



**STATEMENT BY H.E. STAFFORD NEIL, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE 14TH SESSION OF THE HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE ON SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION (New York, 31 May 2005)**

Mr President,

I begin by congratulating you and the other members of the Bureau on your election to preside over the 14th session of the High Level Committee on South-South Cooperation. I am confident that you will guide our deliberations to a successful conclusion. You can be assured of the full support of the Group of 77 and China.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Mark Malloch Brown for the leadership which the UNDP has provided on South-South cooperation during his tenure as Administrator. We look forward to continuing this very positive relationship under the new leadership of the UNDP.

We congratulate Mr Yiping Zhou on his appointment as the Director of the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation. We commend the role that the Unit is playing in support of South-South initiatives. We also acknowledge the work also being done by UN agencies and organisations such as the regional commissions, UNCTAD, FAO, IFAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, WHO and ICAO.

Mr President,

The Report of the Administrator of the UNDP indicates that positive and encouraging steps have been made towards the achievement of the objectives of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. Economic growth in a number of developing countries and the increased technical capacity and expertise in the developing world has contributed to these positive trends. South-South cooperation has now been brought within the mainstream of national and regional policies in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean as part of regional arrangements such as the NEPAD, ASEAN, the South American Community of Nations and the CARICOM. We are also seeing that a growing number of pivotal developing countries are supporting inter-regional and intra-regional cooperation in areas such as health and education and that developing countries have developed the policy and institutional environment for South-South cooperation through the establishment of national focal points. The scope for the participation of different stakeholders in the business sector and civil society organisations at the national and regional levels has been expanded with new modalities being developed to promote technical cooperation among developing countries.

Mr President.

Despite these positive results, much more can be achieved especially if we have the support of our development partners. South-South cooperation should not be construed as a panacea for meeting the challenges facing developing countries. Neither is it a substitute for North-South cooperation. Rather, it constitutes one of the important dimensions of international cooperation for development. I would like to highlight some issues which are critical for advancing South-South and triangular cooperation.

First, pervasive systemic inequities in the areas of trade, finance and money and technology must be removed in favour of policies which promote development. They restrict meaningful cooperation in this era of globalisation and liberalisation. The transfer and utilization of technology, including information and communications technologies, must be addressed in order to bridge the development and digital divide. Trade, like technology, must be governed by equitable rules to enable developing countries to become net beneficiaries of global economic prosperity. Improved market access for products of developing countries in the markets of developed countries represents an important step in this direction. There are areas, particularly within the international financial and monetary system, which need reform and change not just to provide equity and wider participation in decision-making, but also for crisis prevention.

Second, genuine international cooperation requires the full implementation of agreed commitments. The actual pattern of cooperation has not been commensurate with the commitments for South-South and triangular cooperation. While we acknowledge the support given to South-South cooperation by our developed partners, we believe that there is considerable scope for further action, especially through the fulfilment of the 0.7 per cent target of GNI for ODA. Increased aid effectiveness and delivery is critical and we welcome efforts to advance these objectives.

Third, the capabilities and capacities to expand substantially exchanges of experiences and good practices, the sharing of technical resources and information and joint activities in research and development have all been constrained by the lack of resources. An increase in the allocation of resources by donor countries to the core resources of UNDP could contribute to increasing the resources to the Special Unit for South-South cooperation. We hope that additional financial resources can be mobilized, as recommended in the Report of the Administrator including through new and innovative mechanisms, to promote and enhance economic and technical cooperation among developing countries. Broad-based partnership for South-South and triangular cooperation with the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including the business sector and NGOs, could also themselves facilitate mobilization of more resources for such activities. As a practical measure, stronger support for and increased contribution of resources to the Voluntary Trust Fund is also necessary for promotion of South-South cooperation.

The Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund for Economic and Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (PGTF), which was established in accordance with the United Nations General Assembly resolution 38/201 of 20 December 1983, has served as an important source of funding for small-scale projects on South-South cooperation. In order to enable the PGTF to continue being responsive to the increasing needs of developing countries, it is imperative that its resources be significantly expanded through more contributions from both developed and developing countries.

Mr President,

We are pleased that the Reports of the Administrator of the UNDP conclude that the UN development system is now better positioned to ensure that South-South cooperation becomes more central in the operational activities of the programmes of its organisations and agencies. We notice, for example, the adoption by the Executive Board of the UNDP of the Third Cooperation Framework for 2005-2007 as well as its decision to include South-South cooperation among the “drivers of development effectiveness” in its Multi-Year Funding Framework. We consider this a useful example for other organisations and agencies of the UN on the measures needed to mainstream South-South cooperation in the operational activities for development.

Mr President,

As part of this overall strategy, the Group of 77 and China would like to recommend continued close cooperation and collaboration between the Special Unit and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and institutions in the South. It is also advisable to make greater use of available expertise in developing countries in the operational activities of the United Nations system in those areas where such activities could be beneficial and more cost-effective. South-South and triangular cooperation should be strengthened and promoted in order to positively contribute to the overall development of developing countries. We look forward to future reports based on the results, indicators and assessments of the various programmes and projects based on this model. We believe that this will set the stage for more concrete results and proposals for the next session of the High-level Committee.

Mr President,

Since its inception, the Group of 77 has always attached fundamental importance to promoting economic and technical cooperation among developing countries. In two weeks, we will be meeting in Doha, Qatar for the Second South Summit. At that time, we expect to build on the Havana Declaration and Programme of Action which were adopted at the first South Summit in 2000 and which placed particular emphasis on South-South and triangular cooperation. We regard the Doha Summit as an important opportunity to further enhance prospects for closer international cooperation for development to address the new and complex challenges of the 21 st century. We expect that the outcome of both the Summit and the High-level Committee will assist the deliberations of the High Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly later this year, in advancing the development agenda and devising an improved framework for international economic cooperation.

I thank you.