

Speaking Notes of President Mkapa at the South Conference “2015 and the South: Preparing for a Year of Uncertainty and International Summits” on 12 March, 2015

In its report, The Challenge to the South, in 1990, the South Commission noted that the developing countries, the South, bypassed by the benefits of prosperity and progress, exist on the periphery of the developed countries of the North.

“While most of the people of the North are affluent, most of the people of the South are poor; while the economies of the North are generally strong and resilient; those of the South are mostly weak and defenseless; while the countries in the North are, by and large, in control of their destinies, those of the South are very vulnerable to external factors and lacking in functional sovereignty.”

There has been no noticeable change in this North-South Configuration. Perhaps only the emergence of a North-South relationship within the European Union, demonstrated by the on-going Eurozone Crisis. If Europe can treat its poorer components so badly what hope is there of their treatment of the South?

- 1. There has been no reform in global governance. The plea for increase and balance in the membership of the UN Security Council has failed.**

The same can be said of the leadership and quota of the international financial institutions.

2. There has been little change in the global trade systems and patterns. On the contrary we are witnessing continuing marginalizing of poorer countries in the global economy in spite of the WTO, WIPO and so called preferences in favour of developing countries and Idcs. The impasse of the DOHA Round is ample evidence. There are cases where exports have increased but the industrial base of the country has shrivelled. And in some countries this has been accompanied by the exporting of more raw materials and primary commodities. Developed countries on the other hand continue to protect their markets through peak tariffs, subsidies especially in agriculture but also subsidies to their industries, and standards used as non-trade barriers against products from the South.

3. There is the phenomenon of mega regionals. The outcome of negotiations for these trading groups is to consolidate the supply of raw materials for the North by the South and to ensure markets of Northern products in the South. The EPAs and TPPA are cases in point. The promotion of Free Trade Agreements between developed countries such as TTIP will likely result in trade diversion and the erosion of preferences for most developing countries. Even worse, their Investment Rules, Public Procurement Rules, Intellectual Property and Competition Chapters in these agreements will, without doubt cause developing countries to lose much of their remaining policy space.

4. **The monitoring and tutoring of Political Democratization is being confined to developing countries. The operations of the ICC are witness, where so far cases concerning the fairness of elections and the perpetuation of acts against humanity have been visited almost wholly on developing countries and their leaders.**

5. **There is laxity on the part of the countries of the South in promoting South-South Cooperation. Efforts are also insufficient in forging common negotiating positions by South Countries.**

6. **Solidarity of the South is being tested by the attempts of the North to again divide and rule. For example the developed countries are attempting to have new categories of developing countries such as advanced developing countries to distinguish them from other developing countries and to put pressure to split them away during negotiations.**

7. **It is true that we must place priority on addressing the plight of the least developed countries and give the LDCs the priority in aid, in special and differential treatment in trade. But we also must recognize that three quarters of the world's poor people live in middle-income developing countries and this large population of the poor must be given due attention and resources. The unity of developing countries should not be broken by attempts to re-define and divide them.**

8. One notes resources placed to prevent new countries to become nuclear but none to get the nuclear countries to disarm. There are justified fears a new Cold War is rearing its ugly head. There is no palpable movement on the issue of Nuclear Disarmament. The developing countries, in particular the Idcs are encouraged to export Everything But Arms to the developed countries while they seek to export everything INCLUDING ARMS to us!!

9. Civil Wars, and the twists and turns of the so-called Arab Springs, and the politicization of Faith are threatening national unity and regional solidarity in the South.

10. The South-North migration across the Mediterranean is sowing the seeds of International Racism.

These and many other factors build a case for re-visiting “The Challenge to the South” to renew the spirit of South solidarity. Today’s leaders of the South must summon the will to reject, steadfastly, efforts, designs, rules, rounds and agreements that will result in our continued marginalisation, exploitation and under-development!

This is the mission of the South Centre that I am honoured to chair, to seek the unity of the South amidst our diversity. I hope our Conference today contributes to this mission.