

Suggested speaking notes for H.E Ravinatha Aryasinha
**Briefing for Developing Countries on Global Trends and Linkages to
Geneva Multilateral processes.**

13th February 2017, Room XXIV (Panel 2- 11.00 – 13.00 hrs)

Ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to Chair this panel in which we hope to discuss “Linkages between key Geneva multilateral processes and the South’s development interests.”

In addition to my role as Sri Lanka’s Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva, I am also happy to be here in the capacity of the Chair of the PRs of the Group of Fifteen, a grouping of developing nations representing a cross section of the Global South from Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The G-15 and the greater Global South, represented particularly through the G-77 and the China have benefited significantly through these briefings by the South Centre. I recall a similar symposium which was co-organised by the G-15 and the South Centre in February last year titled, “Current Global Economic Trends and Conditions and the International Development Policy Context After 2015.” That meeting took stock of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other landmark Agreements reached in 2015.

I am glad that today we are focusing on the prospects and the policy implications for developing countries of the outcomes of the various multilateral processes that are taking place, particularly in Geneva. I am once again reminded of an astute observation made by Dr. Martin Khor, The Executive Director of the South Centre back in 2014 at the time the development agenda was being finalised. He noted that although there was much focus on New York, the ‘real development agenda’ is actually being negotiated in Geneva and its implementation will in particular be focused in Geneva - within the numerous International Organisations. This observation is now ringing true. The multilateral processes within the implementation phase of the SDGs have very much shifted towards Geneva. This has also provided an opportunity for the Geneva based Missions and organisations to

play an active role in the Development Agenda and to be constructive partners in shaping their own national, regional and international programmes.

As the Global South addresses the many challenges ahead, I believe it is vital that we are steeped in reality, rather than be eventually disappointed by unrealistic expectations. To this end, it is not only important to discuss the numerous avenues of convergence, but also to frank about the many issues of divergence when dealing with the SDGs. Some of these differences may be on the North-South axis, some may be on a regional basis and some may even be between developing countries. I hope today's discussion will sensitize all of us to these stark realities with a view to help think of ways of overcoming such issues.

We have an excellent panel today. I thank them for taking their time and look forward to a constructive and educative session on the topic under reference.

Let me briefly introduce our panellist;

We will first hear from **Ms. Aileen Kwa and Dr. Viviana Munoz from the South Centre,**

We are also joined by three distinguished ambassadors with whom we will discuss their respective country experiences and also gather their own thoughts on the presentations.

I have the pleasure of welcoming **H.E. Dr. François Xavier Ngarambe, the Ambassador of Rwanda, H.E. Mr. Xavier Carim the Ambassador of South Africa, and H.E. Mr. Guilherme Patriota, the Ambassaor of Brazil** to this panel.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As you know the WTO members have agreed that the organization's Eleventh Ministerial Conference (MC11) will take place from 11 to 14 December 2017 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. You are aware that the Ministerial Conference, which is attended by trade ministers and other senior officials from the organization's 164 members, is the

highest decision-making body of the WTO. Under the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the WTO, the Ministerial Conference is to meet at least once every two years. The last Ministerial Meeting was held in Nairobi in December 2015 and we all were well briefed on its outcome by Ms. Aileen Kwa at a subsequent symposium in February 2016. I now have the pleasure of inviting Ms. Kwa to once again present an outlook for WTO MC11 and highlight the key issues for developing countries.

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Thank you Ms. Kwa. I now invite Dr. Viviana Munoz, Coordinator, Development, Innovation and Intellectual Property Programme at the South Centre to brief us on the outlook for **innovation and health issues and implications for developing countries.**

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The Ambassadors in our panel represent a cross section of the Global South. We will be enriched through the discussion of individual country experiences on the presentations made by our experts from the South Centre.

At a time when even the usual champions of open markets and free flow of goods and services are bending towards protectionism and economic nationalism it is important for developing countries to collectively face the challenges of this changing global economic order. In this context I believe that cohesive and comprehensive policies representing the general interest of developing countries at MC 11 and at the WTO will be mutually beneficial. Seeking greater cooperation and market opportunities among our countries is also vital in this regard.

With regard to the SDG's, I am particularly keen on seeing tangible progress in the quest towards achieving the stipulated targets. On the issue of health I am pleased to note that Sri Lanka has made significant progress. However with a rapidly aging population, as is the case around the world, healthcare is going to be a challenge for many developing nations. As we make significant progress in overcoming object

poverty, it is also important to note that simply living is not the natural human condition. Every human being is entitled by birth to a healthy life.

SDG 3 seeks to “ensure health and well-being for all, at every stage of life.” The Goal addresses all major health priorities, including reproductive, maternal and child health; communicable, non-communicable and environmental diseases; universal health coverage; and access for all to safe, effective, quality and affordable medicines and vaccines. It also calls for more research and development, increased health financing, and strengthened capacity of all countries in health risk reduction and management.

In implementing this Goal there is much we could learn from our fellow nations. While some of the challenges and solutions are unique for individual countries many issues are not. Therefore developing countries offer a vast resource of shared experiences that would benefit all of us.

I have the pleasure of inviting..... to share their thoughts on the topics under discussion.

- H.E. Dr. François Xavier Ngarambe, the Ambassador of Rwanda,
- H.E. Mr. Xavier Carim the Ambassador of South Africa,
- H.E. Mr. Guilherme Patriota, the Ambassador of Brazil.

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Open Forum – The floor is now open for questions
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Closing Remarks :

In conclusion, I wish to thank our excellent panellist this morning, Ms. Aileen Kwa and Dr.Viviana Munoz. I also wish to thank the Ambassadors of Rwanda, South Africa and Brazil for their insightful inputs.

I wish to also particularly thank Dr. Martin Khor the Exceptive Director and Mr. Vicente Paolo Yu the Deputy Executive Director of the South Centre for their

excellent leadership of the South Centre and for making constructive contributions to the many global processes on behalf of developing countries.

I thank you all for participation and bid you a good afternoon.