



**Member States Statements at the 23rd Meeting of
the Council of Representatives of the South Centre**

Geneva, 27 April 2023

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Introduction

This document includes the statement made by H.E. Mr. Thabo Mbeki, Chairman of the South Centre Board under agenda item 5 of the meeting “Statement by the Chairman of the Board of the South Centre”, the report made by Dr. Carlos Correa, Executive Director of the South Centre under agenda item 4 “Activities and finances of the South Centre: Report by the Executive Director”, and also interventions made by member countries at the meeting under agenda item 8 “General Statements from Representatives”.

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD

STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE SOUTH CENTRE BOARD, THABO MBEKI

COUNCIL OF THE REPRESENTATIVES, 27 APRIL 2023

Mr. Convenor

Excellencies, Representatives of the South Centre Member States,
Members of the Board of the South Centre,
Executive Director and Members of the Secretariat,

After three years of health, economic and social crisis caused by COVID-19, we can finally meet again.

The deteriorating situation in developing countries, to which I alluded to in our previous meetings, has continued to worsen. The Global South, still recovering from the pandemic, was plunged into yet another situation aggravated by multiple crises and the war in the countries of the North. This has had a far reaching and adverse impact on our societies and economies, including an increase in poverty.

Despite the progress made in some developing countries, overall the gap between the global North and the global South has continued to widen. The lack of solidarity and the inward-looking self-serving policies of the North have only increased the global inequalities.

If COVID-19 has taught us anything, this is that we must completely rethink the value we place on public health and reconsider how global health must be governed in order to be better prepared in the future. It has also taught us that while the multilateral system needs to be invigorated, the South has to rely on its own strengths, and that through South-South Cooperation developing countries can help one another to address emergencies as well as the structural problems that obstruct the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

During these difficult times, the South Centre has continued to adapt and innovate in order to provide enhanced support and stand shoulder to shoulder with all developing countries. It has intensified cooperation with institutions and academics from the South, what has allowed the Centre to expand its policy-oriented research and capacity building activities. It has also supported the Global South in important multilateral negotiations taking place at several places, including but not limited to Geneva.

The Centre closely interacted with you, its Members States to identify and respond to your evolving needs and demands, with special focus on the various issues and challenges raised by COVID 19 and its effects. I am pleased to report, in this regard, that a new Work-Program has been approved by the Board to orient the activities of the Centre in the period 2023-2025.

Despite all the challenges, the Centre will continue to do its utmost to fulfil the mandate given by its founders. I am grateful for the financial support and cooperation of your governments and make an appeal for your continuous support to allow the Centre to remain active and have the resources to respond to the needs of the Global South in a timely and effectively manner.

Finally, I thank the staff of the Secretariat for its professionalism and commitment to the countries of the South.

Thank you for your attention.



Report of the Executive Director on South Centre's Activities and Finances in 2022¹

Excellencies, I thank you for your presence at this meeting. It is of great importance for us to have the guidance of the Centre's member countries in implementing the mandate given to us by its founders.

Despite expectations of economic recovery after the most severe phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, the year 2022 and likely 2023 will also be frustrating for most developing countries and their ambition to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Our countries will take time to fully recover from the devastating effects of the pandemic, which wiped out about 6% of the GDP of emerging and low-income economies. Clearly, the world is not on track to eliminate extreme poverty by 2030.

The negative impact of the pandemic, together with the new crises provoked by the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, the impact on food, fertilizer and energy supply, capital outflows and currency depreciation, as well as rising interest rates and inflation, have led to very weak fiscal positions in most developing countries. Many governments are unable to provide much-needed relief to the poor and most vulnerable, who are the hardest hit by the crises, and must resort to increased borrowing.

In the midst of these crises, extreme weather events are increasingly frequent and severely affect our countries, which are not responsible for the emissions that have caused them. The world is undergoing a major transition to a more sustainable economic development model. However, this transition is tinged with protectionism and nationalism. The radical green industrialization policies of some advanced economies, with massive subsidies to relocate production, threaten to further marginalize developing countries that do not have the capacity to provide similar state aid.

Trade protectionism and the use of restrictive measures by developed countries, including barriers to technology transfer and investment, as well as the use of massive industrial subsidies, have increased in recent years, negatively impacting trade, capital flows and drastically reducing international cooperation. Moreover, unilateral coercive measures, clearly incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations and the basic principles of international law, severely affect a large part of the population of the developing world.

In the face of these global challenges, the construction of a fairer and more inclusive multilateral system, the reform of the international financial architecture and effective - not merely proclaimed - international solidarity and cooperation are now more necessary than ever.

Excellencies, the activities carried out by the Centre in the course of 2022 are part of this context.

¹ This is an unofficial translation of the Report in Spanish made by the Executive Director at the 23rd Meeting of the Council of Representatives on 27 April 2023.

We recognize the diversity in the realities of the countries of the South; however, our ambition remains to strengthen their capacity not only to adopt appropriate policies at the national and regional levels, but also to find common denominators so that developing countries can effectively influence the outcomes of multilateral negotiations.

The adoption of the post-2020 Biodiversity Framework, which, among other things, addresses the issue of genetic sequence information in line with the objective of benefit sharing, is encouraging in this regard. So is the adoption of the new instrument on marine genetic resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction, recently adopted with the decisive intervention of the Group of 77+China in New York under the chairmanship of Cuba. We are happy that the South Centre has contributed to both processes, as well as for the revitalization efforts of that Group in Geneva, under the leadership of the distinguished ambassador of Tanzania.

Your Excellencies, the annual report and the Secretariat's report for this Council, circulated with other documents for this meeting, detail the many activities that the Centre has developed in 2022. I do not intend to recount those activities here.

As you and your colleagues can see from those reports, the Centre has continued to be very active in what we call our policy-oriented research pillar. In 2022 we published 33 Research Papers and 19 Policy Briefs, in addition to other documents. We continue to make efforts to ensure that these publications address the issues relevant to our countries, are based on objective information, and provide tools for policy definition and informed participation in international negotiations. We are pleased to note that in 2022 our publications were downloaded more than 17,000 times and that two books we have published have been accessed by more than 100,000 readers.

These publications include a variety of topics, such as taxation in the digital economy, climate change, South-South cooperation, health, intellectual property, investment, among others. It is important to note that a large number of them are the result of cooperation with other institutions and academics, mostly from developing countries. This responds to the model for the Centre defined by our founders: an organization that should remain small, non-bureaucratic, dynamic and with the capacity to expand its action and influence based on cooperation with other entities in the South.

With regard to the negotiation support pillar the Centre has continued to be active in multiple fields including, without being exhaustive:

- the important negotiations at the WHO on a treaty on pandemics and the International Health Regulations
- the negotiations on the exemption of vaccines and other products from TRIPS obligations
- the WIPO work program on limitations and exceptions to copyright on the basis of the timely and well-prepared proposal of the African Group
- negotiations in UNCITRAL Group III to reform the asymmetrical international investment regime as well as on the Investment Protocol to the African Continental Free Trade Agreement
- those on legally binding instruments on business and human rights and on the Right to Development
- those that have taken place around the so-called OECD Two-Pillar Solution, the impact of which we have quantified while offering more favorable alternatives for our countries.

Naturally, the Center has closely followed the negotiations at the WTO, where developing countries face numerous challenges including attempts to dilute special and differential treatment, proposals for reform of the organization and on new disciplines on trade and environment, lack of progress on agriculture and the deactivation of the appellate body.

On the other hand, the Centre has continued its advisory and capacity-building activities on numerous issues such as South-South Cooperation, financing for development and debt, TRIPS flexibilities, actions against antimicrobial resistance, especially in Africa, taxation of international corporations that make profits but do not pay taxes in our countries, among others.

Now, I will briefly refer to the financial situation of the South Centre: the flow of contributions from Member States has been substantially lower than in the previous year. This can be attributed to the difficulties that many of our members continue to experience as they emerge from the most critical phase of the pandemic, but we hope that member countries will be able to contribute this year and in the future to sustain the Centre, which is ultimately their own creation and belongs to them.

The low contributions from members were offset by contributions from projects with various entities that support the Centre, which resulted in a small surplus for the year 2022. As in previous years, no use has been made of the resources of the Capital Fund. The Centre's accounts have been audited with the addition that the Centre's management has taken a significant step forward with the application of international standards in its accounting.

New challenges have arisen, however, on the Centre's financial front, as the Swiss Government has informed that its contribution to pay for office rent will be discontinued as of 2023.

The activities carried out by the Secretariat would not have been possible without the guidance provided by the ambassadors and delegates at the frequent meetings we hold and are grateful for, without the guidance of this Council of Representatives and without the leadership of President Thabo Mbeki and the guidance of the members of the Governing Council. Nor would they have been possible without a competent and committed staff, the support of donor organizations funding various projects and the cooperation of a large number of institutions and experts.

Excellencies, beyond the constraints faced by developing countries, especially financially, our countries collectively have a significant weight in world GDP and manufacturing output; they have made significant progress in science and technology; they contribute to feeding a large proportion of the world's population. This weight must be more fully reflected in the multilateral arena. The South Centre will do its utmost to make this happen.



Mission Permanente
de la République d'Angola
Genève

**Statement by
Her Excellency Mrs. Margarida Izata
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Angola On**

23rd Meeting of the Council of Representative of the South Centre

27th of April 2023

15:00-18:00 Palais de Nations Room XXV

Mr. Chair,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate Ambassador **Ajit Kumar** (India) for his re-election as the Convenor of the Council and Ambassador **Ali Bahreini** (Iran) as the Vice-Convenor.

Angola welcomes the comprehensive Annual Report mainly on activities carried out by the South Centre on 2022 including its publications and the work in fields of **i) Capacity Building, ii) Climate Change, iii) Access to Medicines, iv) Global Health, v) Right to Development, vi) South-South and Triangular Cooperation, vii) Trade Development, viii) Development Finance, ix) International Investment Regime, x) Digital Transformation**, to name a few.

There is an increased urgency to combat climate change, as it is a direct opponent to sustainable social and economic development efforts, and there is an urgent need to better support those who are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and in adapting to it, because they tend to lack the funds and equipment to deal with the impacts they face.

We believe that strengthened **South-South and Triangular Cooperation** for development, as a complement not a substitute of the North-South cooperation, considering its potential to contribute to breaking the cycle of poverty, instability and development inequalities while promoting national development strategies with the support of partners can help developing countries in their efforts to build economic resilience, diversify economic structures, and balance climate actions.

Therefore, we support South Centre's continued work with the objective of contributing to build up a multilateral system that supports developing countries development efforts, and to the design and implementation of national and regional policies that address the key problems and vulnerabilities those countries face.

Thank you for your attention.

23rd Meeting of the Council of the Representatives of the South Centre Statement by Bolivia (Plurinational State of)

Thank you very much indeed for giving me the floor.

