



STATEMENTS AT THE 25TH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SOUTH CENTRE

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Introduction

The Council of Representatives of the South Centre, the highest authority of the organization, met on 8 May 2025 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, with the participation of the Chairman and members of the Centre's Board and representatives from 36 Members States of the Centre. The Council's functions include to examine the Centre's activities, offer advice and recommendations and review the financial situation of the Centre.

This year's meeting of the Council of Representatives had particular significance as the South Centre celebrates the 30th anniversary from its establishment. A Reception was organized after the Council to celebrate this anniversary.

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", the opening statement and closing remarks made by H.E. Mr. Ajit Kumar, Convenor of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre, and also interventions made by member countries at the meeting under agenda item 8 "General Statements from Representatives".



Opening statement by H.E. Mr. Ajit Kumar, Convenor of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre at the 25th Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre, 8 May 2025

Good afternoon, President Mbeki, Chair of the Board; Excellencies; distinguished delegates; members of the South Centre's Board; Executive Director, Dr. Carlos Correa and members of the Secretariat,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this 25th meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre. Thank you all for making time to attend this meeting.

I would like to thank the Secretariat for organizing the meeting and for circulating in advance the documents for consideration by the Council. I also thank the Secretariat for making arrangements for simultaneous interpretation into French and Spanish, an expression of the importance it gives to multilingualism.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, we are meeting today in a context where the international landscape is facing a deep crisis of multilateralism. Longstanding norms and principles are under strain. Institutions designed to foster cooperation and equitable development are increasingly paralyzed by geopolitical rivalries, unilateral actions, and the marginalization of developing countries in decision-making.

In this moment of crisis, the South Centre's role is more vital than ever. Today's meeting holds special significance as this year, the South Centre commemorates its 30th anniversary. Over the past three decades, the South Centre has had the opportunity to work alongside government officials and diplomats, academics, civil society, and development partners to champion South-South cooperation, equitable development, and a more just and inclusive global governance system.

It is a good opportunity today for us to take a moment to reflect on the collective journey we have undertaken and also on current and emerging challenges we are facing in advancing the interests of developing countries.

We are meeting here today to review the work of the South Centre in 2024 which has been reflected in a large number of research outputs, support in various multilateral negotiations as well as trainings and capacity building in the areas covered by its Work Program. We will also review the financial situation of the Centre. Last year has been very challenging for the Centre financially and this year the situation is even more uncertain. The Executive Director will provide us with more details later when he reports to the Council.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, I now declare this 25th meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre open.



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OFFICE OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD

**Statement of President Mbeki under the Council Agenda Item 5
8 May 2025**

Mr. Convenor and Vice-Convenor,
Your Excellencies, Representatives of the South Centre Member
States,
Members of the Board of the South Centre,
Executive Director and Members of the Secretariat:

I am honoured to address this Council.

I would like to thank Your Excellencies and distinguished delegates
for your participation at this meeting, as well as for the very
stimulating interventions at the last Council meeting, in April 2024.

We live in a turbulent time not only due to wars that cause suffering
and economic losses, but to the recent escalation of unilateral
measures that blatantly violate internationally agreed principles and
rules. These measures threaten to destabilise global trade, further
weaken a sluggish global economic growth and disproportionately
affect developing countries, which already face unacceptable levels of
poverty, the impact of climate change and high indebtedness.

In this scenario, it is necessary not only to protect our countries from
the shocks caused by these measures and events, but we must also
continue to address the structural asymmetries and support the
efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, many of which
now appear to be very elusive.

A more sustainable, just, and peaceful world, as envisioned by the Pact for the Future adopted last year by the United Nations General Assembly, will only be possible if substantial reforms are made, notably regarding the international financial architecture.

We do not need more declarations nor unfulfilled promises, but a collective action with a decisive participation of the Global South to shape a multilateral system that supports development. Such a system, based on international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter, should also contribute to put an end and prevent coercive unilateral measures, including in the area of trade, that can only undermine development and perpetuate injustice.

While fully recognising the shifting global geopolitical landscape and new world dynamics, the South Centre has continued to work for the adoption of frameworks, rules and policies that promote the common interest and address the needs and concerns of developing countries.

