



The President  
of the  
General Assembly High-level Committee  
on South-South Cooperation

**Statement of H.E. Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen, Ambassador & Permanent Representative of  
Bangladesh to the United Nations and President of the United Nations High-level  
Committee on South South-South Cooperation at the Grand Opening Ceremony of the  
Global South-South Development EXPO 2014  
Washington, D.C., Monday 17 November 2014**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to this 2014 Global South-South Development Expo on behalf of High-level Committee of the UN on South-South Cooperation.

2. My special thanks go to Organization of American States (OAS) for graciously hosting this Expo and to the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation for organizing this annual event which affords us the invaluable opportunity to celebrate and showcase the remarkable advances that are taking place across the countries of the Global South.

3. I believe South-South cooperation, in the present global context, is not an option but a must for enhancing international cooperation for development. Sooner we realize this and sooner the evolving global development architecture recognizes its importance, the better we are in structuring a holistic development process for the developing world. The magnitude of the contribution by the South to global economic activities has been recognized in the expression “the new geography of trade”. Cooperation among developing countries is changing the landscape of international relations, particularly in trade, financial flows and regional integration. Here I would stress most emphatically that South-South cooperation is not a substitute for but rather a complement to North-South cooperation.

4. The present structure of South-South cooperation and its special focus on the most vulnerable countries – the least developed, the landlocked and the small island states - has been developed through major inter-governmental decisions, particularly those adopted by the United Nations High-Level Committee on South-South Cooperation.

5. In less than a year, the global leadership once again will convene at the United Nations to make a forward looking commitment that will set into motion a new set of sustainable development goals or SDGs and more importantly, the means to achieve them. Therefore, “Scaling up South-South and triangular cooperation for sustainable development” is an appropriate theme for the EXPO of this year. Let me welcome a recent decision by the UN to establish a multi-partner fund that will invest in social enterprises, which have the potential to scale up within the global south. Considered a pioneering fund, the U.N. Social Enterprise

Facility for the South will pool official development assistance and equity funds and initially support social enterprises in Asia and the Pacific. This Facility has attracted interest from commercial banks, venture philanthropists and hedge fund managers specializing in socially responsible investment funds. The outstanding achievements and initiatives that we are celebrating here this week are very relevant to the post-2015 development agenda. We are shaping to secure peace, prosperity and a healthy environment for all of us and for future generations to come. It is important to recognize the linkage between South-South cooperation with the effective realization of the sustainable development agenda, especially with regard to poverty reduction efforts and social development, particularly in ensuring equality and empowerment of women.

6. The strong economic performance and other successes of many countries in the South in recent years have heightened our hope and ushered in a range of new realities and achiever's expectations with important implications on the options available to improve the human condition globally. Let me highlight some of the new realities.

- First, in 2012, the countries of the South accounted for half of world's GDP which is projected to reach 60 per cent by 2030. And by 2025, the South is likely to account for 600 million households earning more than \$20,000 per annum and an overall annual consumption of \$30 trillion.
- Second, South-South trade has grown to unprecedented levels, not only exceeding trade with the North, but also moving towards trade baskets with more technologically sophisticated products. For example, statistics show that from 1990 to 2008, the volume of exports from developing countries grew consistently faster than exports from developed countries or the world as a whole. While volume of exports between 2000 and 2008 basically almost doubled in the South, it increased merely 50% for the world.
- Third, Finance is also trending up. The South provides more than a third of global investments and the developing world is projected to account for more than half of total capital stock by 2030.
- Fourth, the global South produces half of the world's economic output, hold \$5 trillion in reserves and accounts for 47% of global trade of which about half is South-South trade. Additionally, several countries of the global South have become economic powerhouses wielding significant influence.
- Fifth, the South is maturing technological capacity at affordable prices marked by new information and communications technologies which are transforming traditional deficiencies into unprecedented new opportunities for development.

7. Such noteworthy economic performance has translated into concomitant social gains in some countries of the South that have prudently invested in health, education, industrialization and innovation leading to significant progress in job creation and poverty reduction.