We thank and welcome the President of the South Centre Board, President Mbeki as well as Professor Carlos Correa for their report and analysis of the activities and the situation at the Centre. We also commend you, Mr. Kumar for your re-election as Convenor. We congratulate you on the excellent way in which you are guiding the work of the South Centre in these complex times.

The Government of Bolivia would like to take this opportunity to recall the technical support provided by South Centre to developing countries on issues of very complex new negotiations of the multilateral spheres, such as climate change, trade, investments, foreign debt, human rights and, on health and intellectual property more particularly, with a significant substantive academic input over the recent years. The multiple crises that we are facing mean that we have many challenges before us. So, the constant support of the South Centre is very important for us. The needs and overviews of the different situations as well as the inputs that we see from the global South, these must be reflected in discussions and negotiations in the different multilateral spheres. Institutions such as the South Centre are essential to work jointly cooperatively and to retain substantive results as we seek to build more just and equitable societies.

We take this opportunity to particularly welcome the cooperation from the South Centre provided to Bolivia working in joint efforts on many issues, such as tax, debt, access to medicines, intellectual property and the promotion that we have been doing recently of the Declaration of the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas, as well as to the many meetings that have been held during the past year. We would like to thank you for the technical advisory work and the constant technical advice that we were given and that really helped our work.

Thank you very much indeed.

23rd Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre
Statement by China

His Excellency Mr. Ajit Kumar, Convenor of the Council of Representatives, His Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki, Chairman of the Board, Dr. Carlos Correa, Executive Director,
Excellences and Distinguished delegates,

On behalf of Permanent Mission of China, I would like to take this opportunity to thank His Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki for his leadership and thank Dr. Carlos Correa, Executive Director, for presenting the Report of the South Centre.

2022 was a challenging year, especially for the south world. Whether it's the economy, food and energy crisis or climate change, challenges of all kinds have tested many of us. Despite this, we are pleased to see that the South Centre has continued to provide support to developing countries as they tackle critical issues like sustainable development, climate change, international tax matters, global public health, and debt problems. Through collaborations with other organizations and academic institutions, the South Centre has made significant contributions in various fields over the past year, and we appreciate their hard work and dedication.

Mr. Convenor,

In the face of a volatile international situation and rising global challenges, it is only through solidarity that we can overcome these

difficulties. Over the past ten years, the concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind has turned into a common vision. The future of mankind should be joint contribution and shared benefits to all countries. We should take an active part in reforming and building the global governance system, and firmly uphold the UN-centered international system and the international order based on international law.

China is always a staunch advocate for and an active contributor to global development. China will vigorously act on the Global Development Initiative (GDI) proposed by President Xi, and join hands to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a bid to build a community with a shared future for mankind.

Mr. Convenor,

China and South Center share the common interests in enhancing multilateralism and promoting global development. Over past years, we have built up solid cooperation relationship. China will continue to deeply engage in South-South cooperation, actively support international cooperation, mobilize more development resources, and work hand in hand with South Centre and other partners to overcome risks and challenges together.

We wish this Meeting a complete success.

Thank you all.



REPUBLICA DE CUBA
Misión Permanente ante la Oficina de las Naciones
Unidas en Ginebra y los Organismos Internacionales
con sede en Suiza

Intervención del Embajador de Cuba, Juan Antonio Quintanilla Román, en la Vigésima tercera reunión del Consejo de Representantes del Centro Sur. Ginebra, 27 de abril de 2023.

Estimado Sr. Carlos Correa,

Sr. Presidente de la Junta, S.E. Thabo Mbeki,

Sr. Convocante, S.E. Ajit Kumar

Distinguidos colegas,

En primer lugar, quisiera saludar al presidente de la Junta el Sr. Thabo Mbeki, ex Presidente de la hermana República de Sudáfrica y al Sr. Carlos Correa, Director Ejecutivo del Centro del Sur.

Agradezco las palabras introductorias del Convocante S.E. Ajit Kumar así como toda la información puesta a nuestra disposición.

El informe anual, así como el informe del director ejecutivo reflejan el decidido y permanente apoyo del Centro a los países en desarrollo y a sus principales

intereses. Es meritoria la labor ejecutada por el Centro en la generación de estudios, documentos de investigación y en la divulgación de literatura con rigurosos análisis y argumentos que son de alta utilidad para países como el nuestro. Confiamos en que esta labor continuará contribuyendo al logro de una posición cohesionada en los diversos foros de esta sede.

Cuba aprecia sinceramente el espacio regular de intercambio y reflexión que ofrece el Centro en temas de la OMC, la UNCTAD, la OMS, la OMPI y otras organizaciones y agencias de las Naciones Unidas.

Saludamos la decisión de Colombia de ratificar el Acuerdo de 1994 por el que se crea el Centro del Sur. Les confirmamos nuestra disposición a trabajar de conjunto en favor de los intereses del Sur.

Presidente:

Vivimos tiempos de crisis sistémicas y de grandes retos que el orden económico actual ha generado para el mundo en desarrollo. Crisis que se manifiestan en el ámbito sanitario, climático,

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energético, alimentario, económico, en la escalada de las tensiones geopolíticas y en formas renovadas de dominación y hegemonía.

Es evidente que los discretos progresos alcanzados en la implementación de la Agenda 2030 se encuentran en riesgo de ser revertidos. Somos testigos de un mundo post pandémico más dividido y egoísta.

Más de una treintena de medidas y sistemas de medidas coercitivas unilaterales contra países en desarrollo continúan en pleno vigor. Es una tendencia que lejos de revertirse, se agudiza.

En el caso de mi país, más del 80 % de la población cubana actual ha nacido bajo los efectos del bloqueo económico, comercial y financiero impuesto por el gobierno de los Estados Unidos. El bloqueo es el sistema de medidas coercitivas unilaterales más abarcador, complejo y prolongado que se haya impuesto contra país alguno en la historia.

El bloqueo es un acto deliberado de guerra económica con el propósito de impedir los ingresos financieros al país, destruir la capacidad del

gobierno para atender las necesidades de la población, hacer colapsar la economía y crear una situación de ingobernabilidad.

Como parte del bloqueo a Cuba, la persecución financiera se ha reforzado aún más con la arbitraria y fraudulenta inclusión de nuestro país en la lista unilateral del Departamento de Estado sobre supuestos países patrocinadores del terrorismo, que eleva exponencialmente el llamado Riesgo País, lo que implica un reforzamiento de las dificultades de Cuba para insertarse en el comercio internacional, realizar operaciones financieras y adquirir insumos básicos. Esa medida tiene un efecto coercitivo e intimidatorio que gravita sobre todos los ámbitos de la economía cubana.

Presidente:

De manera particular, Cuba otorga gran valor al apoyo del Centro en nuestra batalla contra el bloqueo económico, comercial y financiero impuesto por los EE.UU., que viola los principios fundamentales del Derecho Internacional y de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas, incluyendo las reglas

del Sistema Multilateral de Comercio y cuyos efectos se extienden de manera creciente a otros países.

Lamentablemente, este tipo de medidas coercitivas unilaterales, rechazadas por la inmensa mayoría de la comunidad internacional, están en auge en un contexto internacional en el que algunos intentan pisotear el multilateralismo y regresar a la ley de la selva.

Nuestra batalla no cesará y en ella contamos, como siempre, con los países del Sur y por supuesto con el Centro, como hasta ahora.

Señor Presidente,

Para continuar realizando tan importante labor, es sin dudas muy importante que el Centro Sur cuente con los recursos financieros adecuados y con expertos y funcionarios motivados y comprometidos con los intereses del Sur. A todos ellos, nuestro más sincero reconocimiento por sus aportes y denodada labor.

Cuba, aún en las tensas condiciones de su economía, condicionada por la guerra económica impuesta por los Estados Unidos reafirma, una vez más, su compromiso de continuar realizando todos los esfuerzos para honrar nuestra contribución financiera al presupuesto regular.

No puedo concluir sin hacer un reconocimiento particular al Centro, y a su Director ejecutivo en particular, por el decidido apoyo brindado a Cuba en su rol de presidente del Grupo de los 77 más China en Nueva York, responsabilidad asumida el pasado 12 de enero.

Como en aquella ocasión dijera el ministro de relaciones exteriores de Cuba, y cito *“Unidad es la palabra de orden en estos tiempos difíciles. Solo mediante la construcción de consensos podremos avanzar hacia la realización de nuestras legítimas aspiraciones de desarrollo.”* *“El momento actual no admite titubeos ni divisiones. Son tiempos de actuar unidos en defensa de nuestros preteridos reclamos.”*

Puede contar el Centro, y sus Miembros, con la disposición de Cuba para continuar trabajando con el Centro en pro del desarrollo de los países del Sur.

Muchas gracias.



REPUBLICA DE CUBA
Misión Permanente ante la Oficina de las Naciones
Unidas en Ginebra y los Organismos Internacionales
con sede en Suiza

Speech by the Ambassador of Cuba, Juan Antonio Quintanilla Román, at the Twenty-third Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre. Geneva, April 27, 2023.

Dear Mr. Carlos Correa,

Mr. Chairman of the Board, H.E. Thabo Mbeki,

Mr. Convener, H.E. Ajit Kumar

Distinguished Colleagues,

First of all, I would like to greet the Chairman of the Board Mr. Thabo Mbeki, former President of the sister Republic of South Africa and Mr. Carlos Correa, Executive Director of the South Centre.

I am grateful for the introductory remarks of the Convener, H.E. Ajit Kumar, as well as for all the information made available to us.

The annual report, as well as the report of the Executive Director, reflect the Centre's strong and permanent support to developing countries and their main interests. The work carried out by the Centre in the generation of studies, research documents and the dissemination of literature with rigorous analysis and arguments that are highly useful for countries such as ours is commendable. We trust that this work will continue to contribute to the achievement of a cohesive position in the various forums of this headquarters.

Cuba sincerely appreciates the regular space for exchange and reflection offered by the Centre on WTO, UNCTAD, WHO, WIPO and other United Nations organizations and agencies.

We welcome Colombia's decision to ratify the 1994 Agreement establishing the South Centre. We confirm our willingness to work together in favor of the interests of the South.

Mr. Chair,

We live in times of systemic crises and of great challenges that the current economic order has generated for the developing world. These crises are manifested in the health, climate, energy, food and economic spheres, in the escalation of geopolitical tensions and in renewed forms of domination and hegemony.

It is clear that the modest progress achieved in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is at risk of being reversed. We are witnessing a more divided and selfish post-pandemic world.

More than thirty measures and systems of unilateral coercive measures against developing countries are still in full force. It is a trend that, far from being reversed, is becoming more acute.

In the case of my country, more than 80% of the current Cuban population was born under the effects of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the government of the United States. The blockade is the most comprehensive, complex and prolonged system of unilateral coercive measures ever imposed against any country in history.

The blockade is a deliberate act of economic warfare with the purpose of preventing financial income to the country, destroying the

government's capacity to attend to the needs of the population, collapsing the economy and creating a situation of ungovernability.