As you are aware, the countries of the Global South have actively participated in 2024 in many international processes struggling for greater equity in the global order. Despite some progress in areas such as taxation, genetic resources and intellectual property, much still needs to be done to overcome historical inequities. The South Centre has closely followed these and other processes, including the important negotiations to address pandemics, as well as elaborate, through the UN, an international tax framework. The Centre has continued to support the developing countries through policy-oriented research, advice and capacity building.

As mentioned by the Executive Director and shown in the documents circulated for this meeting, the Centre is facing a fragile financial situation, given the decline of funding available from donors and the current level of contributions received from our membership.

If this situation is not addressed effectively and on time, the long-term sustainability of the Centre will be at risk. As I mentioned during the last Council meeting, we really need to ensure that the Centre is run

from the contributions provided by our Members. This is crucial to ensure the Centre's intellectual independence and sustainability. I sent In August last year I sent a letter to the Heads of State and Government of our Member States alerting them about the Centre's financial situation. The expenditures of the Secretariat are kept to the minimum. A proposal was elaborated and circulated to adjust the levels of assessed contributions. I leave it to the Convenor to consider whether the new scale of contributions should be submitted to the Council at this juncture.

This year the South Centre celebrates 30 years since its establishment. I humbly invite Your Excellencies to celebrate this anniversary with us. We are proud for having been able to preserve the values and have worked hard to make a reality the vision and aspirations of the founders of the Centre led by President Nyerere of Tanzania, one of the great leaders of the Global South.

Lastly, I would like to thank the members of the Board, the Convenors, the Executive Director and the staff of the Centre for their work and support.

Thank you for your attention.



Report of the Executive Director on South Centre's Activities and Finances in 2024

1. In 2024, the world experienced escalating geopolitical tensions, armed conflicts, increased economic and financial fragmentation, and worsening inequalities, resulting in greater economic vulnerability for many developing countries. The climate crisis also worsened, but the urgency of addressing it did not receive the attention it demanded. Developing countries were the hardest hit by these developments, especially because of high debt and borrowing cost. A significant number of developing countries, particularly low-income countries, are facing high levels of debt burden. This continues to hamper their ability to invest in crucial areas such as the climate crisis, health, education and other essential services.

2. Global economic growth remained below historical levels and failed to regain the path it was on before the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this, developing countries now account for approximately 45% of global GDP, up from 25% in 2000, and play a central role in global trade by powering value chains and green transitions. Their interdependence has also grown, with more than 40% of their exports of goods now going to other developing economies—double the share in 2000.

3. In 2024, the countries of the Global South reasserted their role as key players in multilateral fora. Through the Group of 77+China and other groupings, the countries of the Global South have played a prominent role in global negotiations, such as the Pact for the Future, the negotiations on the pandemic treaty, the adoption of a long sought treaty on intellectual property, genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge as well as of a High-level Political Declaration on Antimicrobial Resistance, to mention a few. The South Centre has closely followed these processes and supported developing countries in their efforts to ensure outcomes that reflect their needs and interests.

4. The reluctance of developed countries to take effective action on crucial issues, such as the reform of the global financial architecture and the adoption of mechanisms for effective technology transfer to address future pandemics, poses a persistent challenge. Also, continuing injustices, such as unilateral coercive measures, together with new issues, such as the challenges and opportunities of digital transformation, require particular focus and attention.

5. This is the scenario in which the South Centre performed its mandate by actively supporting developing countries through policy-oriented research, technical reports, advice on key international negotiations, training and capacity building. Its work aimed at assisting developing countries to address the multiple challenges they face by proposing effective solutions whenever possible. Importantly, the South Centre continued to rely on and promote South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

6. The Annual Report on activities conducted in 2024, circulated with other documents for this meeting, details the many activities carried out by the Centre in the period.

7. As shown in that report, the South Centre has continued to be very active in its policy-oriented research pillar. In 2024 the Centre published 40 major research outputs, including Research Papers and Policy Briefs, in addition to other documents. These publications address issues relevant to developing countries and aim at providing, based on rigorous and

objective analyses, tools for policy definition and informed participation in international negotiations. In 2024, our main publications were downloaded more than 20,000 times, the Centre's Newsletter accessed more than 40,000 times and two books published in 2023 have been accessed by more than 290,000 readers.

8. It is important to note that a significant number of these publications were the result of cooperation with other institutions and academics, mostly from developing countries. This correlates to the efficient operational model of the Centre, as defined by our founders: a small, dynamic, non-bureaucratic and member-driven organization with the capacity to expand its action and influence based on cooperation with other partners in the South.

