



Journal of the Group of 77



Special Edition

Published since September 1982 by the Office of the Chairman of the Group of 77
at the United Nations Headquarters in New York

September/November 2002

HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ADOPTS COMMON PLATFORM ON PROMOTION OF TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES IN THE SOUTH



The Opening Ceremony- Dubai Conference

In accordance with the recommendation of the South Summit in Havana, more than 70 delegations and over 150 scientists and researchers from the developing countries gathered in Dubai, 27-30 October 2002, United Arab Emirates, in the first ever High-level Conference on Science and Technology, under the *auspices* of the Group of 77. The Conference unanimously adopted a Declaration, known as the Dubai Declaration on the Promotion of Science and Technology in the South.

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**DUBAI 2002: DEVELOPING NATIONS ADOPT COMMON VISION
FOR PROMOTION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE SOUTH**

From 27-30 October 2002, the dynamic city of Dubai, United Arab Emirates, hosted a landmark event in the history of the Group of 77. During four days, ministerial and high level delegations from more than 70 countries and over 150 scientists and researchers from the developing world gathered in Dubai for the first ever High-level Conference on Science and Technology.

This major event was organized under the auspices of the Group of 77 in New York, in collaboration with the Group's Paris Chapter, currently chaired by the United Arab Emirates, as well as with Dubai Municipality. The convening of the Conference is the result of a recommendation of the Havana Plan of Action, adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the Group of 77 at the South Summit, held in Cuba in April 2000. The Conference also benefited from a large mobilization of scientists and researchers from the developing world through the generous network of the Third World Academy of Science (TWAS), based in Trieste, Italy.

Held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai, Minister of Finance and Industry and Chairman of Dubai Municipality, the Conference elected His Excellency Ambassador Hussein Ghubash as President. Mr. Ghubash is Chairman of the Paris Chapter of the Group of 77 and Permanent Delegate of the United Arab Emirates to UNESCO.

Throughout their exchanges of views, participants discussed reports submitted by various United Nations agencies, including the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

Delegations noted with concern the growing scientific and technological gap between developed and developing countries two years after the adoption of the Havana Programme of Action. However, it was also recognized that existing knowledge capacities and facilities in the South should be used in a more sustainable, systematic, and efficient manner and in this context South-South cooperation encouraged.



*His Highness Sheikh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum
Deputy Ruler of Dubai, addressing the opening ceremony*

The four-day Conference culminated with the unanimous adoption of a Declaration on the Promotion of Science and Technology in the South, known as the Dubai Declaration.

The Declaration called on developing countries to use their own resources to bridge the gap between North and South in science and technology and to develop more creative ways of using science and technology to fight poverty. In this context, it reaffirmed the strong commitment of the 134 Member States of the Group of 77 to the implementation of the principles and recommendations of the historic South Summit, and expresses with great concern

the disparities between the North and the South in their capacity to produce scientific and technological knowledge in support of social and economic development.

The Conference also considered that new and additional resources should be devoted by the international community for science and technology in the South, and calls for greater recognition of the special needs of the developing countries in these areas, bearing in mind their significant obstacles, including lack of or inadequacy of resources, infrastructures, and institutions.

The Conference identified several ways to strengthen the scientific and technological base of developing countries, including the creation of a Trust Fund for the promotion of knowledge and technology in the South. Developing countries also agreed to look into the establishment of a consortium of knowledge and technology comprising representatives from Governments, the private sector, and other relevant organizations aimed at promoting joint ventures in the South, and a Group of 77 Award honoring individual scientists from developing countries.

The scientific and research community gathered in Dubai subscribed to a Declaration of Scientists of the Developing World on Science and Technology for Peace and Development that calls for the Governments of the Group of 77 to increase the funding level for science and research technology and development to at least 2.5% of the Gross National Product (GNP) by the year 2010. The scientists also expressed their concern for the recent political instability in several of the countries of the Group of 77, generated by destabilizing forces, and stressed that the imposition of

pressure, be it internal or external, diverts resources and energies from the development priorities as well as from knowledge and technology progress.

