

**General Debate
on**

**The role of South-South Cooperation
and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for
Sustainable Development: challenges and opportunities**

Statement by

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on South-South Cooperation**

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Mr. President and Distinguished Delegates,

Let me begin by expressing our gratitude to our hosts - Argentina - who in keeping with their tradition of leadership in promoting cooperation amongst the South, have been gracious with their hospitality and arrangements for this meeting.

2. We also are grateful to the Secretary General and UN Staff for the smooth conduct of this Conference.

Mr. President,

3. The cardinal principle of South-South cooperation, that brought us together 40 years ago to adopt the Buenos Aires Program of Action and still binds us together, is that sharing valuable capacities, experience and knowledge amongst developing countries can be a catalyst for development. It does not substitute or supplant but only supplements North-South cooperation.

Mr. President,

4. As opportunities for sharing the fruits of knowledge, technology and growth have changed, we all are now seeking new channels of cooperation, rather than conflict; new pathways for development, rather than destruction.

5. India, given our large, complex and diverse setting, has vast experience in nation-building experiments. Based on this, the core of our approach towards development cooperation, since the early years of our independence, has been a willingness to share with others traversing similar paths.

6. In recent years, India's development cooperation with fellow partners from the South has expanded.

7. Geographically, distance is no longer a deterrent to sharing for common benefit.

8. Formats of consolidating partnerships have broadened. They include Grant assistance, Lines of Credit, Small Development Projects, technical consultancy,

disaster relief, humanitarian assistance, educational scholarships and a range of capacity building programmes.

9. Under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme, about 13 thousand training slots are provided annually to nominees from 161 countries.

10. All LDCs are eligible for preferential market access in India under our 'Duty Free Tariff Preference Scheme'.

11. Over the last decade, India has extended Lines of Credit of about US \$ 25 billion to more than 60 countries of the South. All projects follow universally recognized norms. They do not create unsustainable debt burdens and ensure skill & technology transfer to help local communities maintain and sustain assets created.

12. Projects not only cover "traditional" sectors such as infrastructure, agriculture, education, health and rural development, but also new frontiers ranging from the "blue" economy to the "digital" economy. They encompass climate action activities such as through the International Solar Alliance and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief as is being undertaken by the Indian navy at Port Beira in Mozambique now. The South Asian satellite is testimony that the sky is no longer the limit when it comes to India's efforts at South-South cooperation among like-minded countries.

Mr. President,

13. The SDGs represent a confluence of core developmental priorities of the South and the normative agenda of the UN. The India-UN Development Partnership Fund established in June 2017 is a new mechanism contributing to the achievement of SDGs of fellow developing countries.

14. The UN Office of South-South Cooperation is the fund manager for this innovative “startup” initiative. The Fund already has projects in 39 countries. UN system entities take the lead in project implementation. We welcome partners from the South availing opportunities offered by this new modality.

Mr. President,

15. More and better South-South Cooperation now is on account of the global South enjoying more rapid and sustained economic growth. Yet, South-South Cooperation retains its distinct nature and values, as well as diversity of forms and flows. It defies easy categorization.

16. The trajectory of global growth and the declining share of ODA during the last decade or so has seen attempts to subsume South-South cooperation in the international aid architecture. Such efforts are not helpful. They do no justice to either its historical heritage or its future potential. Let us not venture to strait jacket South-South cooperation into a format that it cannot fit into.

Mr. President,

17. India remains committed to enhancing contributions to South-South solidarity in accordance with our means and on the basis of the principles & norms of South-South cooperation.
