



**Statement by His Excellency Thabo Mbeki  
on the occasion of the meeting of the Board of the South Centre**

I was honoured by the Council of the South Centre in April 2018 with the appointment as the Chair of its Board. My first meeting as Chair of the Board was held on October 11<sup>th</sup> in Geneva. It allowed me to interact with the Board members and the Secretariat and to delineate a work program to continue and improve on the work done by the Centre under the guidance of my predecessor, former President of Tanzania, Benjamin Mkapa. The South Centre is unique among the South's institutions in that it is the sole multilateral intergovernmental policy research think-tank composed of and accountable to developing country Member States. It is in itself, a manifestation of South-South cooperation. The role of the Centre in supporting collective and individual actions in the international arena was recently recognized by the Ministerial Declaration of the Group of 77+China adopted in New York on 27 September 2018.

I deeply believe that the South Centre has a major role to play in assisting developing countries in the design of national policies and, particularly, in supporting them to effectively participate in international negotiating processes that are relevant to the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). From my new position, I will endeavour to strengthen, with the support of the members of the Board and the Secretariat, the Centre's capacity to respond to the various challenges facing developing countries, particularly in preserving the multilateral system and improving its development dimension. The Centre will continue to promote the common interests of developing countries in international fora, while recognizing the diversity in the South.

I encourage those countries that are already members of the South Centre to continue providing their support, including through their assessed contributions, to sustain the Centre's activities, and invite those developing countries that are not members yet, to consider joining the Centre to fully benefit from its policy research, advice, training and other activities, and to participate in a collective effort to strengthen the capacity of the South to achieve the SDGs.