

Statement by Ambassador Nassrollah K. Kamyab (Islamic Republic of Iran), on behalf of the Group of 77, at the Twelfth Session of the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries

New York, 29 May 2001

Mr. President,

At the outset, allow me to offer, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, our sincere congratulations to you and the other distinguished members of the Bureau on your election. We are confident that under your able leadership our deliberations will lead us to a successful outcome for the Twelfth Session of the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries. I would also like to express and register our deep appreciation to the United Nations Development Programme and, in particular, to the Special Unit for TCDC for preparing the reports on the various aspects of TCDC.

Mr. President,

Since the closure of the eleventh session of the High-level Committee, there have been quite a number of positive and encouraging developments towards the achievement of the objectives set out in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA). The modalities of promotion and expansion of TCDC has transformed and is leading us to a path with new and innovative patterns of cooperation and collaboration in this field. New stakeholders and players at the national, regional and international levels are becoming more interested in TCDC and new modalities have been developed for various situations and different areas of TCDC. Furthermore, the Heads of State and Government of developing countries attending the South Summit in Havana acknowledged the challenges before the developing world and highlighted the importance of South-South cooperation among developing countries.

As we all know the Havana Declaration and the Programme of Action have paid particular attention to South-South cooperation as an effective instrument for optimizing the potentials to promote development through, among others, mobilizing and sharing of existing resources and expertise in our countries, as well as complementing cooperation with developed countries. Economic and technical cooperation among developing countries highlighted and was considered to become an integral part of the mutual relations between the States of the South and an important means of promoting the exchange of ideas, experiences, knowledge, technical advances, skills and expertise across a broad range of sectors. Moreover, our Heads of State and Government also recognized that although there has been an increasing pattern of cooperation, it has not been commensurate with the existing capabilities and capacities in the South as well as with comprehensive nature of the commitments embodied in the various declarations and other documents for South-South cooperation. Technical and economic cooperation among developing countries in the fields of trade and investment, monetary and finance and social development were also underlined. The Havana Programme of Action also stressed the importance of the establishment of a network among focal points of developing countries by the Special Unit for TCDC in the context of the creation of a multidimensional web of information for development; publication of an annual report on South-South cooperation by the Chairman of the Group of 77 in collaboration with the Special Unit for TCDC; and invited the Administrator of UNDP to strengthen the TCDC Unit as the UN focal point for South-South cooperation through various ways and means. Given the aspirations as well as the huge untapped potentials for enhancing and promoting South-South cooperation and TCDC among developing countries, we believe that a lot can and should be done towards realizing these potentials.

The emergence of six major trends in the area of TCDC in the previous biennium, in particular increasing sophistication and complexity of TCDC activities; a shift from bilateral towards regional and sub-regional

cooperation; a more active role by developing countries in initiating and financing TCDC; as well as enhanced modalities for triangular and long-term cooperation in TCDC activities, clearly point to an emerging common understanding that such activities could assist developing countries to address some challenges of globalization more efficiently and effectively. The major focus of TCDC programmes has been development of human resources and more collaborative efforts have been devoted to identifying and addressing issues of common interests namely those related to globalization. Triangular cooperation enhanced the ownership and lower the costs of development programmes and strengthened the partnership among developing countries. The establishment of TCDC focal points and decentralization of programming to the field level to support TCDC by the United Nations organizations is an important step which could lead to give more priority to TCDC activities in the UN system.

Developing countries have been involved in TCDC activities either as providers or recipient or both. As indicated in the reports, developing countries have improved policy and institutional environment for TCDC through establishment of focal points; increasing national funding for TCDC; expanding the scope for participation of all stakeholders in such activities as well as to the regional and sub-regional levels. We are also cognizant of the fact that developed countries have been supporting TCDC activities through such mechanisms as assisting the development of human resources through third-country training programmes; use of southern experts in their bilateral cooperation; and supporting TCDC through established regional programmes. We in the Group of 77 and China welcome and appreciate such endeavors. Let me seize the opportunity right here to register our deep appreciation for the positive role that the United Nations agencies and organizations – regional commissions, FAO, ITC, UNDCP, UNFPA, UPU, WHO, UNAIDS, WIPO, and in particular UNCTAD, as well as other development partners, have been playing in promoting Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries in various fields and at different national, regional and global levels.

