

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Peter Thomson, Permanent Representative  
of the Republic of Fiji to the United Nations, Chair of the Group of 77 and China, at  
the opening session of the South Centre Conference “The South in the Global  
Economic Crisis and Reviewing Multilateral Negotiations”  
Geneva, 31 January 2013**

**Honourable Chairman of the Board of the South Centre,  
Honourable Chair of G77 Geneva Chapter,  
Executive Director of the South Centre,  
Mme Executive Secretary of ESCAP,  
Executive Secretary of G77,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. At the outset allow me to thank the South Centre for inviting me in my capacity as Chair of the Group of 77 and China, at this important Conference to reflect on the review of multilateralism and the process of rethinking development in the current Global economy. I would also like to express on my behalf and on behalf of G77 Executive Secretary appreciation to the South Centre for all the arrangements and preparations they have accomplished for the Conference.

2. Allow me also to acknowledge the important role that the South Centre has been playing over the years in supporting the negotiating capacity of the Group of 77 in addressing major policy issues relating to development and in assisting the honing of a Southern perspective. I wish to take this opportunity to affirm that the Executive Secretariat of the Group of 77 in New York will continue to work closely with the South Centre Secretariat in our shared aspirations for the developing world.

**Excellencies,  
Distinguished Participants,**

3. As you may recall, our leaders have expressed their commitment to multilateralism in the Doha Declaration adopted by the Second South Summit, held in Qatar from 12 to 16 June, 2005. Today the Group of 77 remains fully committed to multilateralism through the establishment of a more just and equitable international economic system that offers opportunities to all countries. This has always been the essence of the G77's work in the international landscape.

4. We have on many occasions stressed the importance of strengthening multilateralism and the viability of international action for development, especially in the present aftermath of the global economic and financial crisis. In this context, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 stated in their Declaration following their last meeting held in New York on September 28, 2012, that, and I quote, “for the United Nations to fulfill its role in global economic governance, the political will of all Member

States to commit to the United Nations processes, to multilateralism and its underlying values is critical”(end of quotation).

5. In essence, multilateralism is now at a crossroads. We believe the international community must take the right direction and commit to working in solidarity on a coordinated and comprehensive global response to global economic governance issues, we must take action to strengthen the role of the United Nations development system in responding to global crises and increasing its impact on development. For this the United Nations must be fully equipped with the resources and capabilities necessary to effectively and quickly address these great global challenges.

**Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

6. The economic and financial crisis has re-emphasized the centrality of inclusive multilateralism. We are here to remind the international community that strengthening multilateralism depends on the capacity of the international community to reflect in reality all the commitments to which it subscribed in the area of economic and social development at the various conferences and summits held over the two past decades under the aegis of the United Nations. Let us not forget the goals that we have committed the community of nations towards.

7. We believe strengthening of multilateralism should be achieved through an enhanced global partnership for development, thus providing more effective support to developing countries. This must be geared to enabling countries of the South to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

8. We all know that the recent global financial and economic crisis has had a profound impact on both developed and developing countries, and this underscores that we have a common interest in re-shaping the international economic and financial architecture. It is sad to acknowledge that many countries will not be able to achieve the MDGs because of the multidimensional world crisis. The global financial and economic crisis has worsened the situation in most developing countries, notably in Africa. It is against this background, that we must reaffirm it is in our mutual and common interest to rebuild the international economic and financial landscape. The only way we can see this task being accomplished is through committed multilateralism, with the UN system at its center playing its mandated leadership role.

9. As G-77, we have reaffirmed on many occasions that the crisis represents a critical occasion for the development partners to renew their political commitment towards economic and social development for the world as a whole. We must use these times to assess the progress we have made to date and identify the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits and conferences on economic and social development. We must also address the new and emerging challenges. Within

G77, we are committed to work to build consensus on putting in place an international economic system that meets the needs and aspirations of all developing countries.

10. In this context, I wish to call on our development partners to fulfill all agreed commitments from all the major United Nations summits and conferences in the economic, social and related fields within the context of a strengthened global partnership for development, based on the recognition of national leadership and ownership of development strategies. We must ensure that the economic and financial crisis is not used under any circumstances as an excuse to slow down or not fulfill the obligations and commitments by the developed partners towards the developing countries, including commitments related to international development assistance.

**Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

11. The Group of 77 has always attached fundamental importance in promoting South-South cooperation. This past decade has demonstrated the increasing impact and relevance of South-South cooperation. Significant progress has been registered in strengthening this vital form of cooperation, and we believe strongly that the time has come to broaden and strengthen further South-South cooperation as an effective way of promoting international cooperation for development, especially in the current international economic environment.

12. Our Group has always given South-South cooperation a special place in the development agenda. South-South cooperation remains our primary focus. The exchange of resources, technology and knowledge between developing nations has increased in importance and scope, and we believe strongly in South-South cooperation as a complement to North-South cooperation.

13. Therefore, the G77 will pursue the policy of consolidating the South-South cooperation agenda as one of the South's priorities. In this spirit, this year the Chair will convene in Fiji, from 7 to 9 May 2013, a meeting of the High-level Panel of Eminent Personalities of the South to address relevant development challenges, with special focus on the future landscape of South-South cooperation.

14. Cooperation among developing countries remains our great hope. The emerging new dynamism of the South provides new and potential opportunities for promoting South-South cooperation through trade, investment and technological cooperation. The potentiality of South-South cooperation continues to expand as much as the economic power grows in a number of developing countries. Therefore, South-South cooperation will continue to represent the best form of South-South solidarity and interdependence among the members of the Group of 77.

I wish Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, all success to your deliberations in this important Conference.

I thank you.