As part of the blockade against Cuba, the financial persecution has been further reinforced with the arbitrary and fraudulent inclusion of our country in the State Department's unilateral list of alleged countries sponsoring terrorism, which exponentially raises the so-called Country Risk, which implies a reinforcement of Cuba's difficulties to enter international trade, carry out financial operations and acquire basic inputs. This measure has a coercive and intimidating effect that affects all areas of the Cuban economy.

Mr. Chair,

In a particular way, Cuba attaches great value to the Centre's support in our battle against the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the US, which violates the fundamental principles of International Law and the United Nations Charter, including the rules of the Multilateral Trading System and whose effects are increasingly extending to other countries.

Unfortunately, this type of unilateral coercive measures, rejected by the vast majority of the international community, are on the rise in an international context in which some are trying to trample on multilateralism and return to the law of the jungle.

Our battle will not cease and in it we count, as always, on the countries of the South and, of course, on the Centre, as we have done up to now.

Mr. Chair,

In order to continue to carry out such important work, it is undoubtedly very important that the South Centre has adequate financial resources and motivated experts and officials committed to the interests of the South. To all of them, our most sincere appreciation for their contributions and hard work.

Cuba, even in the tense conditions of its economy, conditioned by the economic war imposed by the United States, reaffirms, once again, its commitment to continue making every effort to honor our financial contribution to the regular budget.

I cannot conclude without making a particular acknowledgement to the Centre, and to its Executive Director in particular, for the determined support given to Cuba in its role as Chairman of the Group of 77 plus China in New York, a responsibility assumed last January 12.

As the Cuban foreign minister said on that occasion, and I quote, *"Unity is the word of order in these difficult times. Only through consensus building can we advance towards the realization of our legitimate aspirations for development." "The current moment does not admit hesitation or divisions. These are times to act united in defense of our cherished claims."*

The Centre, and its Members, can count on Cuba's willingness to continue working with the Centre for the development of the countries of the South.

Thank you very much.

23rd Meeting of the Council of the Representatives of the South Centre Statement by Egypt

Thank you, Mr. Convenor. I would like to start by congratulating you on your reelection and also through you to extend a warm welcome among us the distinguished President Thabo Mbeki, Chairman of the Board. And again, I would like to congratulate him and our brothers and sisters from South Africa for the Freedom Day and to congratulate our sister, the Ambassador of Tanzania for the Union Day of her country. And also, I would like to recognize the members of the Board and the distinguished Executive Director, Mr. Correa. I would like also to say as Egypt being a founding member, we attach great importance to the South Centre and to its strengthening, building on the vision of its founding fathers.

The world today needs the Centre more than ever. It has changed fundamentally over the past years by a series of consecutive global disruptions resulting from years of geopolitical and economic tension as well as the international community's failure to achieve sustainable development goals and to eradicate particularly hunger and achieving food security. These changes heighten more than ever the need and importance of the Centre and the need to strengthen South-South cooperation in international affairs and consolidate the efforts of the global South by analyzing the interrelated challenges of the developing countries, encouraging them to share their experience and providing intellectual and policy support to act collectively and in a unified manner at the international level.

In this context, I would like to commend the work of the South Centre during 2022 and also the Work Program for the period 2023 – 2025 and the willingness of the Centre to focus more on developments in global finance and external debt which are of great importance to my country and the global South at large. And in this regard, I would like to submit the following additional ideas.

First, focusing more on the processes related to common agenda, especially in subject matters that could have important implications on developing countries. For example, the latest 26th session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development held on 27th of March discussed the input for the WSIS plus 20 review and the potential outcomes that may emerge in the context of other ongoing international processes at the intersection of digitalization and development, such as the Summit of the Future and the Global Digital Compact. Two important resolutions have been adopted by this commission in this regard. In such discussions and negotiations, it could have been preferable to have a consolidated position by the countries of the global South.

Second, exploring the possibility of cooperation between the South Centre with UNCTAD on the best way for the implementation of the UNCTAD Secretary-General's proposal on an independent debt authority. An informal working group of experts from permanent missions with the participation of the South Centre and UNCTAD could be established to discuss this proposal.

Third, as the submission of the final draft text of the Convention on the Right to Development at the Human Rights Council approaches, we look forward for an analysis on the best way forward that ensure a wide consensus which is necessary for greater commitment in the implementation of this right.

Fourth, in the framework of the ongoing regional intersessional meetings held by the Group of Friends of the Chair of the Open Ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Transnational Cooperation and other Business Enterprises with respect to Human Rights, we support holding meetings facilitated by the South Centre for the G77 in order to encourage the active participation of the member states of the global South and to consider the possibility of reaching a consolidated position with regard to the draft legally binding instrument.

Fifth, we need the South Centre to engage further in issues discussed in the WTO, such as SDT, the eCommerce work program, the dispute settlement and the WTO reform. Developing countries need assistance and support to understand the background of technical matters raised during the meetings and to formulate common and strong positions so that they can participate effectively in the ongoing negotiations and policy deliberations

A stronger role of the South Centre in concluding policy-oriented research on key policy development issues is needed more than ever with the aim to support developing countries to effectively participate in the international negotiating processes, particularly in the context of the cascading global crisis. Egypt was honored to contribute in the work of this Centre through the distinguished membership of Dr Omar El-Arini in the Board for the past nine years. I would like to express our pride in his solid contribution, integrity and dedication and wish him all the best in his future endeavors. We are also proud to present the candidature of Ambassador Mohamed Edrees for the membership of the Board and we hope he will enjoy the support of the member states of the South Centre. I trust the Secretariat will be circulating the note verbal that we have addressed to the South Centre in this regard.

Finally, with regard to the contribution of the Government of Switzerland to the South Centre, let me recommend that a letter be addressed by the Chairperson of the Board who is an international figure that we all respect and admire in our collective names requesting the Swiss authorities to reconsider their decision to stop the contribution to the South Centre in 2023, bearing in mind the importance of the Centre and the established practice since the establishment of that Centre and its initial role as an international intergovernmental organization based in Geneva helping the countries of the global South to effectively contribute to a multilateral success story in international Geneva.

I thank you very much, Mr. Convenor.



**STATEMENT BY GHANA DELIVERED BY AKOSUA D. OKYERE-BADDOO,
CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES/ DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE,
THURSDAY, 27TH APRIL, 2023**

Hon. Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki, the distinguished Chairperson of the South Centre,

Ambassador Ajit Kumar, the distinguished Convener of the Centre,

The distinguished members of the Board,

Excellencies and distinguished delegates,

Thank you for the comprehensive reports. The reports have been helpful in understanding the main developments in the areas covered by the South Centre Work Programme and activities, carried out by the respective programmes including the achievements and challenges facing the Centre.

Despite these challenges, we note that the Centre has still been very resourceful. For developing country missions in Geneva, especially small missions, the Centre plays a vital role in providing the necessary support and strengthening of our negotiating capacity.

Ghana welcomes the positive contributions that the policy and legal analysis over the wide ranging areas competently covered by South Centre is making to Global South knowledge production. This is critical in the context of setting our own narrative and agenda in accordance with the SDGs and national/regional interests.

We would like to congratulate South Centre on its work and in particular recognise the contributions made by the Trade and Development department who provided invaluable inputs and guidance in the lead up to, and at the WTO's Twelfth Ministerial Conference. We will continue to count on their support as we prepare for the next Ministerial Conference

in February 2024 especially on issues relating to WTO Reform, Special and Differential Treatment, WTO Reform and Food Security.

Trade remains a part of the solution to the ongoing global recovery efforts. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) remains the world's largest free trade area bringing together the 55 countries belonging to the African Union and integrating the eight regional economic communities that currently exist in the various parts of Africa.

The overarching objective of the AfCFTA is to create a single continental market by liberalising trade in goods and services as well as the free movement of people and capital. It is expected that full implementation of the AfCFTA would soon take place, as negotiations on competition policy, investment and intellectual property intensify. The full implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) has the potential to promote Africa's development

It is vitally important for the member states to faithfully implement the provisions of the Agreement and also adopt trade facilitating measures. Without such measures, it would be difficult for the AfCFTA to realise its full potential.

We recognise the contributions of the Centre to the work of the AfCFTA and look forward to their assessment and capacity-building initiatives on Digital Trade in Africa.

We look forward to a continued engagement with the South Centre and other member states and we are confident that the South Centre will continue to pursue its mandate and serve as a key partner to developing countries.

I thank you for your kind attention.

23rd Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre Statement by India

**Excellency Thabo Mbeki, Chairperson of the Board,
Convenor of the Council, Members of the Board
Executive Director,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,**

I thank you Chair for giving me the floor.

2. I would like to begin by conveying our profound appreciation of the leadership of His Excellency Thabo Mbeki, Chairperson of the Board. I would also like to convey our gratitude to members of the Board for their invaluable contribution. I extend a warm welcome to new members of the Board.

3. I take this opportunity to convey our appreciation to our Convenor, Ambassador Ajit Kumar, for his efficient steering of the work of the Council of Representatives. I thank Executive Director, Dr. Carlos Correa, for his stewardship of the Centre's work. I also thank him for the comprehensive overview of the activities and finances of the South Centre in 2022.

4. These are difficult and uncertain times for the world at large, especially for the developing countries. The multiple crises, unfolding over past three years, have posed unprecedented challenges to us. The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a huge toll on human life globally. It has had a lasting socio-economic impact on countries of Global South, including acute debt distress. Ongoing conflicts have been a cause of profound concern for all of us due to food and energy insecurity as well as supply chain disruptions they have caused. Climate change-driven natural disasters have been markedly on the rise. Iniquitous responses to many of these crises by existing international institutions and multilateral organizations have exacerbated the divide between the Global North and the Global South.

5. Under these challenging circumstances, as you are aware, India assumed the Presidency of G-20 on 1st December 2022. Guided by our

commitment to protect and promote the interests of fellow developing countries, our Prime Minister had convened a virtual Voice of Global South Summit, in which 125 countries had participated. The purpose of the Summit was to understand clearly the concerns and priorities of the fellow developing countries with a view to reflect them in the deliberations and decisions under various mechanisms of G20.

6. India's priorities during its G20 Presidency accordingly reflect the concerns and the priorities of the developing countries: Accelerated, Inclusive & Resilient Growth; Accelerating Progress on SDGs; Technological Transformation & Digital Public Infrastructure; Delivering on Climate Action and Finance / LiFE; Stable Supply Chains of Food, Energy & Fertilizers; Multilateral Institutions for the 21st Century; and Women-led Development. We hope to be able to make concrete progress in all these areas.

7. South Centre has always attached a high priority to the issues impacting on growth and development of Global South in its research and advocacy work. In the context of multiple crises being faced by Global South, the work done by South Centre assumes more importance than ever. The policy briefs based on research and analysis undertaken by the Centre have been very valuable. Its efforts to support coordinated proposals in negotiations and promote our common interests in multilateral arena have been very fruitful.