8. Unfortunately, progress has been uneven in many dimensions across the South and many countries continue to face extreme poverty, joblessness, rampant inequality, malnutrition, social and economic deprivation, health hazards, financial shocks and instability, vulnerability to

climate and weather-related shocks and other challenges. In spite of progress and potential for growth, is it not a shame that till to-day:

- About 2.2 billion people live below the poverty level and nearly 12% or 842 million people still suffer from chronic hunger mostly in the South.
- Nearly 80 per cent, or the majority of the global population mostly in the South, lack comprehensive social protection.
- Mostly in the South, millions suffer from acute shortage of essential infrastructure while about 1.4 billion people still have no reliable electricity, 900 million lack access to clean water and 2.6 billion do not have adequate sanitation.
- Nearly 200 million are being hard hit each year due to erratic climate change, and many of them are uprooted from their homes and their livelihood and overcrowding our towns and cities creating slumps. In addition, owing to violence, nearly another 45 million become refugees.

9. In fact, millions of people in Africa, Asia and Latin America lack basic health services that could save lives and they also lack infrastructure and job opportunities that can improve their standard of living. Many are continuously vulnerable to life threatening tropical and communicable diseases that are otherwise curable. This is nowhere more evident than countries in West Africa where the recent Ebola outbreak has already claimed the lives of thousands. If this crisis worsens, the social and economic consequences may set the Ebola-afflicted countries backwards, reversing some gains that they have made in recent years. Same is equally true for climate vulnerable countries. Many are afraid that their achievements in MDG goals might be wiped out if there is a big cyclone, tidal wave, flood or drought.

10. I have no doubt that South-South cooperation can contribute to the solutions needed to overcome common threats and trans-boundary development challenges such as Ebola and other health pandemics that are too difficult for countries to tackle single-handedly. I am very pleased to learn that there is a session organized at this Expo on Ebola and how to respond to the epidemic through South-South cooperation. However, we should be mindful that each year millions of lives could be saved that are not in the media headlines if we effectively share our experiences and lessons learned for a better living with the countries from the South and in partnership with the North.

11. South-South collaboration on health has become common and more effective where a number of countries work together to promote joint research and development aimed at developing innovative drugs and vaccines for the prevention and treatment of various diseases. One such good example is the Developing Countries Vaccine Manufacturers Network (DCVMN) that ensures a consistent and sustainable supply of quality vaccines to developing countries at affordable prices.

12. Many countries of the South have acquired the technical skills, know-how and solutions to other pressing development challenges in areas such as food security and nutrition, energy efficiency, social security, green technology, sustainable environment, affordable housing, small entrepreneurships, women empowerment, and the like.

13. I am glad that this Expo offers a strategic opportunity for all of us to take a closer look at such solutions, including the means for their replication and scaling-up, with the support of all partners both South-South and the North, to ensure their greater development impact, reaching MDGs and looking forward to attain the post 2015 development agenda and beyond. May I reiterate that South-South and North triangular cooperation and partnership is essential for a win-win situation for all.

14. In February next year, Bangladesh will be organizing a High-level South-South Cooperation and Development event in Dhaka in collaboration with the UN Office of South-South Cooperation for a brainstorming session to articulate issues of the South regarding financing the post-2015 development agenda, removal of all existing tariff and non-tariff barriers, improving transit transport by all modes of communications, increasing foreign direct investment (FDI) flows to the most vulnerable countries, enhance technical assistance and technology transfer, greater support to the social sector development with special attention to health, education, population issues and women's empowerment and cooperation in establishing food security for the most vulnerable countries. We look forward to your support, cooperation, and participation. Detail will follow soon. You all are welcome.

15. Finally, I would like to once again thank all our United Nations partners, civil society, NGO and business leaders, experts and delegates who have graced us with their presence at this EXPO, and in particular the organizers, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, as well as our host the Organization of American States. Their efforts and hard work will be successful if we truly can realize our goal of pro-people, pro-planet, inclusive and sustainable world for all of us where extreme poverty and hunger would be history, where peace and stability, decent life and living for all would be a reality.

I wish you a very fruitful and enjoyable EXPO. Thank you all.

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