

STATEMENT BY MR. S.M. KRISHNA, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER AT THE THIRTYTHIRD ANNUAL MEETING OF MINISTERS FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE GROUP OF 66 ON SEPTEMBER 25, 2009

Allow me to congratulate Sudan for its energetic leadership of our Group during the past year.

I would also like to greet Yemen on its election as the Chairman of the Group of 77 for the year 2010.

Mr. Chairman,

Major developments have taken place since we last met. These have been particularly challenging for developing countries. The global financial and economic crisis continues to adversely impact our economies. Coming at the heels of the global food and fuel crises, their impact has been especially severe. Years of development gains and efforts to eradicate poverty are threatened today.

This crisis was not of our making and yet we are its worst sufferers. Therefore, developing countries must fully be a part of solution to the crisis. Traditional structures to deal with global issues have been found wanting. Newer structures with increasing involvement of developing countries are needed today. Our Group must work to accelerate these systemic changes.

The recent UN Conference on the ongoing crisis is a testimony to the ability of our diverse Group to be able to respond forcefully and with a common voice to these challenges. Despite our varying perspectives on the important issues that were covered, and efforts to divide us, G77 was successful in presenting a unified position that captured our shared vision and aspirations. The follow-up process at the UN that was initiated at this Group's insistence will be key; not only to find the right solutions, but also for a greater involvement of developing countries in global governance structures. In this regard, we also look forward to an active role for the Economic and Social Council in the follow-up process.

Mr. Chairman,

It is crucial that the sense of unity, solidarity and common purpose that we have displayed is maintained and strengthened. This would be of paramount importance during the forthcoming negotiations on climate change under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol. It is only through cohesiveness that the interests of developing countries can be fully protected and promoted in these crucial negotiations.

Developing countries are the most affected by climate change, and we must be part of the solution. However, we must ensure that all actions are on the basis of equity and the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities", fully accounting for the historical responsibilities, and the limited financial and technical capability of developing countries. Any outcome must also acknowledge the imperative of pursuing growth by developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Next year's high-level meeting on the Millennium Development Goals [MDGs] will be an important landmark in assessing progress made towards the achievement of these Goals. It would be yet another occasion to reiterate our common demand for a more equitable world order and for a more enabling international environment for development. With only 5 years to go thereafter till the target date for the MDGs, there is no doubt that greater international action is required if the MDGs are to be achieved. Particularly, since repeated international crises have weakened the ability of developing countries to achieve these goals.

In this context, it is imperative that commitments by developed countries, particularly on Official Development Assistance, market access and transfer of technology, are fulfilled. We cannot talk of a global partnership for development if promises are not translated into action. Our developed partners need to take urgent actions to promote flow of capital to developing countries, eliminate protectionist barriers to trade, and foster a fairer IPR regime that balances rewards for innovators with the common good of humankind in critical technologies.

Trade can play a key role in promoting development. It is imperative that the Doha round of trade negotiations is concluded successfully in a manner that keeps the development dimension at its core. In this context, we are encouraged by the success of the Ministerial meeting held earlier this month in New Delhi, and we look forward to the resumption of these negotiations.

Mr. Chairman,

Cooperation amongst fellow developing countries has played an important role in enhancing the cohesiveness of this Group. Traditional South-South cooperation in economic and technical issues has been strengthened by intra-South trade and investment flows. We thank the Government of Kenya for its

offer to host the forthcoming UN Conference on South-South cooperation. This will be an important occasion to examine how South-South cooperation can be further enhanced. However, we must forcefully reject efforts to present South-South cooperation initiatives through the prism of traditional North-South development cooperation. South-South cooperation must continue to be based on the core element of experience sharing amongst fellow developing countries.

In our efforts to strengthen our Group, we must continue to ensure that the needs and concerns of special groups amongst us - the Least Developed Countries, the Landlocked Developing Countries, the Small Island Developing States, the African countries and others are given importance.

Before concluding, Mr. Chairman, permit me to reiterate India's commitment to the G-77 and solidarity with its members. India will continue with its efforts to enhance and intensify such cooperation in future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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