Mr. President,

The role of UNDP and the Special Unit for TCDC in promoting and expanding the scope and vision for technical cooperation among developing countries has been outstanding. We welcome the endeavors by the Administrator for promoting TCDC as one of his priorities in the work of UNDP. We also share and support the stated intention of the Administrator to promote TCDC in the national, regional and global programmes of UNDP. The efforts of the Special Unit towards focusing on a number of issues or activities that promise to make an impact on large numbers of developing countries are to be commended. It should, however, be cautioned that such a focus should not distract the Unit from more challenging and long-term activities whose results and outcomes may not be visible immediately or in the short-term. A good combination of short, medium and long-term activities would be a more advisable portfolio for the Special Unit to pursue in the future. 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.

Let me turn to the important and leading role that pivotal countries have been playing in TCDC, including through sharing their expertise and other resources with other developing countries. As clearly indicated in the report, these countries have increased national resource allocation for programmes to provide technical assistance to partner countries and designed specific TCDC programmes to address the needs of those recipient countries. The role of the private sector in pivotal countries for expansion of TCDC with business sector of other developing countries can certainly contribute to the expansion of the scope of such cooperation. The efforts and endeavors of these countries should be disseminated through existing information systems for TCDC and specially the Web of Information for Development (WIDE). The allocation of resources by pivotal countries should be leveraged by more assistance and resources from donor countries to expand the scope and impact of relevant programmes.

The Group of 77 and China believes that not only the TCDC activities should be promoted, but, equally important, is to ensure that the outcome of successful TCDC activities would be disseminated and incorporated in the future activities of the national, regional and global programmes by recipient and donor countries as well as United Nations system and other development partners. Utilizing the expertise of developing countries in the operational activities of the United Nations system in those areas where such activities could be beneficial and more cost-effective is also imperative. We would also like to underline that regional cooperation and integration provides the most meaningful approach and effective conduit for the South to face the challenges of globalization and take full advantage of its opportunities. For the real potentials of TCDC activities to be realized it is imperative that they should go beyond the country to country cooperation. Cooperation among secretariats of various economic groupings in the South should be encouraged and enhanced. Secretariats of economic groupings, particularly those with extensive capacities, precious expertise, experiences and good practices in institutional and capacity-building for smooth and successful regional integration, through technical cooperation with other such groupings, could contribute to the endeavors of other economic groupings in developing regions. Utilizing such capacities and capabilities for TCDC could bring tremendous results for developing countries and contribute to their preparation for integration at the regional level as well as in the global economy.

The Group of 77 and China also believes that TCDC activities should not be considered as a panacea for challenges facing developing countries. Rather, it should be considered as one of the important elements of a comprehensive development strategy. It can not replace North-South cooperation, it can only complement such a cooperation. In a general sense, TCDC should be strengthened and promoted in areas where it can have a major and positive contribution to the overall development of developing countries based on the results, indicators and assessments of the programmes and projects.

Mr. President,

Coming to the end of the statement, let me emphasize that capabilities and capacities to expand substantially exchanges of experiences and good practices, sharing technical resources and information, joint activities in research and development and, in general, strengthening TCDC as a means of promotion of cooperation for development, have been constrained, and I should add, quite severely, by lack of resources. Increase in the allocation of more resources by donor countries to the core resources of UNDP could contribute tremendously to the increasing allocation of core resources to the Special Unit for TCDC. We also hope that additional financial resources could be mobilized, including through new and innovative mechanisms to promote and enhance TCDC activities. Broad-based partnership for TCDC with the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including private sector and NGOs, could also facilitate mobilization of more resources for such activities. As a very practical measure, a stronger support and an enhanced contribution of resources to the Voluntary Trust Fund by the donor community is also necessary for promotion of TCDC. The need for a more vigorous promotional and advocacy effort to publicize the Trust Fund and its activities can hardly be overemphasized.

Thank You, Mr. President.