



MESSAGE FROM H.E. AMBASSADOR JORGE ARGÜELLO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ARGENTINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, DELIVERED BY MR. MARCELO SUÑEZ SALVIA, DIRECTOR FOR MULTILATERAL COOPERATION OF ARGENTINA, AT THE HIGH LEVEL OPENING CEREMONY OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH-SOUTH DEVELOPMENT EXPO 2011 (GSSD EXPO 2011) (Rome, Italy, 5 December 2011)

Mr. President,
Distinguished Representatives,
Excellencies,

1. At the outset, I wish to express my thanks to you, Mr. President, for the kind invitation to address the opening ceremony of the Global South-South Development Expo 2011 which focuses this year on solutions in the five thematic areas of food security, climate change and environment, global health and HIV/AIDS and social protection. The GSSD Expo has been providing a valuable platform for exhibiting important initiatives and contributions from across the South towards addressing a variety of development challenges within the framework of South-South and triangular cooperation in the context of the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals including the MDGs.

2. The importance of strengthening South-South cooperation, especially in the current international economic environment, was recently reaffirmed by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 who met in New York on 23 September 2011 on the sidelines of the General Assembly. The Ministers reiterated their support for South-South Cooperation as a strategy to sustain the development efforts of developing countries and also as a means of enhancing their participation in the global economy. They reiterated the framework and the principles of South-South Cooperation as endorsed by their Thirty-fourth Annual Meeting held in New York on 28 September 2010.

3. South-South and triangular cooperation can be of significant benefit for the international community as a whole. The achievements and great potential of South-South cooperation, which complements North-South cooperation as an effective contribution to development, are well recognized. In this context, South-South cooperation and its agenda is critical for developing countries and must be driven by the countries of the South. As such, it requires long-term vision and a global institutional arrangement as envisioned by the Second South Summit.

4. The conceptual framework of South-South cooperation is distinct from the traditional notion of development cooperation with a welfare approach and must not be analyzed and evaluated using the same standards as those used for North-South relations. South-South cooperation, stripped of conditionalities, seeks to meet the developmental needs of each developing country based on a strong, genuine, broad-based partnership and solidarity to achieve mutual benefits at a very low cost, but making a huge impact with benefits that often exceed its economic terms.

5. Therefore, it is important to underline that these South-South initiatives should come as a complement and not a substitute to North-South cooperation. South-South cooperation is a collective endeavor of developing countries based on premises, conditions and, objectives that are specific to their historic and political context and to their needs and expectations. As such, South-South cooperation, critical for the G77 and China, deserves its own separate and independent

promotion as reaffirmed in the Nairobi outcome document and the Development Platform for the South of the G-77.

6. In this context, the Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Group of 77 have reiterated their commitment in the Plan of Action adopted in Doha during the Second South Summit in June 2005, to promote South-South Cooperation in the effort to eradicate poverty and achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development in the South. We have always encouraged all South-South initiatives aimed at reducing the challenges of developing countries and assist them in achieving their development priorities. Among such initiatives undertaken by the Group of 77 is the global South-South network of scientific institutions known as the Consortium on Science, Technology and Innovation for the South (COSTIS).

7. The network's goal is to enhance cooperation among existing scientific institutions and research centers of the South. It will promote the development of collaborative programmes between its members and scientific institutions and organizations of the South in the strategic areas, which are of critical importance to developing countries, such as biodiversity, climate change, water, biotechnology, and new and renewable sources of energy. In this context, we are working towards the operationalization of COSTIS in partnership with the UN Special Unit for South-South Cooperation, particularly within the context of similar strategic initiatives, such as the "Africa-Asia Development University Network" and the "Global South-South Development Academy".

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. Partnership plays an important role in generating political dynamism and visibility in order to achieve important development goals for developing countries through South-South and triangular cooperation. The issue of well-equipped institutional mechanisms must also be addressed to support proper implementation and follow-up of the outcomes of South-South initiatives. We support especially the public-private partnership arrangements in its ability to expand South-South cooperation. The concept of forming alliances among sustainable cities and municipalities of the South and private sector has proven to be successful in contributing to poverty reduction and economic growth.

9. Participation of academic groups, think-tanks as well as media groups in disseminating the importance of South-South cooperation for development is extremely important since it increases the international community's understanding and support for South-South development solutions. In the same vein, I wish to highlight the important role of South-South forums for parliamentarians, local authorities, youth and civil society to be held in 2012 as mandated by the recent Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77 held in New York on 23 September 2011.

10. Furthermore, we believe that the media institutions as a global voice can play a valuable role in providing information to the international community and highlighting South-South solutions and integrating them into the core of their message. There is a need to strengthen South-South communication, through information networking and the establishment of a global network of media agencies of the South.

11. Before concluding, let me say that the main challenge for the expansion of South-South Cooperation is the lack of financial resources. The most common sources for financing South-South activities are coming from national institutions of developing countries, UN system resources, foundations and the private sector. There is a great need for increased bilateral and multilateral funding to assist developing countries in enhancing South-South cooperation including triangular

cooperation.

12. Last but not least, I wish to highlight the role of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation of the Group of 77 which has provided valuable catalytic support to South-South cooperation benefitting directly 122 member countries of the Group of 77 and collectively all of them through projects carried out by numerous organizations of the South. PGTF is ready to partner up with other institutions, including financial institutions, in order to advance South-South Cooperation.

I wish you all success in your deliberations.

Thank you.