

**Statement delivered by Ambassador
Sophia Tesfamariam
During the Annual Ministerial Meeting
Of the G77 and China, Virtually
30 November, 2021**



Mr. Chair,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

I would like to thank the honourable Foreign Minister of Guinea, H.E. Dr. Morissanda Kouyate, for convening this annual Ministerial meeting of the G77 and China.

On behalf of my Minister, H.E. Mr. Osman Saleh, I wish to thank the Republic of Guinea for the commendable work it has been rendering to the Group of 77 and China during its Chairmanship tenure. In that same vein, I would like to congratulate the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for taking on the chairmanship for the year 2022.

My delegation welcomes the adoption of the Ministerial declaration. It should be recalled that our group has been working under extremely strained circumstances for the past two years. However, keeping our unity despite our many diversities is a virtue that we should be proud of. As the largest group within the United Nations, it is important that we maintain this bond, to advance the interests of the global south.

Chair,

We have entered the decade of action in the implementation of the SDGs with its overarching goals of addressing poverty and inequalities in our respective countries. The Covid-19 pandemic has slowed our progress and we remain concerned about its long-term repercussions.

We have welcomed COP26, held in Glasgow earlier this month but remain extremely concerned by the lack of progress and the unwillingness to take responsibility in the fight against climate change. Developing countries continue to bear the brunt of this crisis, the Group must do more and speak up in unison.

Chair,

While we are burdened with structural challenges, several of our countries in this group are facing unilateral coercive measures. Unilateral sanctions are nothing but a political tool employed by the most powerful (former colonial powers) to perpetuate their dominance and exploitation. Their ultimate aim is to deny nations and peoples their inalienable right to choose their political and economic system. Unilateral coercive measures are illegal, immoral and flagrant violations of the UN Charter. They must be condemned by all.

For over seven decades, the people of Eritrea have suffered incessant hostilities by successive US Administrations, including diplomatic pressures, sanctions and economic sabotage. This month the US Administration has again imposed unilateral sanctions on Eritrea. Our group must show solidarity with those of us that are being affected by such measures which continue to negatively impact our efforts to respond effectively to the effects of Covid-19 pandemic and other developmental challenges. There should not be any hesitation in calling out for

the immediate lifting of all unilateral sanctions. We must strengthen our solidarity, enhance our coordination and pursue our common goal to counter policies that intend to break us apart and pick us one after the other. We should say No More to the violations of the UN Charter, to politics of bullying, and external intervention in the affairs of sovereign nations.

Despite the relentless harassment and hostilities, Eritrea will continue its path to ensure an inclusive and people-centred development with the principle of social justice at its core. It has made strides in improving educational and health services, agricultural productivity, and infrastructure with meagre resources. Eritrea will also continue to contribute towards creating a peaceful and collaborative neighbourhood in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea.

Mr. Chair,

Excellencies,

With the year 2030 speedily closing in on us, our lack of progress on the SDG agenda has become more evident. The challenges we face in the economic, social and environmental areas and with the overarching goal of addressing and eliminating poverty in all its shapes and forms now seem elusive.

In conclusion, we would like to reiterate that being the largest group within the United Nations is an asset that we should leverage on at levels of our engagements. Keeping a strong and united front while working through our differences is what will ultimately allow us to reach sustainable socio-economic advancement in order to meet the expectations and aspirations of all our peoples.

Eritrea reiterates its readiness to closely work with the sisterly member countries of the Group of 77 to realize the objective of a fair, just, peaceful and equitable global political and economic order.

I thank you Mr. Chair

On Dec 1, 2021