8. India has always been a strong supporter of South Centre and its activities. We have been one of its key financial contributors. We believe that the Centre's functioning should be strengthened and its engagement with the Member States as well as International Organisations and research institutions should be intensified.

9. In our interactions with South Centre, including its Executive Director, we have been highlighting the topical issues that are of high priority for the developing countries where we would like the Centre to focus through engaging in research and analysis and preparation of policy briefs, negotiating briefs and concrete textual proposals. We seek continued support of South Centre in the negotiations currently underway in WHO to amend International Health Regulations and to conclude a new instrument on Pandemic Preparedness and Response. We also seek

South Centre's support on matters related to intellectual property rights in relations to various proposals being considered by WTO, WHO and WIPO. As regards WIPO, negotiations will soon begin to finalize International Treaties on Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge as well as Design Law. Support of South Centre in preparing negotiating briefs and textual proposal will be essential to enable the developing countries to participate effectively in these negotiations to protect their vital interests.

10. The matters pertaining to data have assumed a high importance. The concept of 'Data for Development' has been included on the Agenda of the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development. South Centre's support in highlighting the developing countries' perspectives, underlining the relevance of Data for Development, will be very helpful in shaping the eventual outcome of deliberations at the Commission.

11. As we are aware, a UN Global Digital Compact is being negotiated. The outcome of these negotiations will have far-reaching impact on the endeavors of the developing countries to use digital technologies for their socio-economic transformation. The Global Digital Compact must, therefore, reflect the perspectives of developing countries. Analysis and policy briefs by South Centre on various pillars of Global Digital Compact will be very useful reference for submissions by the developing countries.

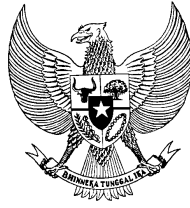
12. The matters related to climate finance and climate justice remain of high importance for the developing countries. We request South Centre to provide its policy advice and to prepare policy briefs to outline how the perspectives of developing countries should be addressed adequately in the global climate action.

13. We all are aware of the importance of the new generation of technologies and the profound impact that they would have on our growth and development as well as our society and polity. As the international community begins to set the norms for development as well as application of these technologies, including AI, we will benefit immensely from the briefs prepared by South Centre on issues pertaining to access to these technologies for the developing countries and I request South Centre to do so.

14. Before I conclude, I would like to thank the distinguished members of South Centre for the support that they have extended for re-election of H.E. Ambassador Ajit Kumar, as Convenor of the Council of Representatives of South Centre.

15. I would like to assure that Indian Mission in Geneva will continue to work with South Centre with a view to further align the priorities of South Centre with the evolving concerns and priorities of the developing countries.

16. I thank you for your kind attention and wish you a good evening.



Statement by

His Excellency Mr. Febrian A. Ruddyard

**Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary/Permanent Representative of
the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations, the World Trade
Organization, and other International Organizations in Geneva
at the Twenty-Third Meeting of the Council of Representatives of
the South Centre**

27 April 2023

**Chairperson of the Board, H.E. Thabo M. Mbeki,
Convenor of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre, H.E. Ajit Kumar
Executive Director of the South Centre, Dr. Carlos Correa,
Excellencies and Colleagues,**

1. At the outset, allow me to begin by thanking the Executive Director, Dr. Carlos Correa, and the Secretariat for organizing the meeting and circulating the meeting documents.
→ Indonesian delegation also would like to join the previous speakers in congratulating you, Mr. Convenor, on the way you have been steering the proceeding of the meeting.
2. We also would like to use this opportunity to extend our sincere appreciation to the Chairperson of the Board, Board Members, Convenor, Executive Director, and staff of the Center.
→ for their commendable in fulfilling the mandate and the role to provide the valuable support to the members of the South Centre
→ especially during the unprecedented challenging times in 2022.

3. Against this backdrop, the primary purpose of the establishment of the South Centre to evolve solutions to global challenges that work for the countries of the Global South is indeed crucial.

**Mr. Convenor,
Excellencies and Colleagues,**

4. I would like to share our view on the 2 (two) things:
5. **First**, on the work of South Center and Indonesia
6. The Republic of Indonesia has always valued the contribution of the South Centre at heart, especially in advancing the interest and concerns of the developing countries across international fora and issues.
7. Over the past year, our delegation highly appreciated the policy brief, research supports, thematic analysis, briefing, consultation, provided by the South Centre on multiple fronts of issues, from global health, access to vaccines, negotiation on international health regulations and pandemic treaty, intellectual property, genetic resources and traditional knowledge, human rights, trade negotiation, TRIPS waiver, fisheries subsidy negotiation, digital economy, and tax cooperation, among others.
8. It includes the ongoing negotiations and discussions at UNCTAD, WHO, WTO, and WIPO, where the Centre has contributed to the consultation and briefed the developing countries in highlighting the common concerns of the developing countries, which is valuable for us in formulating our approach and negotiation strategy.
9. Since the Centre's inception, there has been growing development of the relationship between Indonesia and the Centre that resulted in beneficial and far-reaching projects, notably by the memorandum of understanding between the Center and our think-tank at the Foreign Ministry last year.
10. South-South Cooperation has been an irreplaceable part of our foreign policy, which highlights the mutual respect for national sovereignty, equality, non-conditionality, and

national ownership and independence to accelerate the development and solidarity among developing countries.

11. I would like to share Indonesia priorities as the chair of ASEAN this year...bringing the voice of developing countries of Southeast Asian Nations.

a. First, the strengthening health architecture,

➔ A strengthened global health architecture is imperative and more urgent than ever for the global south countries, especially in vaccine development, access to vaccines, and building resilience toward future global health emergencies.

b. Second, the energy resilience

➔ Focusing on energy interconnectivity and the just transition to renewable energy that also pave the way to the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

c. Third, the digital transformation,

➔ Focusing on the digital transformation that is people-centered, safe, secure and relevant to the needs of end users to support post-pandemic economic recovery and stimulate innovation.

12. In hope to inspire the Centre for its future works... as the world now accelerating effort to achieve the SDG.

➔ And at the same time also start discussing on the future through the United Nations Secretary General's "**Our Common Agenda**",

➔ Indonesia supports the South Centre to provide advice and technical expertise on "Our Common Agenda", that is in line with the interest of South-South Countries.

13. **Second**, on the center's current work.

14. Indonesia welcomed the Executive Director's Report on the Centre program and its financial situation in 2022. We are pleased that the financial situation at the end of 2022 is in a healthy budget surplus, similar to the previous year. ‘

➔ Rest assured that Indonesia will continue contributing financially to the Centre to operationalize the program and mandate.

15. We, however, take note with concern that the Swiss Government's host country contribution to the Centre will be stopped next year. We sincerely hope that it will not affect the operationalization of the Centre and that the Centre may find other contributing donors.

**Mr. Convenor,
Excellencies and Colleagues,**

16. Indonesia delegation echoed with the statement of the Executive Director as reflected on the Report, where the collective effort should be taken, and multilateral cooperation must be enhanced to address major global challenges.
17. Indonesia is reaffirming its commitment to supporting the work of the South Centre in assisting the South-South Countries to recover from the crisis and to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Thank you.

Words: 841

Statement by H.E. Mr. Ali BAHREINI, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the UN office and other international organizations in Geneva, at the twenty-third meeting of Council of Representatives of the South Centre

27 April 2023

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Excellency MR. Tabo Embaki, Chairman of the Council

Ambassador Mr. Ajit Kumar, Convenor

Distinguished Dr. Carlos Corea, Executive Director

Distinguished members of the Board

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Mr. Chairman,

It gives me great pleasure to address this august gathering of the 23rd Council of Representatives of the South Center. I take this opportunity to express my utmost appreciation for the South Center's sustained efforts and impactful activities. The Center's steadfastness in supporting developing countries in enhancing their participation in different international fora and promoting their legitimate concerns are praiseworthy.

Mr. Chairman,

Before raising my views, I would like to congratulate Mr. Ambassador, Ajit Kumar for his re-election as Convenor, I firmly believe that His Excellency's wisdom and vision will pave the way for the South Center work and shed light on our path forward. I wish also to place on record my heartfelt gratitude to all distinguished Members of the South Center who supported me during the election process to day, as I am honored to have been elected as the Vice-Convenor of this

esteemed Center. I am humbled by your trust in me and will render my efforts to work towards fulfilling the expectations of the Council and the Members.

I am confident that together, we shall continue to work towards achieving the objectives of the South Center. I appreciate distinguished Ambassador of Zimbabwe for Proposing me as a candidate for the post of Vice-Convenor. We must endeavor to safeguard the interests of developing nations, promote cooperation and solidarity, and foster a climate conducive to socio-economic development in the South. I look forward to working closely with the Convenor, the Secretariat, and the members of this Council as well as members of the South Center towards achieving our shared goals.

Mr. Chairman,

The climate crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic and an increased number of conflicts around the world are among the cascading challenges and have placed the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in jeopardy, according to the Sustainable Development Goals Report 2022, released by the United Nations. Moreover, the effect of these challenges on developing countries are more complicated and severe than the developed partners. In such tumultuous situation, the role of the South Center is more crucial than ever.

As a part of the revitalization, the ongoing discussion, taking place in UNCTAD, I strongly believe that we should add South Center capacity to all key negotiations process to enable developing countries to negotiate crucial issues at their best and be more visible through making consensus and facilitating our unified positions.

Mr. Chairman,

I appreciate hard efforts of Mr. Carlos Corea, Executive Director of the Center and his able team on delivering high quality workshops, Seminars and briefing sessions on different areas of work specially on intellectual property rights, Trade, WTO reform, and his report also preparing the Report of Activities for 2022, and Report on Financial Situation of the South Centre for the year 2022.

Pertaining to the Thematic Work Program of the South Centre, 2023 to 2025, and after viewing and overviewing the work program, I would reiterate that it is a well-organized and inclusive program, encompassing wide variety of key issues. Having said that I would like to propose to include in the said work program, the issue of the Unilateral Economic and Financial Sanctions that United States imposed Illegally, unlawfully and unilaterally on countries of the South. The

South Center valuable analytical work and views on the effect of such sanctions on different areas inter alia economy, finance, investment would give us better notion how to deal with the implication of the sanctions in different fora.

Also given to importance of the meetings or course of negotiations, taking place, in all International entities positioned in Geneva, and due to lack of time and heavy tasks our diplomats are entrusted with, I would support more high quality briefing sessions before those meetings, focusing on the gist of issues and leading up to common positions and if possible consensus. Such an approach will surely boost the negotiation capacity of the South and enable us to defend our position against the West in more skillful manner.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, let me once again express my sincere appreciation to the South Center for its outstanding efforts and programs. I wish the Council every success in its deliberations and pray that the outcomes of this meeting will serve to further advance the South Center's goals and objectives. I am convinced that our collective strength and solidarity will enable us to overcome the challenges ahead and build a brighter future for all.

