

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY AMBASSADOR S.R. INSANALLY, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GUYANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, BEFORE THE HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE ON THE REVIEW OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

New York, 1 June 1999

Madame President,

I am pleased, on behalf of the Group of 77, to address this eleventh session of the High Level Committee on the Review of the TCDC.

At the outset, I wish to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your election. I am confident that together you will guide our deliberations over the next few days to a successful conclusion.

Also, since this year's meeting coincides with a change in leadership to UNDP within whose purview falls, I would like to congratulate and welcome the newly designated Administrator of UNDP, Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, as well as the Associate Administrator, Mr. Zephirin Diabré. At the same time, I would like to place on record our Group's profound appreciation for the significant contribution made to ECDC/TCDC by the outgoing Administrator, Mr. James Gustave Speth and to his Associate Mr. Rafeuddin Ahmed. We wish them well in their new pursuits.

Madame President, this meeting is of special importance, coming as it does in the midst of the preparations for the first South Summit to be held in April next year.

The occasion certainly provides us with an excellent opportunity to reiterate our commitment to TCDC and to South-South cooperation in general, and also to restate, and perhaps amplify our concept of such cooperation in keeping with the new and emergent realities and challenges that developing countries are likely to face in the 21st century.

We welcome the new format adopted for our deliberations since we believe that it will provide for a more interactive exchange among participants. We are also of the view that the topic selected for the thematic discussion in the plenary, namely, 'the Role of TCDC in Accelerating Growth and Equitable Development through Broad-Based Partnership' is appropriate and timely. The acceleration of growth in the developing countries must remain a central objective of development and therefore a priority for international development cooperation.

The presentation which Sir Shridath Ramphal has been asked to make on the theme for this year's session will undoubtedly enliven and enrich our discussion. Those of us who know him - and I am sure we all do, will also know of his reputation as a brilliant advocate of the cause of development cooperation. We await his intervention with keen interest.

Madame President,

Some critics have argued that the increased differentiation among developing countries has undermined their ability to engage in effective cooperation. This argument cannot be sustained, however, since the Group of 77 continues to function as a dynamic entity. The reality is that our members remain united by a common sense of deprivation and exclusion from the benefits offered by the international economic system. It is noteworthy and indeed quite paradoxical that those who would wish to deny increased cooperation among developing

countries are themselves seeking to strengthen patterns of cooperation among themselves.

TCDC and ECDC reflect the continuing commitment of the developing countries to strengthen their solidarity for the dual purpose of supporting their national development efforts and also to ensure their effective participation in the international economic system. We recognize, of course, that as developing countries, we have the primary responsibility for promoting TCDC and ECDC. We are therefore determined to explore the possibilities of such cooperation in order to maximize the prospects of our individual and collective development, including through the strengthening of regional arrangements and mechanisms of cooperation.

We nevertheless need and therefore would welcome the support provided by the UN system and interested developed countries. In this context, we attach great importance to initiatives carried out within the framework of triangular cooperation in which developed countries provide bilateral and multilateral financing to facilitate cooperation among developing countries. This should not imply however that the developed countries should participate in TCDC and ECDC on the same basis, since this would distort the meaning of South-South Cooperation which is distinct from but complementary to North-South Cooperation.

In seeking to carry forward TCDC and ECDC initiatives we are considerably helped by the Special Unit for TCDC which was created to provide catalytic support for the promotion of TCDC. Such support, whoever, must respect the wishes of the developing countries and reflect their objectives and priorities within the overall framework of the decisions of the High Level Committee and the UN General Assembly. We would urge the new UNDP Administrator to strengthen and expand its activities to help developing countries to realize the full potential of joint enterprise.

Having said this, we welcome the measures adopted by the UN General Assembly at its 52nd session to ensure the closer integration of TCDC and ECDC in the operational activities of the UN system. We firmly believe that the closer operational integration of TCDC and ECDC will facilitate the achievement of this objective. Similarly, we feel that the guidelines on TCDC which set out common approaches to the promotion of TCDC within the UN system, will also make an important contribution to this effort.

In terms of the reports which have been submitted to this session, we are particularly pleased that the report on progress made on the achievement of the objectives set out in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) has provided useful information on the TCDC activities carried out by the developing countries themselves in various regions, and demonstrates their commitment to such cooperation.

We welcome the support provided by the UN system and developed countries and look forward to receiving information on their efforts on a continuing basis. We would suggest that the Administrator of UNDP and the Special Unit for TCDC should collect on a systematic basis, information on TCDC activities undertaken on the initiative of the developing countries themselves and to make such information available on an annual basis. In this way developing countries will be informed about the various TCDC activities that have been carried out.

We are aware of course that the promotion of TCDC depends on the provision of adequate funding for this purpose. We urge governments therefore, to provide increased contribution to the Trust Fund on South-South Cooperation established by the Administrator of UNDP at the request of the UN General Assembly and also the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund established to provide funding for small scale projects geared to the promotion of South-South Cooperation.

The strategy paper which was prepared and adopted some five years ago also entitled "New Directions" (in

Technical Cooperation among us) provided valuable recommendations for the implementation of TCDC. Those guidelines serve to orient TCDC towards initiatives of strategic importance and sets important priorities to be followed.

Madame President, as I stated at the beginning, this meeting takes place at an important historical juncture as a unique opportunity for developing countries to create a new vision for the future. The process of globalization continues to effect fundamental transportation of the international economic system and to pose increased challenges to the developing countries in a number of different areas. This would require renewed emphasis on South-South Cooperation as an essential element in forging a new agenda for the South.

Having just celebrated the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, we now look forward to the South Summit to be held in Havana next year. And we are confident that the deliberations which will take place during this meeting will enable us to advance the objectives of TCDC and ECDC as an indispensable part of a broader strategy of international development cooperation.

Thank you.