



MESSAGE FROM H.E. AMBASSADOR ABDALMAHMOOD ABDALHALEEM MOHAMED, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF 77, ON THE OCCASION OF THE CEREMONY TO LAUNCH THE CONSORTIUM ON SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION FOR THE SOUTH (COSTIS) (Budapest, Hungary, 4 November 2009)

Honourable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

1. I am greatly honoured and privileged to address this prestigious gathering for the launching of the Consortium for Science, Technology and Innovation for the South, (COSTIS). At the outset, I would like to express our warmest thanks to UNESCO for making this ceremony possible. We deeply appreciate the efforts of UNESCO towards the operationalization of COSTIS, and we hope that our strategic partnership will bring outstanding results.
2. As you may recall, the First South Summit of the Group of 77 held in Havana, Cuba, in April 2000 decided to "establish a consortium on knowledge and technology comprising representatives from the governments, private sector and other relevant organizations which should meet on a regular basis in order to promote joint ventures in the South in the field of science and technology". Such decision was reaffirmed by the Second South Summit held in Doha, Qatar, from 12 to 16 June 2005.
3. As follow-up to the South Summits' decision, the G-77 Ministers for Science and Technology met in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 3 September 2006, with the support of UNESCO, for the establishment of the Consortium on Science, Technology and Innovation for the South (COSTIS). This strategic initiative was welcomed by the Thirtieth Annual Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 held at UN Headquarters in New York, on 22 September 2006.
4. In their annual meeting at the UN Headquarters in New York on 25 September 2009, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 welcomed the efforts undertaken by UNESCO towards the operationalization of the Consortium on Science, Technology and Innovation for the South (COSTIS), and invited all members States to extend their support and participate actively in this process.

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5. Today we are indeed delighted to be part of this launching ceremony. We are confident that COSTIS will play an instrumental role in making science, technology and innovation an integral part of the developing process of the South. The main objectives of the Consortium are to promote science-driven economic development in developing countries, and to develop South-South and North-South partnerships in the advance and application of science and technology in the South.
6. We believe that COSTIS will make its contribution in facilitating partnerships among countries of the South and with institutions and countries from the north, towards the achievement of common

goals. We are confident that collaboration with UNESCO will benefit COSTIS in achieving its objectives and sharing experiences and capacity building among developing countries.

7. In this context, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the active role played by the Paris Chapter of the Group of 77 at UNESCO under the able leadership of its current Chair, Ambassador Luisa Rebeca Sanchez Bello, Permanent Delegate of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, in strengthening South-South Cooperation in the field of science and technology and making COSTIS a reality in the process. We are very grateful to the Paris Chapter for all the valuable support provided in the operationalization of COSITS in response to the decision of the Second South Summit including the establishment of a trust fund for science and technology for development hosted by UNESCO in order to support COSTIS activities.

8. I would like to reiterate the importance of the supportive role of UNESCO in promoting the activities of the Consortium during the interim period. This valuable support and expertise are much more needed at this crucial stage of the operationalization of the Consortium. During the transition period of COSTIS for the next 2 years, the COSTIS task force created by the Ministerial Meeting in Rio de Janeiro, will continue to operate as a steering committee with the support of the Executive Secretariat of the Group of 77, with the main task of putting in place the different structures under the umbrella of UNESCO. A progress report on the operations of COSTIS' interim Secretariat will be submitted next year by UNESCO at the Third South Summit of the Group of 77 to be held in Africa. We hope that the Third South Summit will give a new boost to COSTIS and that the process of operationalisation will be completed before the end of 2011.

9. While we highly appreciate and are very grateful to UNESCO for its leading role for the past year, we welcome the commitment of the new leadership of UNESCO in establishing a long-term and strategic partnership between the Group of 77 and UNESCO.

10. I also wish to commend Prof. Mohamed H.A. Hassan, Executive Director of the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World (TWAS), and Mr. Mourad Ahmia, Executive Secretary of the Group of 77 and interim coordinator of COSTIS, for their valuable contribution to the realization of this initiative and the vital role they are playing to make science and technology a household name for four developing countries.

11. I wish to reiterate the commitment of the Group of 77 to bring its full support and contribution in this process.

I wish all success to your deliberations.

I thank you.