Thank you

Statement by Jamaica
23rd Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre
Room XXV, Palais des Nations
27th April 2023

Agenda Item 8: General Statement from Representatives

Thank you, Mr. Convenor, for giving me the floor.

At the outset, Jamaica wishes to thank the Executive Director, Dr. Carlos Correa for his detailed report on the major activities undertaken by the South Centre as well as an overview of future work plans.

My delegation also wishes to thank the Chairman of the Board for his statement and commend the Board for their contribution to the work of the Centre. Furthermore, we would also join others in congratulating both the Convenor and Vice-Convenor on their election.

Mr. Convenor,

The South Centre is an important intergovernmental organization for the Global South as its work is integral to promoting South–South Corporation, building capacity and offering policy advice for the problems and vulnerabilities faced by developing countries. Since we last met, the international development policy-related challenges have mushroomed and required even greater engagement by developing countries in multilateral discussions to ensure our interests, concerns and priorities are not sidelined. Jamaica, therefore, appreciates the efforts of the Centre in supporting developing countries through policy briefs, research, consultations with members, facilitation of dialogue among its membership, workshops and seminars all of which have been captured in its Annual Report 2022. The Centre also ensured its active presence and engagement in processes and events which are importance to members such as negotiations in international organizations in Geneva, including in the WHO and WTO, as well as at the COP27 which was held in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt.

Since the pandemic, we have seen an exponential increase in ecommerce and online business activities and it is even more imminent that developing countries pay greater attention to digitalization. The rapid evolution of digital landscape poses an increased risk for developing countries being further left behind due to lack of infrastructure as well as limited expertise. The work of the South Centre in this area is therefore critical and it has been noted that the Centre continues to monitor issues pertaining to e-commerce and other issues at the World Trade Organization (WTO), Internet governance and equity, the discussions on artificial intelligence (AI), data governance and frontier technologies at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), as well as digital health and pandemic response at the World

Health Organization (WHO). These issues are no longer issues of the future but are now apart of our current reality and we need to be informed so as to be able to engage on these issues and shape the ongoing international discourse.

Mr. Convenor,

Jamaica has also taken note of the Centre's work program for 2023-2025 and appreciates the foresight as well as the recognition of key thematic issues which are important to developing countries. Following the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, we are witnessing what has been described as "poly- crises" which will only further hamper and impede the economic and social advancements of the Global South. Developing countries like Jamaica will require additional policy advice and analysis to address these crises and strengthen our capacity to effectively participate in discussions on international development issues and multilateral negotiations. The Work Program has highlighted several areas which are of interest to Jamaica including implementation of the SDGs, climate change, international trade and intellectual property.

Over the next three years, there will be several major multilateral processes and conferences for which the continued policy briefs and technical briefings by the South Centre will be invaluable. These include:

- The Pandemic Treaty and amendments to the International Health Regulations - World Health Organizations (WHO);
- Diplomatic Conference to conclude an International Legal Instrument Relating to Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge Associated with Genetic Resources – World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) ;
- Preparation for the Thirteenth Ministerial Conference (MC13)- World Trade Organization (WTO) and
- Summit of the Future – United Nations

In addition to supporting delegates in Geneva, it would also be useful for the engagement of capital-based officials to increase their awareness and understanding of the issues being discussed. As the Centre continues its advocacy for developing countries, it is important that there is continued engagement with members to ensure their interests and priorities are being met and we are strengthening the cohesion amongst members.

Mr. Convenor,

In closing, Jamaica extends commendations to the Centre under the leadership of Mr. Correa for the continued assistance to developing countries with the capacity and expertise needed to promote our interests in various multilateral discussions with a view to preserving genuine multilateral governance.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.



STATEMENT BY MALAYSIA

THE 23RD MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SOUTH CENTRE

27 APRIL 2023

His Excellency Mr Chairperson of the Board

His Excellency Mr Convenor

Executive Director

Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates

Malaysia joins others in thanking the South Centre for organising today's meeting, as well as for preparing and presenting many important documents such as the Annual Report 2022, Report of the Executive Director and Report on Financial Situation for the year 2022.

2. We also convey our gratitude to the Chairperson, Board Members, Executive Director and the entire staff of the South Centre for their laudable work and commitment in fulfilling their mandate and role to support members of the South Centre. We are pleased that the South Centre continues to undertake numerous initiatives, particularly extensive research as well as advocacy and advice on international public policy issues of common interest to developing countries.

3. Based on the reports presented today, we are heartened to learn that promoting South-South Cooperation remains at the heart of the Centre's work. Moreover, the South Centre continues to be relevant to countries of the Global South, especially through its work on key development and global issues namely finance for development, global health, intellectual property, biodiversity, human rights, SDGs, climate change and tax cooperation. Malaysia believes that not only us, but all member

states of the South Centre have substantially benefited from the work produced by the South Centre.

4. Malaysia is pleased that, despite many challenges, the South Centre was able to end the Financial Year 2022 with a healthy budgetary surplus. However, we are concerned over the decision of the Government of Switzerland to discontinue its annual contribution to pay the rent of the Centre's office starting this year. In this vein, I wish to assure Malaysia's unwavering commitment to continue making our timely annual contribution.

5. Additionally, I wish to share that the Malaysian Tax Academy and South Centre will sign a Memorandum of Understanding on Tax Cooperation next week. The MOU is a culmination of continued and strategic cooperation between the two sides in recent years. It serves as a partnership modality for both sides to cooperate closely, especially through capacity building and training programmes, as well as joint research programmes on international taxation.

6. Finally, Malaysia is confident that the South Centre will continue to effectively fulfil its mandate and support developing countries in our response to the current global crises. We also stand ready to work with other member states to further enhance the role of the South Centre.

Thank you.



**23RD MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
THE SOUTH CENTRE**

**STATEMENT BY HE AMADEU DA CONCEICAO, AMBASSADOR
AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF
MOZAMBIQUE TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AND
OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA**

AGENDA ITEM 8

GENEVA, APRIL 27, 2023

Mr Convenor of the Council of Representatives, Ambassador Kumar

H.E Thabo Mbeki, Former President of South Africa and Chairman of the South Centre,

Executive Director, Carlos Correa,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At outset, Mozambique delegation would like to take this opportunity to commend H.E Dr Thabo Mbeki for his leadership and congratulates him and his country, South Africa, on the occasion of the Liberation Day, which we are celebrating today, April 27.

My delegation also joins previous speakers in congratulating the Ambassador of Iran for his election as Vice Convenor and Ambassador Kumar for his re-election as Convenor and for his excellent leadership role in directing our deliberations in this session. We extend our salutes to all members of the Board of the South Centre. We thank Dr Carlos Correa, the Executive Director for the presentation of the South Centre Report of Activities and Finances for the year 2022.

Mr Convenor,

We are meeting again in Geneva in the time that the world, particularly the developing countries are experiencing difficult challenges as reflected in the report of the Executive Director.

We should commend the South Centre for its continuous work, despite the challenges of our days. The South Centre is active in promoting debates on global issues and in providing expertise to our countries enabling them to better participate in discussions and negotiations of the most critical and complex issues of the international agenda such as climate change, food insecurity, energy and debt crisis, just to mention a few.

We encourage the South Centre to continue to assist our countries to effectively participate in equal manner in the multilateral processes and negotiations.

To conclude, Mr Convenor, Mozambique delegation reaffirms its Government's commitment to cooperate and work closely with the South Centre and member States for the achievement of its noble goals. Mozambique believes that the South Centre will continue to play a pivotal role in supporting countries of the global south to achieve the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Thank You very much, Mr Convenor!

**STATEMENT BY NIGERIA DURING THE TWENTY-THIRD
MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
SOUTH CENTRE, GENEVA, 27TH APRIL, 2023**

Chairperson of the Board,

Convener,

Vice Convener,

Executive Director of the South Centre,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Nigeria wishes to thank the Convener for convening the 23rd meeting of the South Centre Council of representatives. We wish to thank the Chairman and members of the Board for the elaborate work been done by the South centre. We also thank the Executive Director and the Secretariat for the detailed report and supporting documents for this meeting. We also wish to congratulate the Convener and Vice Convener on their re-elections.

Mr. Chair as we are aware, the world is currently facing a tripod of crisis flowing from uneven post pandemic recovery, geopolitical tensions and the negative effects of climate change. It is in finding solutions to these numerous challenges that we welcome the laudable work of the South Centre. The Centres work in areas of research, negotiations and technical assistance in critical areas affecting the global South is highly commendable.

My delegation associates with the collaboration of the South Centre in supporting developing countries to achieving the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals through its support in the advocacy in critical areas which include but not limited to its support in negotiations on the WHO International Instrument for Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response, the principles of Special but Differentiated treatment, Digital transformation for developing countries, adoption of uniform global taxation policies,

smooth transition of LDC's to middle income countries, negotiations of investment agreements such as the AfCFTA Investment Agreement, reform of the International financial architecture, adaptation and mitigation of climate change, transition to green economy and refocusing of multilateralism in ways that work for developing countries. It is our hope that the Centre continues to carry out its mandate in supporting the global south in surmounting its challenges and giving it a voice in the global arena.

As we deliberate in this meeting, we wish to use this opportunity to reiterate Nigeria's support and commitment to the South Centre for its good work and look forward for a fruitful outcome of this meeting.

I thank you for your kind attention.



**Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN
Geneva**

**Statement by Pakistan
at the
Twenty-Third Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre
(27 April 2023)**

Geneva, Switzerland

**Hon'ble Chairperson, (H. E. Thabo Mvuyelwa MBEKI)
Executive Director, (Dr. Carlos Correa)
Convener of the Council of Representatives, (Ambassador (Retd.) Ajit Kumar)
Distinguished Colleagues,**

Allow me to begin by thanking President Thabo Mbeki for his leadership. I also wish to recognize Executive Director, Dr. Carlos Correa, under whose guidance the South Centre continues to promote the common interests of developing countries.

The South Centre provides a valuable platform for us to exchange ideas, coordinate our positions, and advocate for policies that support our development objectives. Through its technical and policy advice, research, and analysis, the South Centre has helped us to deepen our understanding of the complex issues that we face and to develop effective strategies to address them.

We commend the South Centre for its commitment to promoting multilateralism and for its efforts to strengthen South-South cooperation including the ongoing technical support to developing countries on the Pandemic Treaty negotiation process at the World Health Organization (WHO).

We believe that the South Centre has a critical role to play in advancing the development agenda.

We also recognize that the current global context is marked by significant economic, social, and environmental challenges.

The cascading impacts of COVID-19 pandemic continue to exact a heavy toll on our economies, our societies, and our people, posing existential threat to some developing countries.

The impacts of climate change are becoming more evident with each passing day, and we are witnessing growing inequalities and injustices that threaten to undermine the gains we have made thus far. Last summer, Pakistan bore the brunt of climate-induced catastrophe facing 33 million and imposing an economic cost of over 30 billion dollars.

