

Special Tribute Seminar in Honour of Dr. Gamani Corea

20 March 2014, 1500-1800h, Room XXV, *Palais des Nations*, United Nations Office at Geneva

Welcoming remarks by the moderator, Mr. Martin Khor, Executive Director, South Centre

Good afternoon dear friends,

We will now begin the proceedings for the Special Tribute Seminar that we are holding in honour of one of the great leaders, one of the great sons of the developing countries, our dear departed friend Dr. Gamani Corea, whom many of us know personally. Some of those of you who are a little bit younger, you know him by name and by reputation. He passed away as we know, late last year, and we have been trying to find the right time and opportunity to bring together those of us who have known him as a person, as a professional, as a diplomat and as a great leader not only of the South but of the international community. So we are very happy that all of you have made it today. This shows that this was the right time. We had indeed requests by some eminent persons among you to hold it at the time when they could be in Geneva. Many of you have come to Geneva especially for this event, and we thank you very much.

This special tribute seminar is organised by the South Centre. It may not be so well known but Dr. Gamani Corea, especially after he retired from UNCTAD, was very instrumental in the establishment and the operations of the South Commission and the South Centre. In this opening session which I am moderating we have three eminent speakers who will give an overview, tribute and remembrance of Gamani Corea: the Chairperson of the South Centre, H. E. Benjamin Mkapa; Dr. Kituyi, Secretary General of UNCTAD sends his apologies. He is not in Geneva today and he is represented by Dr. Richard Kozul-Wright, whom as you know is the Director of the Division on Globalization and Development Strategies (GDS) of UNCTAD; and H. E. Mr. Ravinatha Pandukabhaya Aryasinha, Ambassador, and Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka in Geneva. We thank him very much for supporting us in organising this event and for the lovely tea that we have had before we came in. So, without further ado may I invite H.E. Benjamin Mkapa to say a few words.