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UN urges Group of 77 nations to champion development agenda



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon with representatives of the G77 and China on the sidelines of the UN Climate Change Conference in Durban. UN Photo/Mark Garten

11 January 2012 –

[Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon and the President of the General Assembly Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser today urged the bloc of developing countries known as the Group of 77 and China to ensure that concrete and actionable measures are adopted at the forthcoming United Nations conference on sustainable development in the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro.

“Safeguarding the environment is a fundamental priority of the Rio process,” Mr. Ban [said](#) at a ceremony at UN Headquarters where Argentina handed over the chairmanship of the Group of 77 to Algeria. Ambassador Jorge Argüello of Argentina handed over the G-77 chairmanship to Ambassador Mourad Benmehidi of Algeria.

Once again, the role of the G-77 is an important part of the global effort to mobilize political will to achieve sustainable development.

The international community will gather at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) in Rio de Janeiro in June to chart a course towards a more sustainable and equitable world. The Conference will focus on two themes – a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and an institutional framework for sustainable development.

“Promoting balanced and stable economic growth and ensuring social equity are essential,” said Mr. Ban. “Yet the challenges loom large. The debt crisis continues in Europe and elsewhere. Markets are volatile. Budgets are getting squeezed. Unemployment is unacceptably high.

“The United Nations, with the full commitment of its membership, must act resolutely and decisively. Once again, the role of the G-77 is an important part of the global effort to mobilize political will to achieve sustainable development,” he added.

The Group, established in 1964 by 77 States, now includes more than 130 countries, some two thirds of the UN membership, and over 60 per cent of the world’s population.

Mr. Al-Nasser [stressed](#) the need for coordinated action by G-77 and China to ensure successful outcome of Rio+20.

“I am convinced that under the strong leadership of Algeria Rio+20 negotiations will lead to a successful outcome and will be an opportunity to give effect to a new vision,” Mr. Al-Nasser said in a speech delivered on his behalf by his chef de cabinet, Mutlaq al Qahtani.

“This is a vision based on a concrete programme of action for addressing gaps in means of implementation in the sustainable development agenda, as well as on efforts to address new and emerging challenges.”

On the achievement of the global poverty reduction blueprint known as the Millennium Development Goals ([MDGs](#)), the Secretary-General also urged the Group of 77 and China to strive to ensure that the targets are attained by the 2015 deadline.

“We must also begin thinking about the next steps beyond 2015. I invite the G-77 and China to be active in the dialogue regarding the post-2015 international development agenda. In the coming year and beyond, we have a historic opportunity to reshape the way we think about development,” said Mr. Ban.

Mr. Al-Nasser also pledged full support for Group of 77’s joint efforts to surmount the challenges and obstacles in the advancement of the UN development agenda.

“Together, we must ensure that programmes and activities established to address the needs of the developing countries are accorded the appropriate resources.

“As the date set for the achievement of the MDGs rapidly approaches, we must work together to secure the progress achieved so far and build upon hard-won economic and development gains,” he said.

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