The persistence of exogenous shocks has exacerbated debt burdens of many developing countries, squeezed their fiscal space and shrunk their liquidity, thereby

eroding hard-won development gains and undermining their national capacities to achieve SDGs.

The debt-distressed countries, having braced the pandemic, inflation, energy shortages, now face much reduced fiscal space and confront hard choices when it comes to development and achieving SDGs.

The resulting global economic slowdown is both a cause and result of these crises, disrupting global supply chains particularly in food and energy sector and accelerating commodity prices.

Even as these crises affect every country, it is the developing countries which are disproportionately impacted by them due not only to several exogenous shocks but also because of the limitations imposed by the existing global economic and financial system.

Mr. Convener,

We also note with appreciation Dr Correa's presentation and report on the activities undertaken by the South Centre in the past year including on South-South Cooperation & finance for development, Global Health, Intellectual Property and Biodiversity, Sustainable Development and Climate Change, Trade and Development as well as Tax Cooperation.

Mr. Convener,

The Global South has several common interests and priorities, the advancement of which however demands greater coordination, collaboration and cooperation among our countries.

As representatives of the South Centre, we have a unique responsibility to champion the interests of developing countries and to ensure that our voices are heard on the global stage.

I would like to highlight some issues that South Center may prioritize in its program for the next year.

First, enhanced awareness raising and advocacy towards reform of International Economic and Financial Architecture: The South Centre may build on and amplify its support to the proposals for debt relief, creation of International Debt Authority, Multidimensional Vulnerability Index and an independent Global Credit Rating Agency.

Second, continued advocacy for capacity building and technical assistance to developing countries to ward off risks of claims arising from provisions of International Investment Agreements.

Third, continue to call for a flexible and balanced global intellectual property regime which does not hinder the production and equitable, affordable supply of lifesaving medicines and vaccines to the global South.

Fourth, South Centre has been doing an excellent job advocating for tax reforms that promote social justice and sustainable development in developing countries. The Centre should continue to provide developing countries policy proposals, guidance and expert opinion in the on-going reforms of the international tax system.

Fifth, while we appreciate South Centre advocacy for measures to address Illicit financial flows (IFFs), which have a significant impact on the economies and development prospects of developing countries, we encourage the Centre to continue working towards implementation of the recommendations of FACTI Panel and explore ways of supporting developing countries in retrieval of their stolen assets parked in developed countries.

Sixth, continue to provide policy, legal and technical advice across the range of WTO issues including development issues, services, e-commerce, fisheries agriculture, WTO reform and MC12 Outcome Document. We put on record our appreciation for the Centre for its technical and legislative assistance on effective utilization of TRIPS flexibilities in the Global South, including in Pakistan.

Seventh, continue to advise and guide the developing countries on the technical aspects of negotiations on the Pandemic Treaty.

Eight, intensify its engagement with G77 and NAM and continue to provide inputs on strengthening the provisions of the draft legal instrument on the right to development, investment protection and reform of investor-state dispute resolution system; and mobilizing the support for fulfilment of financing commitments in the Paris Agreement.

Finally, we encourage South Centre to expand its collaboration with other institutions and scholars of the South.

Mr. Convener,

We encourage the South Centre to continue its vital work in supporting the development aspirations of its member states and in advancing a more equitable and sustainable global order. We reaffirm our commitment to working in partnership with the South Centre and with each other to address the common challenges facing our countries and our peoples.

Thank you.



PHILIPPINES

23rd Meeting of the Council of Representatives to the South Centre

23 April 2023

STATEMENT

*Delivered by Ms. Hannah Zulayka L. Abubakar, Attaché,
Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Philippines to the
United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva*

Good afternoon, Excellencies, Colleagues.

I would like to begin by expressing our appreciation for the updates provided by the South Centre on matters pertaining to its work. It is important that Member Countries are apprised of these developments. I also join other delegations in congratulating your re-election Mr. Convenor and the election of the Vice-Convenor.

I reiterate the Philippines' support to the Centre, especially in its work in helping achieve Sustainable Development Goals and supporting countries and institutions in the South by providing policy and technical advice and capacity building, among others.

Thank you.



**Statement by South Africa at the 23rd Meeting of the Council of
Representatives of the South Centre to be held on 27 April at 15:00-18:00 at the
Palais des Nations, Room XXV**

Honourable Chairperson of the Board, H.E. Thabo Mbeki

Executive Director, Dr Carlos Correa

Mr Convenor, Ambassador (Retd) Ajit Kumar

Members of the Board

Distinguished delegates

Mr Convenor,

At the outset, let me thank the Chairperson of the Board, H.E President Thabo Mbeki, for his stewardship of the South Centre and express appreciation for the great work done by the Board Members and Dr Carlos Correa as the Executive Director of the South Centre.

South Africa, as the founding member of the South Centre, has always valued the role played by the Centre as an independent think tank that assists developing countries by providing policy advice and technical support.

We appreciate the expertise and the work of the South Centre in providing intellectual thought and policy analysis, which are reflective of the needs and aspirations of developing countries.

We appreciate Dr Correa's presentation and the report on the activities undertaken by the South Centre in the past year. We take note of the financial situation of the South Centre, and we further welcome the statement by the Chairman of the Board of the South Centre.

Mr Convenor,

We agree with the report that the Global South is facing multiple challenges, notably unabated inequalities, growing poverty and external debt, financial instability, unequal

access to the means necessary to fight the pandemic, weak international solidarity, developed countries' reluctance to assume their common but differentiated responsibilities and the onslaught against the multilateral system and the development pillar in the World Trade Organization.

Despite these challenges, we must continue to pursue our core priorities of realizing the SDGs through the effective realization of human rights, the provision of universal access to health, a systemic fight against poverty and inequality, and the expansion of local innovation and production capabilities in developing countries while safeguarding our policy space.

Therefore, South Centre has a crucial role to play in providing the platform and counsel towards building improved South-South Solidarity so that it can retain its relevance as a critical thought leader and enabler for development in our developing countries.

The South Centre has organized numerous workshops and informative sessions which have assisted many developing countries in formulating common positions in various multilateral fora, such as World Trade Organization (WTO), World Health Organization (WHO), International Telecommunication (ITU), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), amongst others.

South Africa has gained a lot from the cooperation with the South Centre and the workshops which were organized in preparation for the World Trade Organization (WTO) 12th Ministerial Conference (MC 12) held in June 2022 and the Climate Change Conference (COP 27) held at the Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt amongst others.

The Trade Unit has provided immense support in the lead-up to and at the WTO MC12, and we will continue to rely on the good offices of the South Centre for their efforts in strengthening our negotiating capacity and helping to build essential coalitions, and enhancing our awareness on new issues as we prepare for the next WTO Ministerial Conference.

We would like to recognize the contributions made by the Centre, notably the valuable inputs, counsel and guidance provided by the experts of the Centre on several critical areas of the current WTO agenda, such as Carbon Pricing, Development and Special and Differential Treatment, Agriculture; Fisheries; WTO Reform and the transformation of the WTO, the Work Programme on E-commerce and the moratorium on customs duties on electronic transmissions.

We welcome the continued support to ongoing negotiations in the WTO reforms and the two Member states led processes at the World Health Organization (WHO), the Intergovernmental Negotiation Body, as well as the targeted amendments of the International Health Regulation (IHR (2005) to draft and negotiate a convention, agreement or other international instruments on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, among other things. Regrettably, the Group of 77 and China could not reach a consensus to participate in the WHO - Intergovernmental Negotiation Body using its majority.

We welcome the recent briefing session and a meeting convened by the South Centre on matters related to the World Intellectual Property Organisation, such as the

Committee on Development and Intellectual Property, and on the Copyrights Limitations & Exceptions under the Standing Committee on Copyrights and Related Rights.

In September 2021, the Secretary-General released his report “Our Common Agenda,” which proposes a Global Digital Compact to be agreed upon at the Summit of the Future in September 2024 through a technology track involving all stakeholders. We believe that the South Centre could play a vital role by developing an issue paper which can serve as a guide for countries of the Global South at the negotiations for developing the Global Digital Compact in New York.

We also welcome South Centre, which continues to place on the issue of Illicit Financial Flows. The outflow of revenue through illicit means drains our economies of much-needed domestic resources to fund sustainable development.

In this regard welcome South Centre’s work on Tax Initiative in supporting the ongoing negotiations in the Two Pillar solution, which have resulted in changes to many of the rules in favour of developing countries. We appreciate the support to developing countries in the UN Tax Committee, which resulted in significant steps forward on issues like taxing computer software, international shipping, minimum taxation in tax treaties and the development of a UN Multilateral Instrument.

Mr Convenor,

In conclusion, South Africa attaches great importance to the South Centre. We stand ready to continue cooperating with the Centre and its membership, guided by the principles of unity, solidarity, collaboration and cooperation. We will continue to contribute constructively to discussions and activities of the South Centre, and we reaffirm our commitment to continue making every effort to honour our financial contribution to the Centre’s regular budget.

Finally, we fully endorse the recommendations presented by His Excellency President Mbeki, the Chairperson of the Board, regarding appointments to the Board of the South Centre. These essential appointments will ensure that the South Centre continues its development work.

I Thank You.

**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO
THE UNITED NATIONS – GENEVA**



**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E MAIMUMA KIBENGA TARISHI, AMBASSADOR
AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF
TANZANIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE IN GENEVA AT THE 22ND MEETING
OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SOUTH CENTRE,
GENEVA, 27TH APRIL 2023**

Mr. Convenor,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak before the Council of Representatives of the South Centre. First and foremost, allow me to express my gratitude to Members of the Board of South Centre for attending this August meeting and the Chairman of the Board, His Excellency Thabo Mbeki, the former President of the Republic of South Africa for his leadership to the Centre. Allow me to also express my profound gratitude and appreciation to the Executive Director of the Centre and his staff for their relentless efforts and commitment to support members and their active participation in the multilateral engagements.

Mr. Convenor,

I would also like to commend the Executive Director and the Centre for the insightful report. My delegation was among the beneficiaries of the technical assistance provided by the centre in 2022, mainly through publications, policy briefs and capacity building activities.

Mr. Convenor,

I would like to elaborate a few areas my delegation has benefited from the centre's support as follows;

On WTO issues; My delegation benefited from the Centre's policy and strategic advices, briefing notes and analysis, which helped shape our positions on various negotiated issues before and during the MC12. The presence and accessibility of the Centre's staff at the MC12 venues was crucial for timely technical and tactical support during and before we adopted the Ministerial outcomes particularly on fisheries, pandemic response, food security, e-commerce work programme and moratorium, TRIPS decision, and export restrictions on WFP food purchases. We successfully completed the MC12 and are grateful for the support provided by the Centre throughout this period.

We are now heading towards MC13 and we are looking forward to your continued support as it is a continuous process. In the MC13, We have a lot of issues at stake, for instance,

in the second round of fisheries negotiations, we as developing countries, must secure special and differential treatment to support fisheries sector development.

