urge all Heads of all UN organisations present today to further support the Office of the G77 Vienna Chapter in its work.

When Pakistan assumed this immense responsibility, we were cognizant of the multiple and multidimensional challenges being faced by the international community, especially by developing countries. Therefore, with your support, the Group pursued its objectives in close partnership with all Vienna-Based Organizations in order to search for consensus-based solutions while remaining engaged with multiple, interrelated and evolving challenges.

Active efforts were also undertaken to develop and project common positions on the thematic issues handled at the Vienna-based Organizations to ensure that their work responded more effectively to the priorities of developing countries.

During Pakistan's Chairpersonship, the Group continued to play its constructive role in maintaining the "Vienna Spirit" and reaffirmed its commitment to enhance cooperation not only between the Member States of the Group but also in augmenting South-South and triangular cooperation.

### **Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

During 2023, the Group continued its work to pursue its objectives with over **79** meetings, including 05 Plenary Meetings, and delivered **31** statements across several governing bodies of the Vienna-based Organizations.

More specifically, the Group continued its efforts in promoting effective measures to combat crime and corruption, address the world drug problem, and to call for a stronger and more effective **UNODC**. Moreover, the Group, for the first time, achieved a consensus statement delivered at the 5th Session of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Cybercrime held in April 2023 which highlighted important contributions to strengthen international cooperation, address challenges posed by ICTs for criminal purposes.

In the context of **UNIDO**, the Group continued to be a leading force in enhancing the work of the organization, and encouraged it to pursue its objective of fostering inclusive and sustainable industrial development in developing countries.

Moreover, the Group also worked towards promoting peaceful uses of nuclear technology and strengthening technical cooperation in the **IAEA**.

At the **CTBTO**, the Group made progress towards the formulation of a focused and comprehensive capacity-building framework.

In **COPUOS**, the Group defended and advanced its position on the need to promote the contribution of the peaceful uses of outer space to sustainable development and reiterated the need for **UNOOSA** to be sufficiently funded and staffed in view of its important mandate.

Finally, at **UNCITRAL**, the Group held several briefings in coordination with the Secretariat to help familiarize Member States with both new and ongoing discussions in the six Working Groups.

## **Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The exceptional work of our Task Force Coordinators was imperative in the Group's contributions and success. I would like to express my sincere appreciation for their dedication, professionalism and hard work in organizing task force meetings, drafting statements and providing substantial support for the Group and pay tribute to:

- Mr. **Gustav Kwaku Sefe Dovlo** from Ghana for **UNIDO** matters;
- Mr. **Matheus Uller** from Brazil for **IAEA** matters;
- Mr. **Fernando Márques** from Angola and Ms. **Amina Ali** from Kenya for **UNODC** matters;
- Mr. **Hasan Abbas** from Pakistan for **COPUOS** matters;
- Mr. **Flavio Medina** from Dominican Republic for **CTBTO** matters; and
- Mr. **Bolivar L. Bao** from the Philippines for **UNCITRAL** matters.

I will also take this opportunity to thank and appreciate the work of Ms. Crosby Plaza Hernandez, the G77 External Relations Officer, for her professionalism and dedication in coordinating all G77 meetings and matters.

I also recognise the efforts of our dedicated team of interns who have worked, behind the scenes, at the Office of the Group of 77 and China to make all our meetings possible. Thank you, Ms. Stephanie Pais Raposo, Ms. Franziska Köstler, Ms. Giulia Musso, Ms. Cassandra Calma and Ms. Mengru Li for your valuable contributions.

## **Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Before concluding, I would like to thank the Group of 77 and China once again for the trust and confidence reposed in Pakistan for this responsibility.

I wish the Group, under the new Chair, the very best and look forward to an excellent and productive year ahead. Pakistan will extend its full cooperation and support to protect and enhance the Group's collective and shared interests in the Vienna-based organizations.

With that, it is my pleasure to officially hand over the Chairpersonship of the Group of 77 and China, Vienna Chapter, for the year 2024, to H.E. Ambassador Laura Gil, Permanent Representative of Colombia.

I thank you.

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