



STATEMENT MADE BY H.E. Mr. VIJAY K.NAMBIAR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE AT THE HANDING OVER CEREMONY OF THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF G-77 ON 16TH JANUARY 2004.

We would like to convey our deep appreciation to the Kingdom of Morocco for the effective leadership it has provided to the Group of 77 in the past year when the developing countries had to deal with many important questions. These have been ably detailed in the Statement of H.E.Mr.Taib Fassi-Fihri this morning prior to his handing over the gavel to Your Excellency.

2. Ambassador Mohamed Bennouna and his team served the Group with patience and dedication during the 58th Session of General Assembly, ECOSOC sessions and other important meetings including CSD XI. Morocco deserves our gratitude for hosting the Ministerial Conference on South-South Co-operation last month in Marrakech, which had resulted in the successful adoption of the Marrakech Declaration and Framework of Implementation.

3. We welcome the Minister of States for Foreign Affairs of Qatar, H.E.Mr.Ahmad bin Abdullah Al-Mohmoud, Ambassador Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser and his team on their taking over the Chairmanship of the Group of 77. We are confident that Qatar will provide effective leadership to the Group this year in collectively meeting the several challenges that confront us. As we enter the 40th anniversary of the G-77 we have several important tasks before us. These include, inter alia, the follow up of the Doha Round of multilateral trade negotiations, the forthcoming UNCTAD meeting in Sao Paulo and the SIDS meeting in Mauritius. We would like to assure Qatar of the full support and cooperation of the Indian Delegation and wish them every success in leading the Group of 77.

Thank you, Mr.Chairman.

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