

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR DAUDI N. MWAKAWAGO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE 10TH SESSION OF THE HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE ON THE REVIEW OF TCDC

New York, May 5, 1997

Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,

I am extremely pleased and honoured to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China at this very important Inter-Governmental Meeting on TCDC, which, fundamentally, symbolizes the solidarity and commitment of developing countries and international community to the implementation and operationalization of Buenos Aires Plan of Action.

First of all, permit me to take this opportunity to congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on your unanimous election, which is a testimony of our confidence in your ability to spur the work of the meeting to its most successful outcome. I wish to assure you of our full support throughout the deliberations of this meeting. We commend the Special Unit/TCDC and, in particular, its Director, Mr. Denis Benn for the excellent preparations of this meeting.

Mr. President,

This being the 10th session of the High-Level Committee, it is important to remind ourselves of the increasing significance of TCDC as an effective mechanism for facilitating the exchange of experiences among developing countries and for promoting collective action in support of their overall development and as a means of ensuring their effective participation in the evolving global economy.

Indeed, with the emerging global trends and the apparent unfortunate weakening of the commitment to development cooperation on the part of the traditional partners, TCDC and South-South cooperation represent the best hope for the developing countries. This does not mean that we see South-South cooperation as a substitute for traditional development cooperation, which must continue to feature as an important objective in its own right but we do believe that cooperation among the countries of the South offers tremendous possibilities and potentialities in the future.

We in the Group of 77 and China wish to reiterate our strong commitment to South-South cooperation as an important strategy for enabling the developing countries to cope with the impact of globalization that has become such a dominant feature of the contemporary international economic relations.

Mr. President,

Developing countries have undertaken several actions including some very innovative initiatives and approaches since the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action and the New Directions Strategy. Exchange of experiences through training, study tours and experts have asserted the efficiency, cost-effectiveness and relevance of TCDC modality. It is noteworthy that improvement has been registered in national ownership in formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluation of TCDC programmes, projects

and activities; growing awareness of TCDC modality of institutions of developing countries and recognition of the potentiality in the long term. In addition, increasingly, developing countries are committed to identifying "priority of priorities" to enhance effectiveness and impact of TCDC in overall development. Certainly, the structural and cultural rigidities and most importantly the lack of financial resources have adversely affected the progress in the utilization of TCDC modality.

Mr. President,

We note that the international community is slowly recognizing that the future belongs to South-South cooperation. In fact we are confident that in time it could become the dominant form of international development cooperation as more developing countries achieve higher levels of technical development and seek on this basis of exchange experiences with other developing countries. I would like to recognize countries like Japan who have come forward with initiatives to push South-South cooperation.

The possibilities for South-South cooperation should not be confined to the exchange of experiences among developing countries but there is also considerable potential for expanded trade and investment among these countries. In fact, the developing countries would need to make a conscious effort to realize the tremendous potential which exists in this area.

We note with encouragement and enthusiasm that both the South-South Conference on Trade, Finance and Investment held in Costa Rica in January and the Non-Aligned Foreign Ministers held last month in New Delhi have formulated important blueprints for action on the part of the developing countries and indeed the international community as a whole in seeking to advance South-South cooperation. We call upon the developed countries and the UN system to work with us in promoting the objectives of the various declarations and programmes of action adopted on the subject.

Mr. President,

We recognize that the UN Development System has a long way to go to dynamize its role in the promotion and implementation of TCDC, right from the Headquarters to the field level. Lack of awareness and deliberate skepticism on the efficacy of the TCDC modality within the system contributes to the marginalization in utilizing the modality.

It is also important to note that amidst the momentous changes that have occurred in the international economic system, 1998 will mark the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. We would therefore propose a special one-day session of the Committee be convened during 1998, possibly during the UN General Assembly, to commemorate the occasion. We seek the support of the members of the Committee for this proposal. We also like to reiterate our proposal for holding the UN conference on South-South Conference which would address comprehensively the challenge of South-South Cooperation in the period of globalization.

Let me also say, Mr. President, that we believe the time has come for us to reassert the importance of the role of the High Level Committee itself in providing broad policy direction for TCDC and in monitoring its application globally. We feel very strongly that this role should be reinforced and indeed expanded to include a review of economic cooperation among developing countries. This would be a logical development in light of recommendation contained in the New Directions proposal to promote an increased operational integration between TCDC and ECDC.

It would be remiss of me if I did not express on behalf of the Group of 77 and China our sincere appreciation of the work of the Special Unit for TCDC in supporting TCDC and South-South cooperation. The Group of 77 has established a close working relationship with the Unit and has benefited greatly from the assistance it has provided. In this context, we wish to reiterate our firm policy stance - which has been repeatedly emphasized - that the separate identity of the Special Unit for TCDC should be maintained and that it should be provided with adequate resources to carry out its mandate and implement the New Directions proposals. We also request all our partners to contribute adequately to the Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation and to the Perez Guerrero Trust Fund for ECDC/TCDC.

Mr. President,

At the dawn of the 21st century we stand at an important moment in history. The choices we make will influence the destiny of the developing world. We are convinced that TCDC and South-South Cooperation must feature as a critical aspect of the development philosophy that will help us to shape that destiny. We appreciate the support and assistance from all donor countries who have come forward to help and will continue to assist in implementing TCDC activities. We invite others to join us in this historic endeavour.

We wish to restate our commitment and resolve expressed by the 20th Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77 held last September in New York that TCDC and South-South Cooperation is an important cornerstone of the overall economic philosophy of the Group of 77 and to promote this concept in the future as an increasingly strategic dimension of international development cooperation. We intend to pursue this objective in the context of the policy discussion that will take place during the substantive session of ECOSOC for 1997 and the 52nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Mr. President,

I would like to close by wishing this Committee every success in its deliberations and we look forward to a very successful session which will produce outcomes needed to accelerate the implementation of TCDC programmes and activities most effectively.

Thank you.