Another issue is the expanding agenda on trade and environment in the WTO, notably carbon pricing. Carbon pricing is forcefully emerging in the WTO and if adopted, will surely devastate our export growth. We are counting on the Centre's support to address this issue. Last but not least, WTO Reform is crucial and we look forward to the guidance provided by the South Centre's Trade Unit to guide members as we seek to articulate and defend our interests.

Mr. Convenor,

On UNCTAD issues, first and foremost we thank the Centre for the recent comprehensive briefing done by Dr. Corea to the Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives of the Group of 77 and China on the WHO Intergovernmental Negotiation Body (INB) on the Pandemic Treaty. Although, we did not achieve our goal of agreeing to negotiate with one voice as a whole group of 77 and China, the briefing was a wakeup call to the members that there is a window for the group to negotiate with one voice.

Another important area which the South Centre has continued to be instrumental in is the work being carried out on taxation. The Bridgetown Covenant reckons the importance of an effective domestic and international taxation system for domestic resource mobilization as a means for a country to achieve national development objectives and be able to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. Developing countries continue to face illicit financial flows and inappropriate tax practices such as evasion, avoidance and capital flight which must be dealt with appropriately by instilling good practices, policies and measures. We are happy to learn that the Centre is taking up more work on Illicit Financial Flows from a trade and misinvoicing perspective. My delegation continues to benefit from the Centre's work available through research papers and policy briefs on this matter. Similarly, we will continue to take heed to the Centre's advice for developing countries to adjust their taxation system that accommodates digital economic activities such as electronic transmittable goods as one area of broadening the tax base.

My delegation also takes note of the several activities and publications made by the Centre relevant to UNCTAD's Bridgetown Covenant mandates which mainly focused on

Climate Change and its impact to the developing world. My delegation benefited from the awareness activities done by the centre on the implications of the EU Carbon Border Adjustment Measures (CBAM) and the emerging Carbon Pricing frameworks entering the trade domain.

Mr. Convenor,

On WHO issues, the Centre continues to support members in the WHO-INB Pandemic treaty negotiations and the ongoing review of the International Health Regulations (2005). The Centre also continues to advocate and raise awareness on the urgency to address the antimicrobial resistance (AMR), a major threat to healthcare and food production.

Mr. Convenor,

I am also aware of the Centre's work carried out in other areas in 2022 such UNEP, WIPO, UNCITRAL, AfCFTA and Human Rights. We commend the centre for their work as the aforementioned areas are equally important to us and their advancement must entrench interests of the South.

Mr. Convenor,

On the financial situation of the Centre, we have noted with concern the slow flow of contributions from Member States in 2022, recording a small surplus. We welcome and encourage the Centre to continue with its creativity to attract string-free project contributions from genuine partners and donors as it was done in 2022. We commend the Centre's initiative to constitute an Ambassadorial Task Force to look on the long-term financial sustainability of the Centre.

Further, we have noted with dismay the emerging financial challenges following the Government of Switzerland's withdrawal of its contribution to the Centre's office rent payment as from 2023. On this matter, we would like to urge the Centre in collaboration with the Task Force to intensively engage with the Swiss Government through the Swiss Mission here in Geneva or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bern, to better understand the dynamics of the matter. It would be useful for Members to be informed regularly of such developments so that we may offer our views and understand the geopolitical implications and context when such actions are taken.

Finally, I would like to conclude my brief remarks by thanking you Convenor and all participants for your kind attention.

Asante Sana.

23nd Meeting Council of Representatives of the South Centre

STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

Delivered by Amb. Marcel R. Tibaleka, 27 April 2023

Hon. President Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki, Chairman of the South Centre Board,
Ambassador Ajit Kumar, Distinguished Convenor of the Board,
Distinguished Members of the Board,
Excellencies and distinguished delegates,

The Delegation of Uganda extends its thanks to Ambassador Ajit Kumar, as well as to the Executive Director for convening this meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre.

The South Centre is unique as the independent inter-governmental think-tank of developing countries and its role in promoting South solidarity and consciousness is invaluable if we are to reverse the narrowing of the development agenda witnessed over the past several years, as well as a growing gap between the development needs of LDCs and the level of financing available.

The Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5), which concluded last month in Doha, was an important political commitment but also a reminder that the world cannot achieve the Sustainable Development Goals without the 46 least developed countries (LDCs) who comprise about 14% of the global population but

comprise more than 50% of the world's extremely poor, with the GDP per capita for the LDC group representing less than 10% of the world average in 2022. LDCs also account for only 1.3% of global gross domestic product, 0.12% of global trade in goods receive just 1.4% of total foreign direct investment and trade under 1% of world merchandise exports.

We are also encouraged by the recent constructive discussions held in the WTO on Reform focussing on Development and the revealed consensus among WTO Members on the centrality of development as a fundamental objective of the multilateral trading system, including that Special and Differential Treatment remains at the core of existing and future agreements.

We hope we can build on this momentum to finally address the systemic nature of the issues marginalising developing countries and LDCs participation in global trade so as to foster better functioning of institutions across all pillars and create a level playing field that will unlock development opportunities for all.

The stakes are very high and we see a positive role for the Centre in championing a multilateral trading system that responds to the needs of developing countries and LDCs and capacitating trade negotiators with technical and strategic advice to advance their development priorities.

The Centre should to play a leading role in enhancing the visibility and global coverage of our pro-development agenda, including ensuring that development forms the axis of the WTO's reform agenda, which should among other things, help to remedy the problems associated with implementation of special and differential treatment and provide for the requisite policy space that developing and least developed countries so badly need for the transformation of their economies and peoples.

My government therefore welcomes the South Centre's Work Programme for 2023-25 and thematic issues therein that are relevant and should help facilitate the discussions that need to be had around development.

Chair, as a small mission in Geneva, allow us to also recognise the important work carried out by the Centre in the Trade Programme. They have provided us with important technical and legal analysis on the aspects relating to the cross-cutting development agenda in the WTO, including during preparations of the 12th Ministerial Conference of the WTO, where Uganda served as one of the vice-chairs.

We hope the Centre will continue to utilize its convening power to bring developing countries together on the various multilateral engagements in the lead up to the WTO's 13th Ministerial Conference, now scheduled for February 2024.

I thank you!



**MENSAJE DEL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE LA REPUBLICA
BOLIVARIANA DE VENEZUELA,
S.E. EMBAJADOR HECTOR CONSTANT ROSALES,
ANTE LA VIGESIMOTERCERA REUNION DEL CONSEJO DE
REPRESENTANTES DEL CENTRO SUR**

JUEVES, 27 DE ABRIL DE 2023

Excelentísimo Señor Thabo Mbeki, Presidente de la Junta del Centro Sur, Embajador Ajit Kumar, Convocante del Consejo de Representantes, Apreciado Profesor Carlos Correa, Director Ejecutivo del Centro Sur, Distinguidos Miembros de la Junta Directiva, Embajadores y Colegas,

Felicitemos a Sudáfrica por la celebración del Día de la Libertad, a Tanzania por su aniversario y a todos los Miembros en general por el Día Internacional del Multilateralismo y Diplomacia para la Paz.

Queremos iniciar nuestra intervención felicitando al Convocante, Embajador Ajit Kumar, por su reelección para un nuevo periodo, así como al Embajador Ali Bahreini, por su elección como Vice-Convocante. Cuentan ambos con el pleno respaldo de mi Delegación. También nos complace la ampliación de la representación de América Latina y el Caribe en la incorporación del expresidente Leonel Fernández a la Junta.

Por otra parte, al agradecer el informe presentado por el Convocador sobre el estatus de ratificación de nuevos miembros, queremos dar la más cordial bienvenida a la hermana República de Colombia. Estamos seguros que su reingreso fortalecerá la labor del Centro Sur en favor del desarrollo de nuestros pueblos.

Venezuela ha escuchado con atención el informe presentado por el Director Ejecutivo sobre las actividades del Centro y su situación financiera. En este sentido, queremos dejar constancia de nuestro pleno respaldo y reconocimiento a las labores de investigación, análisis y asistencia técnica que ofrece el Centro Sur para apoyarnos y mantenernos cohesionados frente a los impostergables desafíos que los países en desarrollo debemos enfrentar.

Especial mención merece el apoyo analítico transversal en materia de propiedad intelectual. El año pasado, autoridades del Servicios Autónomo de Propiedad Intelectual de mi país sostuvieron dos encuentros con el Centro Sur y existe la oferta del Centro Sur de apoyar a Venezuela en materia de actualización legislativa, adicionalmente se llevó a cabo una videoconferencia con el Centro Sur sobre capacitación en materia de patentes.

Igual reconocimiento merece el acompañamiento cotidiano del Centro Sur en lo que respecta a la agenda de la Organización Mundial del Comercio, en particular en lo

relativo a las negociaciones sobre subvenciones a la pesca, agricultura, reforma y ADPICs.

También queremos agradecer la labor analítica recibida en los temas de la Agenda de la Organización Mundial de la Salud. En particular, todo el minucioso análisis que se viene realizando con respecto a las complejas negociaciones intergubernamentales para Redactar y Negociar un Convenio, Acuerdo u otro instrumento internacional sobre Prevención y Respuestas frente a Pandemias.

Asimismo, queremos expresar nuestro agradecimiento por la inclusión en el programa de trabajo del Centro del Sur 2023-2025 de una nueva sección temática (No. 14) sobre Medidas Coercitivas Unilaterales. Como todos bien conocen, la utilización de ilegales Medidas Coercitivas Unilaterales (UCMs) se ha convertido en una de las armas más importantes utilizadas por países hegemónicos para forzar un marco internacional que responda a sus intereses. Los MCU, ilegales según el derecho internacional y la Carta de la ONU, impactan severamente a los países en desarrollo, afectando no solo sus economías sino también limitando su capacidad para proteger y promover las necesidades básicas y los derechos fundamentales de su población.

Estimamos importante que el Centro Sur se sume a los esfuerzos que se vienen realizando para visibilizar y concientizar, desde una perspectiva académica, sobre los efectos de las criminales MCU, no solo para los países que las sufren, sino también para toda la agenda de desarrollo. Entre posibles iniciativas a ser emprendidas, nos permitimos destacar la necesidad de un levantamiento de una base de datos sobre el tema, el desarrollo de una metodología para su estudio sistemático, una mayor narrativa del tema en las diversas agencias especializadas de las Naciones Unidas, acercamiento con instituciones académicas en Ginebra y de una estrategia de divulgación de sus efectos criminales, a través de seminarios y actividades académicas.

Observamos que el programa de trabajo para el 2023-2025 está concebido para permitir que el Centro Sur, de manera efectiva y oportuna, pueda responder, dentro de sus posibilidades y en el contexto de su mandato, a las demandas de sus miembros y de otros países en desarrollo, plenamente conscientes de la diversidad en las estrategias que persiguen para lograr los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible.