9. The Centre also collaborated in the preparation of reports for the United Nations system and participated in international meetings organized by governments, multilateral organizations and civil society. In its work, the Centre not only addressed existing injustices, but also new emerging challenges, always aspiring to seek solutions that favour a fairer and more equitable multilateral system.

10. With respect to the negotiation support pillar and capacity building, the Centre has continued to be active in multiple fields. It organized or co-organized near to 70 physical or virtual meetings.

11. Without being exhaustive the Centre's activities included:

- The monitoring and evaluation of South-South and Triangular Cooperation trends in collaboration with other organizations.
- Participation in the preparatory work for the fourth international conference on finance and development to be held in 2025.
- Supporting developing countries in the reform of the international investment regime through trainings, strategy meetings and analytical reports.
- Addressing international taxation issues, particularly in the digital context, and illicit financial flows and supporting developing countries in international negotiations, including in the historic process towards a United Nations Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation.
- Contributing to the debates and negotiations on human rights, particularly the legally binding instrument on businesses and human rights and the Right to Development.
- Assessing the drafts for the Pact for the Future and the Global Digital Compact and addressing emerging issues related to the digital transformation and the deployment of Artificial Intelligence.
- Monitoring the implementation of key Sustainable Development Goals and addressing the interface of climate change with other areas as well as negotiations on access and benefit sharing (particularly regarding digital sequence information)
- Closely following the negotiations at the World Health Organization for the revision of the International Health Regulations and the adoption of an agreement on pandemics, and promoting awareness and actions to fight antimicrobial resistance in developing countries, particularly in Africa.
- Supporting developing countries on a wide range of issues under negotiation in the World Trade Organization in which they face numerous challenges, including the lack of progress on agriculture and the *de facto* suppression of the Appellate Body.
- Addressing the issue of unilateral coercive measures implemented in violation of international law. In particular, the Centre contributed to the UN Secretary-General's report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution A/RES/78/7 on 'The need

to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba’.

- Contributing to the negotiation and adoption of the new treaties on intellectual property, genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge and on design law, and to the work of the Committees of the World Intellectual Property Organization.

12. These are only few *examples* of the various activities of the Centre during 2024; as mentioned, more details can be found in the Annual Report.

13. Regarding the financial situation, the South Centre ended 2024 with a budgetary deficit of CHF 180,145, which represented 4.75% of the total approved budget. This is the first time in 16 years that the operational incomes have fallen short of operational costs for the Centre. The main reason for this shortfall is the substantial reduction of project grants after the completion of the UNITAID grant in 2023 and the withdrawal of the Swiss government support in 2023. Members’ contributions were higher in 2024 than in the previous year, with a special mention for India which contributed \$600,000 during 2024. We also specially thank the two other Members (China and South Africa) who continued to make contributions in excess of their assessed voluntary contributions, as shown in the financial information circulated to the Council. The Centre managed its liquidity tightly and was able to gain significant interest income during the year to partially cover for the income deficit. The liquidity buffers that have been created arduously over the years allowed the Centre to absorb the budget deficit in 2024. Nevertheless, without the effective and continuous financial support of its Members, the sustainability of the Centre is at risk, especially in these times when major multilateral institutions are undergoing severe stress and obtaining additional funding from donor organizations is becoming increasingly difficult.

14. A proposal for an adjustment of the voluntary contributions based on changes in Members’ GDP and the USD/CHF exchange rate since 2005 has been prepared for consideration of the Council of Representatives when it considers it appropriate.

15. The activities by the Secretariat of the South Centre summarized above would not have been possible without the support of our Members and the frequent interaction with their representatives, the work of a competent and committed staff and the guidance of the Board.

**Statement of the Permanent Mission of Algeria to the UN Office in Geneva and
other International Organizations in Switzerland.**

South Centre 25th Meeting of the Council of Representatives,

8 May 15:00-18:00, Palais des nations, Room XXIII.

Good afternoon, ladies and Gentlemen, Excellencies and distinguished participants.

The Chairman of the Board of the South Centre, H.E. Mr. President Thabo Mbeki,

The Executive Director of the South Centre, Dr. Carlos Di Correa

Mr. the Convenor of this meeting, H.E. Ambassador Coma.

