



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H. E. DR. ALTIGANI SALIH FIDAIL, MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN, AT THE HIGH-LEVEL UN CONFERENCE ON SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION (Nairobi, Kenya, 1 December 2009)**

Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I am deeply honoured and privileged to address our prestigious gathering on behalf of the Group of 77 and China in the opening ceremony of the United Nations High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation. At the outset, I would like to thank the Government and the people of Kenya as host country for warmly receiving us here in Nairobi. I would like also to express our thanks to the Secretary-General of the Conference and to all delegations, representatives of various UN agencies and other organizations attending this conference. I would like to take this opportunity to also thank the President of the General Assembly, the President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, the Co-Facilitators and all delegations for their outstanding support in this process.
2. We are gathered here to commemorate a historical event in South-South cooperation. The United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 30 August to 12 September 1978, was a major landmark in the continuing efforts of the United Nations to promote economic and technical cooperation among developing countries. Today is an occasion to reaffirm the continued relevance of South-South cooperation to build a more equitable global partnership for development and peace.
3. As we are all aware, South-South cooperation is an expression of South-South solidarity that had proven its relevance by a rapid growth. It is a rising and dynamic phenomenon, an important process that is vital to confront the challenges faced by the developing countries, making an increasingly important contribution to their development. In the light of the processes of globalization and deepening interdependence among economies, the intensification of South-South cooperation has become a major imperative both as a development strategy and as a means for ensuring that developing countries participate fully in international economic relations, which is a key objective of the United Nations.
4. It is also clear that South-South cooperation cannot, and should not, replace North-South cooperation. As our Group has emphasized on many occasions, the North has an obligation, both in their own national interests, but also in the interest of global harmony and equity and development, to fulfill their commitments through North-South cooperation. South-South cooperation, whether through the UN - bilaterally or regionally - is not intended to replace cooperation with the North. The premises are different, the conditions are different, and the expectations are different, which must be reflected accordingly. Therefore, South-South cooperation can be of significant benefit for the international community as a whole, including developed countries, and global cooperation can be strengthened by the increasing role of developing countries in the world economy.

5. The rapid economic growth of some major developing countries has, indeed, dramatically improved the development prospects of neighboring countries, spurring economic growth and South-South trade and investment. Today, all of the 130 member countries of the Group of 77 and China, regardless of their size or level of development, have accumulated varying degrees of capacities and experiences in development that can be shared on a South-South basis.

6. These new South-South dynamics have not only enhanced the general sense of confidence in self-development in the more successful countries, but also contextualized the aspirations for interdependence among all developing countries in an entirely different economic context. It is important to note that South-South cooperation is not aid. It is an expression of South-South solidarity and promotion of two-way learning and cooperation based on true partnership for mutual development.

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7. The Thirty-third Annual Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Group of 77 held in New York on 25 September 2009, reiterated the "Yamoussoukro Consensus on South-South Cooperation" and stressed that South-South Cooperation should be based on the following principles:

- a. South-South cooperation is a common endeavour of peoples and countries of the South and must be pursued as an expression of South-South solidarity and a strategy for economic independence and self-reliance of the South based on their common objectives and solidarity;
- b. South-South cooperation and its agenda must be driven by the countries of the South;
- c. South-South cooperation must not be seen as a replacement for North-South cooperation. Strengthening South-South cooperation must not be a measure of coping with the receding interest of the developed world in assisting developing countries;
- d. Cooperation between countries of the South must not be analyzed and evaluated using the same standards as those used for North-South relations;
- e. Financial contributions from other developing countries should not be seen as Official Development Assistance from these countries to other countries of the South. These are merely expressions of solidarity and cooperation borne out of shared experiences and sympathies;
- f. South-South cooperation is a development agenda based on premises, conditions and objectives that are specific to the historic and political context of developing countries and to their needs and expectations. South-South cooperation deserves its own separate and independent promotion;
- g. South-South cooperation is based on a strong, genuine, broad-based partnership and solidarity;
- h. South-South cooperation is based on complete equality, mutual respect and mutual benefit;
- i. South-South cooperation respects national sovereignty in the context of shared responsibility;
- j. South-South cooperation strives for strengthened multilateralism in the promotion of an action-oriented approach to development challenges;

- k. South-South cooperation promotes the exchange of best practices and support among developing countries in the common pursuit of their broad development objectives (encompassing all aspects of international relations and not just in the traditional economic and technical areas);
- l. South-South cooperation is based on the collective self-reliance of developing countries;
- m. South-South cooperation seeks to enable developing countries to play a more active role in international policy and decision-making processes, in support of their efforts to achieve sustainable development;
- n. The modalities and mechanisms for promoting South-South cooperation are based on bilateral, sub-regional, regional and interregional cooperation and integration as well as multilateral cooperation.