In a press conference following the closing ceremony, the President of the Conference, Ambassador Ghubash welcomed the unanimous adoption of the Dubai Declaration as a historic platform for a renewed South-South cooperation in science and technology. He stated that the future and progress of the South rely heavily on scientific research. In this context, he warned against a growing threat of scientific and technological marginalization of the developing world, making the enjoyment of their benefits limited to some few. Ambassador Ghubash pointed out that the continuous exodus of scientific brainpower towards the rich countries of the North not only harms the countries of the South but

also denies them the opportunity to develop a strong scientific sector. "The scale of the problem gives it all the appearances of a new form of colonial competition in which developing countries are being robbed of

their scientists, inventors and development leaders", he

added.

The Chairman of the Group of 77 and Permanent Representative of Venezuela to the United Nations, Ambassador Milos Alcalay said that the Dubai Conference was a turning point in the strengthening of South-South cooperation in science and technology. It showed the capacity of the Group of 77 to embrace progress and renovation for the great benefit of its original principles. He indicated that he intends to set up a high-level advisory group to work on the implementing mechanisms called for by the Conference.



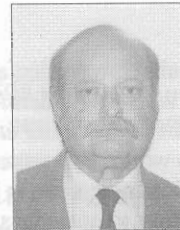
The Opening Ceremony- Dubai

"Science and Technology must be a multiplier of knowledge and of respect of each and everyone of our cultures" Rudolf Romer, Vice Minister of Scientific Research of Venezuela

DUBAI DECLARATION FOR THE PROMOTION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SHUKRAN DUBAI...

Dubai is an unforgettable experience for any visitor. With its state-of-the-art technology, its glass skyscrapers, and its *joie de vivre*, Dubai was the ideal choice for holding the very first High-level Conference on Science and Technology, placed under the *aegis* of the Group of 77 and generously hosted by the Government of the United Arab Emirates and the Dubai Municipality.



At the outset, and on behalf of the Group of 77, I would like to reiterate my most sincere and warmest thanks to all involved in the successful preparations and organization of the Dubai Conference, especially to His Highness Sheikh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai, Minister of Finance and Industry of the United Arab Emirates and President of Dubai Municipality. Special thanks go to my friend, Ambassador Hussein Ghubash for his leadership and valuable support in making this Conference a turning point event. My appreciation is also directed to the United Nations agencies, including UNDP, ITU, UNESCO, ESCWA, and UNCTAD as well as to the Third World Academy of Science (TWAS), for their valuable contribution. And last but not least, I thank Mr. Mourad Ahmia Executive Secretary of the Group of 77 and his team of the Executive Secretariat of the Group of 77, whose efforts have made the Conference a success.

First of all, Dubai was tasked with an important challenge: to promote a new vision for strengthening South-South cooperation in science and technology. That is what made Dubai so particular, the massive participation not only of Governments, but also of scientists and researchers, working hand in hand towards the achievement of this noble goal.

The Declaration of the South Summit of Havana emphasized that, more than ever, rapid scientific and technological progress is a crucial condition for the establishment of economic growth and social well-being. In this context, scientific and technological accomplishments should harmonize with the New Humanitarian Order, proposed by the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, His Excellency Hugo Chavez Frias, based on the principles of solidarity, international social justice, and peace.

Knowledge and technology therefore become central to the emergence of the society of the 21st century. The scientific and technological revolution should be put at the service of the noble causes of poverty eradication, sustainable development, capacity building, empowerment of our populations and local communities, and strengthening sound and well-informed decision-making processes. Knowledge and technology should make a tangible difference in the lives of hundreds of millions of people around the globe, and help fulfill the goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and bridge the growing gap between the North and the South.

The outcome of Dubai is a landmark one in the strengthening of the South-South cooperation. It provides us, the developing countries, with a unique framework to orient the actions of our leaders and scientists towards a common strategy for the promotion of science and technology in our nations. We must act now to meet the challenges ahead as we have demonstrated our capacity to embrace progress and innovation for the betterment of the life of our citizens.

Once Again, Shukran Dubai !

AMBASSADOR MILOS ALCALAY

Permanent Representative of The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations

Chairman of the Group of 77, New York Chapter

"THE EXODUS OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE FROM THE SOUTH MUST STOP"

Dubai is a particular city, at the crossroads of several continents, of East and West, of modernity and tradition. All over the years, it has become a vibrant business center and the most promising centers of science and technology in the Arab world. By convening a High-level Conference on Science and Technology, the developing world has just shown the capacity of our nations to embrace progress and to adjust to nowadays realities and challenges.