Thank you for convening this annual meeting which is taking place in very challenging times marked by uncertainty and doubts.

At the outset, it's great pleasure for me to take part in the 25th Meeting of the Council of the Representatives of the South Centre which remains the highest organ in the decision-making of the Centre. I would like to convey to you our warmest thanks and deep gratitude for the leadership of the south Centre in advocating the priorities and putting forward the legitimate aspirations and concerns of the Global South, and particularly the Group of 77 and China in the current international context which is witnessing profound changes and raising fundamental questions about many multilateral issues.

In this regard, I would like to express our appreciation for the unwavering support offered by the South Centre to our developing countries and economies through the sharing of a valuable technical expertise on wide range of multilateral issues subject of negotiations, as it was the case with the WHO Pandemic Agreement, the agreement on the genetic resources and Traditional knowledge and many other topics intrinsically linked to the social and economic development of our societies. As a think tank, the South Centre is brightly focusing on the fields which deserve to be kept on the top of the agenda of developing countries.

Moreover, we encourage the Centre to reinforce this momentum by conducting studies, research and analysis on other issues that could inflict a harmful impact on the interest of the developing countries, such as the implications of CBAM (Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism) and the effects of the AI on the trade field.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Having said that, the climate change, the growing tensions in the multilateral trade system exacerbated by the protectionist policies, the digital divide, the lack of progress in the implementation of the SGD 2030, the burden of the debt, the unilateral coercive measures, the fragmentation of multilateralism, the sustainable development goals financing gap in developing countries and the International financial architecture reform, to name just a few, represent the mains priorities on which we need to further strengthen and consolidate our common position, by bringing up new alternatives and innovative solutions.

It seems to us that the fight for a new global economic order that our countries defended more than five decades ago remains alive in the minds of our people who consider themselves victims of totally unbridled globalization which is the main cause of multifaceted crises, related to food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition and the fragile global supply chains constraints.

We hope that the 16th Ministerial meeting of the UNCTAD, scheduled in October 2025 in Hanoi, under the theme “*Shaping the future: Driving economic transformation for equitable, inclusive and sustainable development*”, will allow the delegations to formulate global policy responses and to set the organization’s work priorities for the next four years to ensure that no one is left behind. In our opinion, and as it was underlined in the landmark Bridgetown Covenant of 2021, we need to remain focused on the following endeavors:

- More diversified economies;
- More inclusive, sustainable and resilient economies;
- More abundant and stable finance for development;
- More multilateralism in a multipolar world.

To conclude, and while reiterating our support of the South Centre Team under the able leadership of H.E.Mr. Thabo Mbeki, and the importance to reaffirm and reinvigorate the south-south values of solidarity and cooperation, we also would like to express our great satisfaction regarding the excellent relations of cooperation established between Algeria and South Centre, mainly in terms of capacity building.

I thank you.

**Mr. Larbi BENAOUA, Counsellor at
the Permanent Mission of Algeria in Geneva.**

Statement by Barbados at the 25th Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre

Barbados thanks you, Mr. Convener, for the excellent manner in which this meeting is being conducted. We also thank the board and the Secretariat for continuing to steer the activities of the self-center, including for the documentation and updates which were presented to the council. We wish to congratulate the South Centre on 30 years of existence and for its invaluable support to the South when it matters most.

Like others, Barbados is also concerned with the current financial situation and commend the South Centre for the activities undertaken under such circumstances. As we navigate the myriad of crises, not least of all the climate crisis, a global financial architecture, in need of reform and heightened geopolitical tensions. Developing countries, including small island developing states like Barbados, will now more than ever require the center's policy-oriented research, advice, and capacity building.

We commend the Centre's work in 2024, particularly as it relates to taxation, intellectual property, particularly in terms of the treaty on intellectual property, genetic resources, and associated traditional knowledge and the design law treaty, as well as on global health. In an effort to enhance its operationalization, we suggest that the South Centre one, enhance its engagement on emerging issues. There is scope to deepen engagement on emerging areas such as digital transformation, frontier technologies like artificial intelligence, and global health governance, to better support developing countries in these fast evolving fields.

Two, broaden outreach and dissemination. Although publications and reports are widely accessed, expanding dissemination channels and increasing awareness among policymakers and civil society could enhance impact, especially in bridging research with actionable policy.