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8. There is tremendous potential that can be unleashed through cooperative initiatives for trade, investment, and economic cooperation. We must develop initiatives to enable the private sector, the academic institutions and the NGOs to effectively participate and contribute to development. We also need to organize regular forums for inclusive dialogue on key development issues involving local authorities and other stakeholders. The need of the South for capacity building to promote sectoral cooperation remains a crucial part of our agenda in the South Summit outcomes.
9. Cooperation among developing countries is not confined to economic issues alone. Past UN conferences and summits which dealt with social, environmental and other related issues, adopted programmes of action containing far-reaching recommendations that have significantly expanded the scope for South-South cooperation and explicitly identified South-South cooperation as an important modality for implementing their outcomes.
10. Despite these positive results and the encouraging perspectives for the future, South-South cooperation has a number of major constraints. Much more can be achieved especially if the developing countries have the financial and technical support of the developed countries and UN system. However, most of the growth and expansion in the South today is limited to a few countries. A great number of developing countries, in particular, the least developed, the land-locked and the small island developing states are still beset by worsening poverty, hunger, and unemployment. The recent global financial crisis has contributed in raising the number of people living in extreme poverty in developing countries and most of these countries are not on track to reach the MDGs set for 2015.
11. In this regard, the developed countries must fulfill their commitments for North-South cooperation. While we acknowledge the limited support given to South-South cooperation by some developed partners, we believe that there is considerable scope for further action, especially through the fulfillment of the internationally agreed goals, such as the target of 0.7 per cent of GNI for ODA. Broad based partnerships for South-South and triangular cooperation with the participation of developed countries, the UN system and all relevant stakeholders, could enhance more resources for development. This is dictated by the principle of equity and solidarity and it is in their own long-term interest. A triangular cooperation is, therefore, a useful and cost effective tool for furthering our objectives. Expansion of South-South cooperation requires adequate funding, and the international community should support initiatives promoted by developing countries in that

field.

12. South-South cooperation should not be considered as a panacea for meeting the challenges facing developing countries. South-South cooperation at the global level requires adequate and structured financial and institutional support. For cooperation among developing countries to prosper and expand there is an urgent need for effective and well-equipped financial mechanisms as well as strategic capacity building in order to support our efforts at the national, regional and inter regional levels.

13. Development is a principal objective of the United Nations. As such, the United Nations system can play an important role in fostering South-South cooperation which is an integral part of that objective. South-South cooperation should be explicitly incorporated into the operational programmes of all relevant bodies of the United Nations system and there should be regular consultations among them on the most effective way to support South-South cooperation. In this context, we welcome the recent initiatives undertaken by various UN bodies to establish new units and work programmes to support and promote South-South cooperation and urge other entities of the United Nations system to intensify their efforts to include South-South cooperation in the mainstream of their activities.

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14. South-South cooperation at the global level requires adequate and structured institutional support. The Special Unit for South-South Cooperation, hosted by the UNDP, has remained the focal point to promote South-South cooperation. Therefore, it is imperative to strengthen the Special Unit and to provide it with further support to enable it to fulfill its mandate in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the UN General Assembly.

15. As we prepare for the Third G-77 South-Summit, it is crucial that our Group takes the lead today in the new transformation of South-South cooperation by promoting various initiatives by developing countries. The Group of 77 believes that South-South cooperation could play a major role in the global effort to eradicate poverty and stimulate economic growth. It is a vital means of attracting trade and investments flows as well as promoting increased international, financial and technical cooperation.

16. In conclusion, we believe that strong partnerships among countries of the South supported by developed countries and the UN system will help unlock the economic potential of the developing countries and benefit the entire international community. The forthcoming Third G-77 South Summit to be held in Africa in 2010 will certainly contribute to further strengthen South-South cooperation.

I wish all success to your deliberations.

Thank you.