At a time when we struggle to forge a new relationship between science, man, development, and his realization of justice and progress, whereby science embraces a system of values that caters for the concerns of humankind, the future of our countries depends heavily on scientific research as the key to the creation of knowledge and achievement of progress. Yet, it is not disconcerting at a time when the barriers of distance, time, and place are being dissolved that humankind has never been so divided by economic disparities, digital gap, and the variable fortunes of peace and security. It is saddening to note that the process of accumulation of vast amounts of knowledge and achievement of scientific breakthroughs has not been accompanied by similar progress in the moral and political domains.

The daily and growing threat of the scientific and technological marginalization of the South makes it vital that our nations place science and technology at the top of our agenda. This means that we need to address the issues of knowledge and openness to global research system as a matter of priority for our national programmes in the context of a renewed South-South cooperation.

The continuous exodus of scientific brainpower towards the rich countries of the North not only greatly harms the countries of the South, by depriving them of resources, but also denies them the opportunity to develop a strong scientific sector for the future. The wide scale of this problem gives it all the appearance of a new form of colonial competition in which the developing countries are being robbed of their scientists, inventors, and development leaders. More than 20,000 scientific and technical experts in various specialties are lost to Africa alone each year when they take up jobs in laboratories and research institutions in Europe and the United States. The statistics show that in the Arab region, over one million highly skilled professionals work outside their countries of origin.

This brain drain must be stopped as a matter of emergency. To this end, we need to set aside and spend more resources in science and technology and to create the necessary conditions to help us retain these valuable skills. We all have the duty to overcome three major challenges, namely to overcome the problem of the knowledge gap between the North and the South; to answer the question of how science could be enlisted in the service of sustainable development; and to establish harmonious rules between man and his environment.

If knowledge is power, it is also freedom. Today, knowledge remains in the hands of the powerful. The knowledge we are striving for is one that grants us to escape from the prison of dependency, ignorance, disease, and hunger, and to protect our future generations, cultures, and nations.

AMBASSADOR HUSSEIN GHUBASH

Permanent Delegate of the United Arab Emirates to UNESCO

Chairman of the Group of 77, Paris Chapter

President of the Dubai Conference

DUBAI DECLARATION FOR THE PROMOTION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE SOUTH

Following are excerpts from the Declaration on the Promotion of Science and Technology in the South, unanimously adopted in Dubai on 30 October 2002:

We, the Participants at the Group of 77 South-South High-Level Conference on Science and Technology,

Pursuant to the decision of the Havana Programme of Action adopted by the first South Summit of the Group of 77, held in Havana, Cuba, from 10-14 April 2000;

Deeply concerned that the prevailing and growing knowledge gap between the North and the South contributes to the marginalization of many developing countries and the significant segment of humankind already afflicted by poverty;

Aware that the disparity between the developed and developing countries, in their respective capacities and implementation, has emerged as a major problem;

Affirm and seek to strengthen the role of the United Nations in mainstreaming the positive benefits of science and technology for the developing countries;

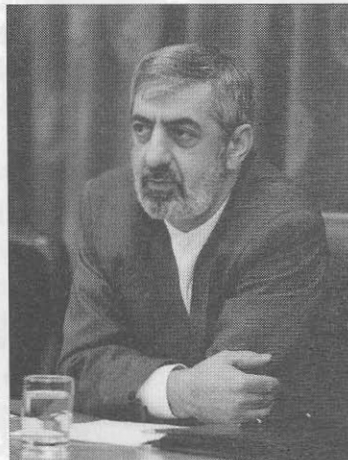
Committed to work towards the promotion of the development of science and technology by increasing the allocation of resources to that end, developing appropriate institutional frameworks and promoting technology through advanced and quality education;

Having assembled at a High-level Conference on Science and Technology of the Group of 77 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 27-30 October 2002, to formulate a new vision and a global strategy for the promotion of science and technology in the South;

Hereby, adopt the Dubai Declaration as a practical platform for the promotion of science and technology among the Member States of the Group of 77:

We reaffirm our commitment to the implementation of the specific actions at the

national and international levels contained in the Havana Programme of Action. These include, inter alia, the promotion and development of knowledge and technology in the South; to encourage the institutions of the South to launch further initiatives to promote knowledge and technology in developing countries; to harness the potential of



*Ambassador Bagher Asadi, Chairman
of the Drafting Committee*

human resources, including expatriates, from the South for the benefit of developing countries; to address the challenges associated with brain drain; to create an enduring international environment to ensure the South's access to knowledge and technology; and to promote the central role of the United Nations in removing different barriers faced by the South in the acquisition of knowledge and technology.

We emphasize with deep concern the disparities between the developed and developing world in their capacity to produce scientific and technological knowledge in support of social and economic development. In this context, we welcome the initiative of the United Arab Emirates in UNESCO to launch a South-South Solidarity Programme in the Field of Education aimed at assisting developing countries to use and benefit from the South's potential in the field of education; reduce illiteracy; and improve education for all. We call upon Member States of the Group of 77, other countries and agencies to formulate a strategy to ensure that sufficient resources are available in developing countries for science education at secondary and tertiary levels.

The Conference calls for greater

recognition of the special needs of developing countries in science and technology. The Conference advocates greater understanding, consideration and cooperation among Member States and other countries for the different needs and priorities of developing countries in respect of new technologies; we call for further attention and resources to be devoted to traditional knowledge, its promotion, enrichment, advancement and mechanisms for its protection, and the sharing of benefits arising from its use;

We recognize the significant obstacles to science and technology in developing countries, including, inter alia, lack or inadequacy of resources, infrastructure and institutions, gender imbalance in Science and Technology, lack of trained personnel, prohibitive costs of

acquiring knowledge and technology, and barriers to the transfer of knowledge, personnel and technologies from developed to developing countries.

Some countries in the South have developed significant expertise in biotechnology, information technology, and water and sanitation technologies. We therefore call for the exchange of scientific experiences and of technologies with a view to intensifying cooperation and delivering real benefits among developing countries, using new and existing mechanisms to the full;



We also call for the establishment of a South-South network, linking research & development (R&D) institutions and other centers of excellence to enhance the South's efforts in setting up strategic programmes of R&D, particularly for the development of vaccines, drugs and diagnostics for the prevention and cure of major communicable diseases in the South, such as malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS;

We invite the Chairman of the Group of 77 in New York, in collaboration with the Chairmen of the Chapters of the Group of 77, as required, to initiate or undertake consultations for the implementation of the following decisions of the South Summit, and to report on the results of his consultations to the forthcoming Annual Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 in September 2003:

- a) Establishment of a Trust Fund for the promotion of knowledge and technology in the South. To this end, governments, the private sector, foundations and other organizations are encouraged to provide seed money for the Fund;
- b) Establishment of a consortium of knowledge and technology, comprising representatives from the governments, the 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; and
- c) Establishment of the Award of the Group of 77 for Science



UAE dignitaries at the opening session

and Technology, in order to recognize and honor individual scientists from developing countries who have made outstanding scientific contributions of the highest international quality.

We call for an effective implementation of this Declaration and invite the Chairman of the Group of 77 in New York and the concerned Chapters to put in place the necessary practical modalities for the follow-up of the Dubai Conference outcome in close coordination with the relevant United Nations bodies and agencies, and through:

- a) Setting up of three virtual working groups on ICT, biotechnology and clean water, with a view to implementing the provisions of the Declaration; and
- b) Development of an Internet-based communication mechanism among G-77 resource persons and institutions to reduce costs and to enhance the work of the Group of 77.

"Today access to knowledge should be considered as basic human right" Dr. Daniel Codorniu Pujals, First Vice Minister of Science, Technology, and Environment of Cuba

WORKSHOPS ON ICT, BIOTECHNOLOGY, AND WATER....

As the largest ever gathering of scientists and researchers from the developing world, the Dubai Conference held three substantive workshops on crucial topics for the development of the South.

1. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

Under the chairmanship of Professor Tarcisio Della Senta (Brazil), from the United Nations University, the workshop on ICT's considered a series of documents on this topic prepared by United Nations bodies and other agencies, including the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Economic and Social Commission of Western Asia (ESCWA), the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), and the World Bank.

Speakers addressed the issue of the increasing role of ICT's in daily life as well as the acceleration of the polarization between the North and the South. Although recognizing that ICT's are not a panacea for development problems, speakers stressed that the new scientific and technologies can support national development goals and be a booster for the development process.

However, speakers agreed on the barriers and obstacles that hamper the optimal use of ICT's in the South, including the limited and high cost of the telecommunications infrastructure; the lack of human resource capacities in both basic and advanced skills, exacerbated by the brain drain; the insufficient Government funding for



Opening Ceremony- Dubai Conference

education, research and development; and the limited cooperation among Southern countries.

The scientific community called on the Governments of the developing countries of the Group of 77 to undertake all the efforts in view of the early establishment of a Fund aimed at supporting innovative initiatives for the development of ICT

infrastructure in the South, and encouraged them to allocate at least 2,5% of their Gross National Product (GNP) for research and development. International organizations, especially the United Nations system, should also support these initiatives.

2. Biotechnology

The workshop on Biotechnology, chaired by Professor K.E. Mshigeni, Director of the Zero Emissions Research Initiative of the University of Namibia, considered the report submitted by UNCTAD and recognized the tremendous importance and potential that biotechnology offers for poverty eradication, human resources, technological, and industrial development of the South.

With the vast and rich genetic resources of the G-77 countries, it is imperative that the South invests resources into the development of biotechnology.

To protect their biodiversity wealth, Governments must

put in place legislation based upon the Bonn guidelines on access to bio-resources. They must also invest into basic and applied research to harness their biodiversity wealth using biotechnology, to create economic benefits. "Traditional and indigenous knowledge must be documented and developed into economic gains and Governments must invest into the research and development infrastructure, providing the institutional framework to encourage good research and development to be carried out within their countries", the speakers said.

Many institutions within the G-77 countries enjoy a worldwide recognition in various aspects of biotechnology, including medical, agricultural, biotechnology. They now need to be identified as forestry, animal, fisheries, marine and environmental registrar together with their scientists developed. Networking between South institutions should

be encouraged, including transfer of technology.

Funding institutions, such as the Islamic Development Bank and the regional development banks, should support the development of these institutions through the provision of funds for research, collaborative programs, and networking. International institutions such as UNDP, UNESCO, FAO, and other institutions should increase their support to biotechnology programs in the G-77 countries.

Nevertheless, while the G-77 countries recognize the potential of biotechnology, they also admit the potential dangers of some aspects of biotechnology, such as genetically modified organisms and other contentious areas of biotechnology. In this respect, Governments must also ratify the Cartagena Protocol on Bio-safety and institute laws on Bio-safety.

3. Safe Drinking Water

Under the chairmanship of Professor C.N.R. Rao from the Nehru Center

for Advanced Scientific Research in India, Vital participants exchanged views on the vital topic of access to safe drinking water.

Noting that three out of four people on the planet do not have access to safe drinking water, participants stressed the importance that nations make efforts to provide potable water to each and every citizen within the next 10 years.

Technologies are now in place for making water both potable and safe within the fourfold path of securing new sources of water; saving and redistributing its supplies; reducing the demand for water; and recycling water.

The scientists called on the member States of the Group of 77 to make safe drinking water available to all their people. They also called upon them to adopt tried and tested community practices and available technologies towards this goal, in addition to intensify their efforts to devise new and cost-effective technologies for the purification of water.

"If Knowledge is power, it is also freedom. The knowledge we are striving to create will free us from the prisons of dependence, ignorance, disease, and hunger"
Ambassador Hussein Ghubash, President of the Dubai Conference

DUBAI DECLARATION OF SCIENTISTS OF THE DEVELOPING WORLD ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

We, the scientists of the developing countries, having assembled in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, for the first High-Level Conference on Science and Technology, organized by the Group of 77, as decided by the historic Havana South Summit, hereby subscribe to the following Declaration on Science and Technology for Peace and Development:

We emphasize that more than ever the world has become more interdependent than before. However, the persistence of endemic poverty and deprivation in the South constitutes a potential threat to the security and prosperity of the world. At the same time, we recognize that scientific knowledge and technological developments become key to economic and social development, and therefore, not only influence all aspects of human endeavors but are also crucial conditions for global peace and stability;

As the world witnesses a profound and dynamic revolution of knowledge and technology, we recognize this movement as a crucial contribution to the economic growth and the socio-economic development of our countries. We note that the prevailing gap between the North and the South in the scientific and technological field is still growing, and that the process of rapid accumulation of knowledge and technologies has not reached the hundreds of millions of people who continue to live in absolute poverty;

We also recognize that information technology constitutes one of the pillars

of technological revolution and represents one of the most powerful development tools of our time. We firmly believe that we need to take full advantage to use science and technology for peace and development and to ensure that its benefits reach our peoples, as the future of the South depends on the inclusion of information technology in its economic and social development programmes. In this context, we underline the need to establish global knowledge partnerships that encourage developed countries to provide developing countries with the necessary assistance;

We call for the adoption of the appropriate measures to overcome the technological gap between the developing and industrialized countries and to work towards arrangements that facilitate the process of technology transfer. While our countries are committed to promoting the development of science and technology, we urge the developed countries to facilitate the transfer of technology, easing the costs and collateral conditions that presently stand in its way;

While we believe it is urgent to enhance our access to global information networks and to improve the benefits derived there from, we also emphasize the need to preserve our national and regional diversity of traditions, identities, languages and cultures which may be affected by the globalization process, and to achieve a connection to contemporary international information and knowledge that does not entail sacrificing our national and cultural identities;

While recognizing the resource constraints faced by the developing countries and the competing demands from other sectors, we call on the Governments of the Group of 77 to increase funding for education, science, and technology. In particular, we call on our Governments to make a commitment to raise the level of funding on Science and technology research and development to at least 2.5% of the Gross National Product (GNP) by the year 2010;

We pledge to work to overcome the scourges of underdevelopment, poverty, hunger, illiteracy, disease, and debt. Although we recognize that this is primarily the responsibility of our own countries, we urge the international community to adopt urgent and resolute actions to assist in overcoming these plagues, and to establish international economic relations based on justice and equity;

In this context, we are deeply concerned that international cooperation for development has been downplayed on the agenda of the international community, including the United Nations system. We therefore call the international community to give priority to the development agenda of developing countries and adopt urgent measures to overcome the obstacles to their development objectives;

Reiterating that war and violence divert valuable resources from scientific and technological progress, we express our active solidarity with the scientific and research community from the North that expressed its opposition to any unilateral action against any nation, including Iraq, and stress the urgent need to resolve all disputes through dialogue and peaceful means;

We remain gravely concerned over the grave deterioration of the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people, which has negatively affected their development and access to education, science, and technology. We call for the immediate cessation of all inhumane practices, including collective punishments, hampering the access to basic and high education to the Palestinian people;

We reaffirm the right of peoples to exploit their natural resources, including water resources, to serve the economic and social needs of their populations, and reject the use of force or the threat of use of force, in order to prevent peoples from exploiting their natural resources according to the international law and customs;

We express our deep concern for the recent political instability in several of our countries, generated by destabilizing forces, and stress that the imposition of pressure be it internal or external, divert our resources and energies from the development priorities as well as from knowledge and technology progress. We are firmly convinced that only dialogue among all social sectors and peaceful means can resolve political unrest. In this context, we express our solidarity to the strengthening of the consolidation of peace and democracy in all countries of the Group of 77;

We welcome the adoption by our Member States of the Dubai Declaration on South-South Cooperation in Science and Technology, and call on the establishment of the appropriate mechanisms for its implementation and follow-up.

DIRECTORY OF G-77 CHAPTERS LIASON OFFICES

Founded in September 1982



The JOURNAL OF THE GROUP OF 77 is published at the United Nations Headquarters by the Office of the Chairman of the Group of 77 in New York in collaboration with Inter Press Service (IPS). Contributions to the Journal are welcome and should be addressed to the Managing Editor of the Journal: Office of the Chairman of the Group of 77, U.N. Headquarters, Secretariat building, Room S-3953, New York, N.Y. 10017, U.S.A.

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