

Statement by the Chair of the G-77 Vienna Chapter

Handover Ceremony of the Chairmanship of the G-77 Vienna Chapter

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Colombia hands over the chairpersonship of the G-77 and China to Kenya with a deep sense of gratitude to the members for their engagement during our tenure. You were always there when the Chair called. A heartfelt thanks!

I had the honor to preside this group during its 60th anniversary. We marked it with a series of commemorative activities, including a three-day exhibition titled "*Textiles from the Global South*", a cultural festival, an official ceremony attended by Executive Heads of Vienna-based Organizations, a concert at the ORF's Funkhaus and a reception at the Colombian residence. I hope you enjoyed the festivities.

Throughout the year, the Group remained steadfast in its commitment, holding 82 meetings, including seven Plenary Meetings, and delivering 27 statements across various governing bodies. Our engagement spanned key areas:

- **UNODC:** We actively contributed to discussions on drug control, crime prevention, and transnational organized crime, emphasizing alternative development, anti-corruption efforts, and protection of vulnerable populations.
- **UNIDO:** We advocated for inclusive and sustainable industrial development, successfully securing the adoption of the G-77-sponsored resolution at the UN General Assembly in New York.
- **IAEA:** We reinforced support for technical cooperation and peaceful uses of nuclear technology, securing the adoption of 10 draft resolutions by consensus, including ours on technical cooperation, which also advocated for technical assistance for health facilities in Palestine.
- **CTBTO:** We highlighted economic challenges faced by developing countries and emphasized the need for sustainable capacity-building measures.

- **COPUOS:** We defended the peaceful use of outer space to advance sustainable development, engaging with the new Director of UNOOSA to ensure adequate resources for the Office's mission.
- **UNCITRAL:** We reaffirmed the Group's role in ISDS reform and investment compensation discussions, strengthening capacity-building efforts in collaboration with the South Centre.

It is evident that the G-77 has repeatedly voiced clear demands; yet, effective responses remain elusive. I hope my successors continue working toward obtaining such responses.

From the very outset, I said that the Chair wanted to contribute to further the relevance of the G-77 in Vienna. I would like to provide a short summary of what I perceive as our fruitful efforts:

- **Advocacy for Equitable Representation:** The Group has been demanding equitable geographical representation within Vienna-based international organizations for the past 30 to 15 years, depending on the organization, to little avail. Thus, I obtained a mandate from you to engage directly with the heads of IAEA, UNIDO, UNOV, and CTBTO. This led to a firmer G-77 stance on the issue, its increased recognition at the highest levels and a commitment to improved representation of G-77 members.
- **Support for Palestine at IAEA:** In response to the humanitarian crisis in the occupied Palestinian territory, particularly in Gaza, the Group requested the IAEA to facilitate the delivery of nuclear medicine equipment and to strengthen human resource capacities. This was the first-ever statement of any chapter of the Group on Palestine.
- **Interagency Cooperation:** Strengthening collaboration between agencies should remain a priority in Vienna. The G-77 and China supported and encouraged the negotiation and signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between UNIDO and UNODC, enhancing synergies in sectors such as agro-industry, mining, and pharmaceuticals. I hope our countries take advantage of this initiative.
- **Engagement with UN Agencies:** We successfully organized briefings with representatives of organizations such as UNODA and

INTERPOL, enhancing Members' understanding of these organizations' mandates and fostering greater cooperation with Permanent Missions in Vienna. I believe the information circulated in such briefings help us all tap into resources that our missions do not necessarily know are available.

- **Strengthening Global South Dialogue with the rest of the world:** The annual dialogue with the European Union reinforced bilateral engagement on critical global issues. A very sincere conversation took place. I am convinced frank talk is or should be at the heart of peace-loving diplomacy.
- **Re-engagement at UNCITRAL:** After a hiatus of seven years, the Group successfully delivered a statement at UNCITRAL on Investor-State Dispute Settlement reform, advocating for a balanced framework that upholds the interests of States and investors alike.
- **Science Diplomacy Series:** We launch the initiative to bring an informal group to equip G-77 members with the knowledge and tools to effectively engage in international science diplomacy. The first engagement, jointly organized by the Permanent Missions of Colombia and Pakistan, will focus on the peaceful uses of outer space and will be announced soon.
- **Institutional Strengthening of the G-77 Office:** Recognizing the importance of the G-77 Office, efforts were made to secure additional resources, including the recruitment of an additional staff member, which had been a longstanding request of the Group and is now in process.

If these are successes, they are not the Chair's but ours. In the end, you own the group and have final decision-making powers. I saw my position as an inspiration-oriented one. I proposed, you decided. I brought a number of proposals to this plenary that we never moved on. On other occasions, we did reach agreements. If I put forward initiatives, even at the risk of being rejected, that was because I saw it as my responsibility to seek deeper impact in Vienna. I never saw lack of agreement as a failure. Nor do I see silence as a failure. I would much rather have silence on those topics that divide us than a fragile consensus artificially construed by forcing one or other side to concede.

It is clear that the G-77 and China do not see eye to eye on many of the most pressing international issues. Add to that that the group is now under stress, it is clear, by the periodic electoral cycles of its members that change dynamics and force us to re-recognize each other and adapt. In my view, the response to that can only be one: let's keep focused on what does indeed glue us together.

We cannot bury our heads in the sand: divisions and fractures among us will deepen as the Trump administration seeks to impose a new world order. Does the Global South have a response to it? And, more importantly, is this group ready to think and take a stand as the America first way penetrates our work at the United Nations-based organizations in Vienna?

I cannot finish my words without referring to Palestine. Palestine is one of our members. If we do not defend our own, who will

Excellencies, the strength of the G-77 lies in our shared commitment to a fairer and more inclusive global order. I urge all Member States to continue engaging actively, strengthening our collective voice and advancing our common goals.

Do as you preach goes the saying. I hope this statement was short enough not to have you drift into boredom. I have to confess a failing: I could not manage to convince our task force coordinators that less is more and less is more strategic and thus our statements continued to break at the time limits!

Our Task Force Coordinators may be stubborn but they are also loyal to our cause, talented, committed, and relentless. Nothing but gratitude for their work and that of the Secretariat in the hands of Crosby Plaza Hernandez, without whom I could not have undertaken this chairpersonship. Always calm, always helpful, always knowledgeable, always professional, and all this with always a smile on her face.

At this moment I invite them to come forward, in front of the podium, to receive a special recognition from the Colombian chairpersonship in appreciation of your dedication and invaluable contributions to the G-77

Mr. Mohammed Moussoui from Algeria for IAEA matters;
Mr. Marco Martinez from Chile for UNIDO matters;
Mr. Carlos Sanchez from Peru for UNODC matters;
Mr. Nortin Titus from Chile in CTBTO matters;
Ms. Hasan Abbas from the Pakistan for COPUOS matters
Mr. Erik Mangajaya from Indonesia a for UNCITRAL matters.

This is a small token of gratitude

It has been a privilege to serve as Chair, and I look forward to the continued success of our Group.

As we transition leadership, I take this opportunity to extend my congratulations to H.E. the Ambassador of Kenya on assuming the Chairmanship of the G-77 Vienna Chapter. I am confident that under Kenya's leadership, the Group will continue to thrive and champion the interests of the Global South.

It is my pleasure to officially hand over the chairmanship of the Group of 77, Vienna chapter, for the year 2025, to H.E. Ambassador Maurice Makoloo, of Kenya.