No quisiera concluir sin antes reiterar nuestro compromiso con el Centro Sur, con sus objetivos y principios, así como con su vigencia y trascendencia como articulador de los intereses del Sur. Venezuela continuará en su vocación anti-hegemónica y defensora de los países del Sur, para lo cual ofrece siempre su amistad y estima a todos los países aquí presentes.

Muchas gracias.

Unofficial translation



**MESSAGE FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOLIVARIAN
REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA,
H.E. AMBASSADOR HECTOR CONSTANT ROSALES,
TO THE TWENTY-THIRD MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL REGION OF VENEZUELA**

THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2023

**Your Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki, Chairman of the Board of the South Centre,
Ambassador Ajit Kumar, Convener of the Council of Representatives,
Professor Carlos Correa, Executive Director of the South Centre, Distinguished
Members of the Board of Directors, Ambassadors and Colleagues,**

**We congratulate South Africa on the celebration of Freedom Day, Tanzania on
its anniversary and all Members in general on the International Day of
Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace.**

We would like to begin by congratulating the Convener, Ambassador Ajit Kumar, on his re-election for a new term, as well as Ambassador Ali Bahreini, on his election as Vice-Convener. Both have the full support of my Delegation. We also welcome the expansion of representation from Latin America and the Caribbean with the addition of former President Leonel Fernandez to the Board.

On the other hand, in welcoming the report presented by the Convener on the status of ratification of new members, we would like to extend a warm welcome to the sister Republic of Colombia. We are certain that its reinstatement will strengthen the work of the South Centre in favor of the development of our peoples.

Venezuela has listened carefully to the report presented by the Executive Director on the activities of the Centre and its financial situation. In this regard, we wish to place on record our full support and recognition of the research, analysis and technical assistance work offered by the South Centre to support us and keep us united in the face of the unpostponable challenges that developing countries must face.

Special mention should be made of the cross-cutting analytical support in the area of intellectual property. Last year, authorities of the Autonomous Intellectual Property Services of my country held two meetings with the South Centre and there is an offer from the South Centre to support Venezuela in terms of legislative updating, additionally a videoconference was held with the South Centre on patent training.

The South Center's daily monitoring of the World Trade Organization agenda, particularly with respect to the negotiations on fisheries subsidies, agriculture, reform and TRIPS, deserves equal recognition.

We would also like to acknowledge the analytical work received on the World Health Organization agenda items. In particular, all the detailed analysis that has been carried out with respect to the complex intergovernmental negotiations to draft and negotiate a Convention, Agreement or other international instrument on Pandemic Prevention and Response.

We would also like to express our appreciation for the inclusion in the South Centre's work program 2023-2025 of a new thematic section (No. 14) on Unilateral Coercive Measures. As you are all well aware, the use of illegal Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCMs) has become one of the most important weapons used by hegemonic countries to force an international framework that responds to their interests. UCMs, illegal under international law and the UN Charter, severely impact developing countries, affecting not only their economies but also limiting their ability to protect and promote the basic needs and fundamental rights of their populations.

We believe it is important for the South Centre to join the efforts being made to make visible and raise awareness, from an academic perspective, of the effects of criminal UCMs, not only for the countries that suffer from them, but also for the entire development agenda. Among possible initiatives to be undertaken, we would like to highlight the need for a database on the subject, the development of a methodology for its systematic study, a greater narrative on the subject in the various specialized agencies of the United Nations, rapprochement with academic institutions in Geneva and a strategy for dissemination of its criminal effects, through seminars and academic activities.

We note that the work program for 2023-2025 is designed to enable the South Centre, in an effective and timely manner, to respond, within its possibilities and in the context of its mandate, to the demands of its members and other developing countries, fully aware of the diversity in the strategies they pursue to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

I would not like to conclude without first reiterating our commitment to the South Centre, with its objectives and principles, as well as with its validity and transcendence as an articulator of the interests of the South. Venezuela will continue in its anti-hegemonic vocation and defender of the countries of the South, for which it always offers its friendship and esteem to all the countries present here.

Thank you very much.

Statement of Ambassador Dr. Le Thi Tuyet Mai

Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the UN, WTO and other IOs in Geneva

at the 23th Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre

(27 April 2023, the *Palace* of Nations, Geneva, Conference Room XXV)

*Chairman of the Board of the South Centre, Mr. Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki,
Mr. Convenor, Ambassador Ajit Kumar,
Executive Director of the South Centre, Dr. Carlos María Correa,
Excellencies and distinguished Delegates,*

The Vietnamese Delegation would also like to thank the Chairman of the Board of the South Centre, the Executive Director and the Convenor for your able leadership in promoting the work of the South Centre, including the organization of the 23rd meeting of the Council of the representatives of the South Centre.

1. We take note with appreciation the Report by Executive Director Dr. Carlos María Correa that highlights the achievements and activities that the South Centre has conducted in the past year. We highly appreciate, among others, the role of South Centre in providing technical assistance to developing countries, including Viet Nam, particularly research and consultancy on issues relating to sustainable development such as climate change adaptation, public health, intellectual property, and biodiversity... and consistently protect the interests of developing countries in the discussions and negotiations at multilateral mechanisms, such as WTO, WHO, WIPO, UNCTAD etc...

In this regard, we welcome the support of the South Centre in raising the relevance and visibility of the G77 and China grouping in WHO INB briefings. We also appreciate the South Centre's support for our Workshop on "Global trends and policy option in digital transformation: implications on Viet Nam" in December last year, as well as the South Centre's technical assistance extended to Viet Nam in reforming the tax system.

2. Viet Nam is keen on upholding multilateralism and responsible international cooperation in global governance as the key pillar of its foreign policy. It is, therefore, Viet Nam's hope that the South Centre and other UN agencies heightened their roles and voices in the course of reforming global governance institutions so as to ensure the efficient allocation of resources for addressing global challenges such as climate change, disruption of supply chain, public debt crisis and digital transition and green transformation as well as heighten

the role of emerging and developing economies etc. At the same time, the South Centre should contribute to promoting South-South cooperation and trilateral cooperation, fostering unity, common voices and interests of developing countries in global issues, especially in promoting multilateralism and implementing sustainable development goals.

3. Viet Nam reaffirms our strong commitment on climate change adaptation. We will improve the management mechanisms and policy framework so as to mobilize resources, including finances and technology transfer, from developed countries. This kind of resources should be allocated in a transparent and balanced manner for efforts to reduce greenhouse emission from developing and least developing countries.

4. Viet Nam is committed to making efforts to the joint activities of the South Centre. We appreciate the South Centre Board's consideration of the candidacy of Ambassador Vu Anh Quang, a Vietnamese candidate, for the position of Board member from Asia for the term 2022-2025. This candidacy presentation reflects the spirit of responsibility and contribution of Viet Nam to the South Centre management and organization.

On this occasion, we would like to congratulate Ambassador Ajit Kumar of India for being re-elected as the Covenor of the South Centre and Ambassador Ali Bahreini of Iran for being elected as Vice-Covenor of the South Centre.

We also congratulate the newly elected members of the Board of South Centre from Dominica and Indonesia and the re-election of Ambassador Wuhailong from China to the Board's membership.

I thank you very much!



**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H. E. MR STUART COMBERBACH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE
AT THE 23rd MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE SOUTH CENTRE ON 27 APRIL 2023**

**Chairperson of the South Centre Board, H. E. President Thabo Mbeki,
former President of the Republic of South Africa**

Distinguished Board Members,

Executive Director,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Allow me to extend sincere appreciation to you all for convening this 23rd Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre.

We join others in warmly welcoming Colombia on its return to the fold. A return which strengthens our membership and adds yet further weight to the efforts of the Centre in its quest to advance the collective interests of the Global South.

We extend our thanks to the Executive Director for his comprehensive **Annual Report** for the year 2022 - a year which we all hoped would be one of recovery and revival, but one which proved, instead, to be one of the most challenging years ever for developing and least developed countries : as we all struggled, on an increasingly uneven and inequitable playing field, to breathe new life into our economies and to *build back better* after the ravages of the Pandemic. And as the multilateral system we have so painstakingly constructed over the past many decades has come under increasing strain - the consequence of intensifying geo-political tensions, the politicisation of literally every issue and the resultant increasing polarisation between and among nations : all of which has militated against the kind of collective, collaborative cooperation required if, as developing countries, we are to regain traction and to recover ground lost on the path to 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Throughout this period, and as the Annual Report clearly reflects, South Centre has proved to be a constant and consistent companion - informing, guiding and advising our countries on a wide range of critical topics : providing detailed analysis, research-based data, and proffering well-argued policy options on a raft of “live” issues - including **climate change, health, trade** - in all its many manifestations and the symbiotic relationship between **trade and development**, the issue of **food-security**, the issue of **intellectual property**, the issue of **debt**, the issue of **development finance**, the burgeoning issue of **migration** - specifically **labour migration** and, of great importance to my own country and indeed a growing number of countries, the issue of **unilateral coercive measures** - sanctions - and the widespread collateral damage these so-called targeted measures inflict upon the lives and livelihoods of literally hundreds of millions of ordinary citizens in our countries.

We encourage South Centre to continue to focus on the issue of UCM’s and hope that, by way of academic research and further scientific analysis, it will contribute to the growing body of empirical evidence proving their far-reaching, wholly negative impact on vulnerable economies.

In short, Chair, we express our deep appreciation and our continuing support for the manner and the consistency with which the South Centre has stayed the course and has continued to fulfil its mission as think-tank and advisor to the Global South.

As we look ahead, the immediate to near term prospects for the Global South continue to be littered with serious challenges : quite apart from the multiple crises of health, climate, cost of living and debt, there is the resurgence of **unilateralism and protectionism** and, as already mentioned, an unravelling of our multilateral system.

Those challenges have of course been exacerbated by the outbreak of conflict in Eastern Europe - with its impact on the supply and cost of food, fertilizers, and, of course, energy - and the drag-effect all of this is having on our efforts to recover.

The polarisation of which I spoke was already very evident prior to the outbreak of conflict in Eastern Europe : but it has become much more acute - with far-reaching impact on efforts to progress our collective development agenda via multilateral forums.

Against this background, and, as we step up our efforts within those forums, it is clear that **the role of the South Centre** and its contribution, in terms of guiding and enriching those efforts, **is more important than ever**.

We continue to rely on the Centre's work to support us, to help unpack and understand technically complex issues and to assist our delegations in formulating and consolidating appropriate positions within these ongoing multilateral engagements.

However, in order for South Centre to continue and even increase its invaluable work and, in reaction to the report on the current financial situation, it is clear that **more needs to be done to ensure that the Centre is adequately resourced.** This includes, inter alia, the need for all members to meet their respective financial obligations. As I conclude, let me reiterate Zimbabwe's strong commitment *to* and support *for* the Centre, and our determination to honour our dues and financial obligations.

I thank you.