

UNITED NATIONS



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H.E. Ambassador Inga Rhonda King
President of the Economic and Social Council

Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation
Buenos Aires, 20 March 2019

Opening Statement

Your Excellency, Mr Mauricio Macri,
President of Argentina and President of the Conference on South-South Cooperation,
Your Excellency, Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés,
President of the General Assembly,
Mr António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Mr. Achim Steiner, Administrator of UN Development Programme,
Your Excellency, Mr. Adonia Ayebara,
President designate of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Forty years since the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, South-South cooperation is a key to unlock the promise of the 2030 Agenda. The 2018 Development Cooperation Forum Survey indicates that developing countries increasingly incorporate South-South and triangular cooperation in their national development cooperation strategies.

My own country, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, a Small Island Developing State, has made progress with the shared expertise and know-how from our neighbours and friends in the South. South-South cooperation has been instrumental in my country's pursuit of a sustainable future. This has also been the experience of many others from the global South.

And what strikes me is how much the current dynamism and innovation in the South-South space are cutting through business-as-usual politics and policy.

Still much more can be done to fully leverage South-South and triangular cooperation for sustainable development. I would like to highlight, among many, four key points of action recommended by ECOSOC's Development Cooperation Forum, the DCF.

First, be more visible. The visibility of South-South and triangular cooperation must be further increased. Analyzing their added value and sustainable development impact will only advance the global effort to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

Such efforts should be supported at all levels, including globally through the DCF and other ECOSOC platforms (such as): the Financing for Development Forum, Multi-Stakeholder Forum on

Science, Technology and Innovation, and High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. These are your forums – please use them!

Second, be bold! Countries and actors of the global South must be bolder in sharing their experiences and evidence on development cooperation, and the global North bolder in learning from and integrating the experience of the global South into their practices.

Third, be strategic. Regional and national experiences in South-South and triangular cooperation should be mainstreamed into national development plans.

This will promote more transparent, accountable and impactful cooperation. It would also (i) further strengthen institutional capacities and collaborative arrangements and (ii) build integrated national financing frameworks.

Fourth, be specific in boosting inclusion and effective multi-stakeholder engagement. Increase engagement of parliamentarians, local authorities, women, civil society, youth and other stakeholders.

To this end, more exchanges are needed on (i) how we can leverage the comparative advantages of the different stakeholders involved and (ii) how to develop applicable policy and legal frameworks.

In the lead-up to its next High-level Meeting in May 2020, the DCF will continue to contribute, as a unique and trusted space for sharing on-the-ground insights and advancing action-oriented global policy dialogue on South-South and triangular cooperation.

Excellencies,

Everyone active in the South-South space has a story of how collective ingenuity and solidarity can overcome the seemingly insurmountable.

In St. Vincent and the Grenadines, after decades facing huge costs and limited availability of suitable land, the combination of creativity and political will with effective South-South cooperation, both technical and financial, within a broad-based, country-owned effort, brought to life the Argyle International Airport (AIA) in 2017. This was our first international airport and largest capital project ever undertaken in the country.

Think what the world can achieve with more broad-based, country-owned, inclusive and structured South-South and triangular cooperation for sustainable development!

In closing, I would like to thank our esteemed hosts, the Government of Argentina, and wish all participants a most successful conference.

Thank you!

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