



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY
AMBASSADOR MOHAMED BENNOUNA, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIRMAN OF THE
GROUP OF 77, BEFORE THE 13TH SESSION OF THE HIGH-LEVEL
COMMITTEE ON THE REVIEW OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (New York, 27-30 May 2003)**

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

I am pleased, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, to address this 13th Session of the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (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 to a successful conclusion

Also, since this year's meeting coincides with the 25th anniversary for the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA), I would like to place on record our Group's profound appreciation for the significant and outstanding contribution made by the Special Unit for TCDC for the promotion of South-South cooperation under the able leadership of Mme. Safiatou Ba-N'Daw to whom we have just listened.

Mr. Chairman,

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 transformation 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 and a new vision for the technical cooperation.

The Havana Declaration and the Programme of Action adopted by the South Summit held in 2000 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 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.

The General Assembly in its resolution A/RES/57/263 urged developing countries and their partners to intensify South-South and triangular initiatives contributing to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration. The Programme of Action for LDCs (2001-2010) recognized the role of South-South cooperation in Least Developed Countries' growth and development and encouraged the use of triangular mechanisms, which could ensure success of South-South cooperation. Furthermore, the Monterrey consensus on Financing for development and the Johannesburg Plan of implementation have given new dimensions to the context in which TCDC and South-South cooperation will have to be pursued.

Technical cooperation among developing countries has experienced both success and failures during the last twenty-five years since the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA). The experience of this period and recent changes in global economic circumstances should point to lessons regarding future technical cooperation among developing countries.

Since the twelfth 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 BAPA. South-South cooperation has the potential to become a mainstream modality in all regions and most sectors. The economic growth of a number of developing countries and the increased technical ability and expertise in the developing world has contributed to these positive trends. 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

South-South cooperation has drawn support from some development partners such as European Union and its Member States, Japan, Canada, United States, Australia and others. While expressing our sincere thanks to these countries, we hope that other developed partners could join this effort.

Mr. Chairman,

Although the relatively positive trends I just mentioned, the pattern of cooperation has not been unfortunately commensurate with the comprehensive nature of the commitments contained in the various declarations and other documents for South-South cooperation as well as with the existing capabilities and capacities in the South. The inadequate financial resources allocated in support of South-South cooperation programmes continues to constitute a serious obstacle to their promotion and effectiveness.

The pivotal countries have been playing a crucial role in TCDC, including through sharing their expertise and resources with other developing countries. 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 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 role of the private sector in promoting South-South cooperation can certainly contribute to the expansion of the scope of such cooperation. The high-level Committee, in the framework of its thematic discussion this year, is focusing on the role of private sector in promoting South-South cooperation, including triangular cooperation. In fact, there is a concern that the private sector is not sufficiently engaged in South-South cooperation.

Private sector from developing and developed countries involvement in South-South cooperation is indispensable for achieving positive results. We look forward to hear concrete ideas as how to engage the private sector in South-South cooperation, including through joint venture modalities, which could contribute to transfer of technology to and among developing countries. The outcome of the thematic discussion in the High-level Committee could contribute in identifying ways and means to enhance the role of the private sector in promoting South-South cooperation. The specific situation of developing countries with weak or no private sector at all should be taken into consideration.

Triangular cooperation enhances the ownership and lowers the costs of development programmes and strengthens the partnership among developing countries on one hand and among developing and developed countries on the other hand. The new vision should place its focus on triangular cooperation and related innovative approaches in promoting South-South cooperation.

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.

Most technical cooperation among developing countries occurs within the framework of regional integration efforts. Regional cooperation and integration provides the most meaningful approach and effective conduit for the South to face the challenges of globalization and take advantage of its opportunities. Cooperation

among regional groupings should be encouraged and TCDC should contribute in promoting and bridging sub-regional and regional groupings as a pivotal dynamic for enhancing South-South cooperation.

TCDC activities should be considered as one of the important elements of a comprehensive development strategy. It should be seen as complementing North-South technical cooperation. TCDC should be strengthened and promoted to have a major and positive contribution to the overall development of developing countries.

The G77 express its appreciation for the positive role that the United Nations agencies and organizations, such as regional commissions, UNCTAD, FAO, IFAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, ITC, UNDCP, UNFPA, UPU, WHO, UNAIDS, WIPO as well as other development partners, have been playing in promoting Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries in various fields and at national, regional and global levels. Although these efforts are welcomed, they are not commensurate with the needs and aspirations of developing countries. More support to South-South cooperation by the international organizations and the UN programmes and agencies is needed. An effective role of the UN system in promoting such cooperation and an adequate visibility of South-South cooperation activities within the system, including through triangular cooperation, is highly required.

Mr. Chairman,

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. The effort of the UNDP to promote TCDC in the national, regional and global programmes of UNDP is to be encouraged and supported. The orientation towards focusing technical cooperation among developing countries undertaken by the organizations and agencies of the United Nations System on a number of strategic issues of common concern to a large number of developing countries is to be commended. These activities should ultimately contribute to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration.

In this context, the Heads of State and Government in Havana at the South Summit stressed the importance of the TCDC Unit and invited, I quote, "the Administrator of the UNDP to strengthen the TCDC Unit as the UN focal point for South-South cooperation through the preservation of its separate identity and the provision of adequate resources to ensure the full implementation of decisions of the South Summit under its sphere of competence and to enable it to carry out its relevant mandates and responsibilities" (end of quotation)

Capabilities and capacities to expand substantially exchanges of experiences and good practices, sharing technical resources and information, joint activities in research and development have been constrained by lack of resources as I said before. Increase in the allocation of more resources by donor countries to the core resources of UNDP could contribute 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 as well as by developing countries 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 catalytic projects on South-South cooperation. In order to enable PGTF to continue being responsive to the increase needs of

developing countries, it is absolutely imperative that its resources be significantly expanded. Contributions of both developed and developing countries are really needed to support South-South projects.

While celebrating the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, we now look forward to the High-Level Conference on South-South Cooperation to be held in Marrakech (Morocco) from 16 to 19 December 2003. We are confident that the deliberations, which will take place during this important meeting, will enable us to advance the action-oriented objectives of South-South cooperation as an indispensable part of a broader strategy of international development cooperation with the support of our development partners.

I thank you.