



MESSAGE FROM H.E. AMBASSADOR MR. MUNIR AKRAM, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PAKISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77 TO THE G-8/UNESCO WORLD FORUM ON
◆ EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION: NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ◆, DELIVERED BY H.E DR. LAMYA AHMED AL-SAQQAF, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF KUWAIT TO THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS BASED IN ROME CHAIRPERSON OF THE GROUP OF 77, ROME CHAPTER (Trieste, Italy, 12 May 2007)

**Honorable Prime Minister of Italy,
Honorable Director General of UNESCO,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,**

- 1- At the outset allow me to congratulate the sponsors of this joint initiative, especially the Government of Italy, UNESCO and the G-8 for hosting this forum. This is a topical and timely initiative. Effective policies and strategies for building Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) capacity in developing countries are vital for poverty alleviation, balanced socio-economic growth and equitable integration into the global knowledge-based economy. The growing North-South global technological gap must be bridged. Creating links between knowledge generation and development is one of the greatest challenges facing the developing countries and their development partners.
- 2- In recent years, there were encouraging recent examples of success in the developing world. However, for the majority of the poor, the developmental promise of science and technology remains un-fulfilled. The rich are getting richer, and the poor, poorer. Technology, instead of bridging the gap has often become a greater divider. The growing North-South global technological gulf must be bridged. Creating links between knowledge generation and development is one of the greatest challenges facing the developing countries and their development partners.
- 3- There is thus a strong case for the international community to evolve a concrete plan of action to promote the application of science and technology for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other internationally agreed development goals. Such a plan should consist of clear actions and objectives at various levels.
- 4- In this context, there are several actions that should be taken to advance the contribution of education, research and innovation at the international level:

- **First**, the renewed commitment of the international community, especially financial institutions, is essential to support national efforts of developing countries for capacity-building. We need invigorated international cooperation for development in Science and Technology. Bilateral and multilateral donors must increase their official development assistance for science and technology initiatives and programmes in the developing countries.
- **Second**, a global campaign should be initiated for human resource training for MDGs achievement. The developed countries and advanced institutions can provide scholarships to developing countries. Similarly, world class Centers of Excellence in areas relevant to agriculture and industry should be established in the developing countries through external cooperation. Similarly, high quality “virtual universities” and virtual means of research could be created to spread knowledge, innovation and technological application.

- **Third**, international rule making and standard setting activities should respond to the concerns of developing countries and not discriminate against them. To this end, the developing countries should be enabled to participate fully in standard setting bodies. The application of new standards should take into account their impact on the developing countries.
- **Fourth**, the agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS), and other intellectual property laws, should be reviewed and, where necessary, revised to enhance their contribution to development. This should be pursued both in the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO).
- **Fifth**, a more direct endeavour should be made to utilize global scientific and research and development capabilities for development. We should identify the research and developmental needs and priorities of developing countries and possible niche opportunities for specific countries and regions. Modalities could be explored to secure funding for such research needs. For example, a Global Research and Development Fund could be created to guarantee minimum returns to enterprises and institutions in industrial and developing countries to undertake research in areas and issues of interest to the developing countries (e.g., tropical diseases, agriculture, etc).
- **Sixth**, an international organization should be entrusted to compile a list of credible science and technology institutions and programmes in the developing countries, in the public and private sectors, to which financial support could be committed by development partners.
- **Seventh**, appropriate institutional mechanisms should be devised to exchange best practices and experiences both in terms of success and failures in advancing the acquisition and use of science and technology.

5- Meanwhile, bearing in mind the need for an enabling international economic environment, developing countries will be making every effort to adopt, at the national level, strategies for technological learning. These strategies could involve continuous interaction between government, industry, academia, and civil society. Science and technology and innovation should also be mainstreamed into national development strategies. In this context, developing countries need to act to improve the infrastructure for technological development. This could include the establishment of business and technology incubators; export processing zones and production networks. Similarly, developing countries could structure their investment and trade policies in ways designed to acquire technological capabilities. In this context, incentives for foreign direct investment could place a premium on technology and diffusion. Moreover, strengthening educational institutions and research and development organizations in the developing countries and their effective linkages with the industry, is vital.

6- Furthermore, developing countries and the institutions of the South should also make a concerted effort to preserve the traditions of their people as well as indigenous and local traditional knowledge, practices and technology which can, often in combination with modern techniques, offers answers for the realization of sustainable economic growth and development.

7- Not surprisingly, the Least Developed Countries, the Land-locked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States, mostly in Africa, have the lowest indicators for science and technology capacity and have difficulties in capitalizing on the advances in science and technology. Special attention should be given to these countries in order to provide important financial and technical support to create the condition in which science and technology capacity deepens and consolidate. These include transfer of environmentally sound technology and appropriate sciences

programs tailored to the needs of these countries.

8- Mindful of the important contribution that science and technology can make in promoting sustained economic growth and development in the South, the Second South Summit of the Group of 77 in Doha, Qatar, in 2005 decided to support the efforts of the Trieste System, to establish the G-77 Consortium on Science, Technology, and Innovation (COSTIS). The Consortium was launched in Angra dos Reis, Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, in September 2006 by G-77 Ministers of Science and Technology. The main objectives of the Consortium are to promote science-driven economic development in developing countries, and South-South and North-South cooperation in the development and application of science and technology in the South.

9- Let me conclude by commending the strategic partnership between the Trieste system and the Group of 77 and to stress the key role played by various scientific institutions in promoting the capabilities of scientific organizations in developing countries with the generous support of the Government of Italy.

10- I wish also to take this opportunity to appeal to all institutions and other development partners attending this important gathering to provide generous support to COSTIS and assist the Consortium in building science, technology and innovation capacity for development in the South through partnership programmes.

I thank you.