Three, strengthen capacity building. Continuing to expand training and technical assistance particularly, around new negotiating processes and digital issues, can further empower developing countries negotiating positions and policy responses.

And four, increase collaboration and partnership. Increasing cooperation with more academic institutions, civil society and other multilateral organizations can amplify the center's reach and influence, building a more robust network for policy advocacy and knowledge sharing.

As we look to the future, we must seek to ensure that the South Centre is buttressed by a sustainable model of financing which ensures that the collective voice of developing countries is strengthened, and that the Centre remains fit for purpose, reflective of its diverse membership. I thank you.

25th Meeting of the Council of the South Centre

Thursday, May 8, 2025 - 15:00 - 18:00 AM - Room XXV, Building E, Palais des Nations

General Statement from the Permanent Representative of Brazil

Ambassador Ajit Kumar, Convenor of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre;

Mr. Thabo Mbeki, former President of South Africa and Chairman of the Board of the South Centre;

Professor Carlos Correa, Executive Director of the South Centre,

Distinguished colleagues, Members of the Board,

Brazil underscores the importance of this session to review the work done by the South Centre in 2024 and provide support for current activities and guidance on the next steps.

For over three decades now, since its establishment in 1994, The South Centre has been serving as a voice of the Global South, including by supporting the Group of 77/China. It has consistently advocated for reforms to the Global Economic order, in particular the long-standing reform of the International Financial Architecture, as well as the improvement of the multilateral system for the benefit of our developing countries.

The South Centre provides analytical support to developing countries to address the challenges of commodity dependency, helping them to diversify their economies, add value to the local production, and strengthen non-commodity activities, while working to identify and implement the necessary international reforms and strategies.

Brazil welcomes the 2024 Annual Report and commends the South Centre for its work on development finance, unilateral coercive measures, the right to development, responsible investment and business, International Taxation, climate change and sustainable development, biodiversity, Innovation, Intellectual Property Rights and Transfer of Technology, and digital transformation and development, just to mention the core areas of its activities.

Brazil recognizes the significant role played by the South Centre in the negotiation of the Pact for the Future, the Global Digital Compact and in the high-level declaration on health and antimicrobial resistance.

The South Centre also plays a critical role in supporting developing countries to Reform the International Financial Architecture, in the implementation of the UNCCC, the UN Framework Convention on Tax Cooperation; and in the process of reform of the investor-state dispute system; and in the ongoing negotiations ahead of the Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) next month in Seville.

I think that, for the immediate future, we have some challenges ahead of us for which the South Centre could provide critical support to developing countries. We have UNCTAD XVI coming up this year, and it is going to be an uphill battle to achieve a significant outcome with content that is still relevant for developing countries. We will need all the support we can get from the South Centre. Within UNCTAD, we have the Generalized System of Trade Preferences, which is an incredibly meaningful initiative, which still not entered into force up to this day.

We have new issues; many have referred to the Digital Economy, which challenges developing countries. We have Artificial Intelligence, and the Data Governance Working Group has just been established in Geneva under the CSTD, which is serviced by UNCTAD. It is an important process to start discussing some AI multilateral governance scheme.

We have the WTO reform. It is a big issue for us because the WTO currently stands at a standstill in light of a new global tariff escalation, which simply ignores the rules of the multilateral trading system governed by the WTO. It generates a lot of uncertainty and unpredictability. In addition, I think it would be nice to have South Centre also looking into this discussion, on how to really reform the WTO in any significant manner and in a way that safeguards its future.

Some issues are clearly on the horizon, such as the Dispute Settlement System, and how to bring back some sort of relevance to it. There is an issue with the graduation of members. I think it is incredibly threatening for many developing countries, a threat to the Special and Differential Treatment in the multilateral trade rules sphere.

I have to mention that Brazil has taken over the presidency of the G20 and the presidency of BRICS currently. By the end of this year, we will host the COP 30. I see here, present with us, our dear Senator and Professor Cristovam Buarque, who is a member of the Board. And he, along with the Mission of Brazil, has great ideas on how the South Centre could also contribute to COP 30, including in the area of education, which is an area that has been overlooked. I think over the years, within the context of discussions on environmental sustainability, in the beginning, it was the future, the Brundtland report on the future of the world, which required

new generations to be educated to preserve the planet. And I think this element of our efforts has been left behind in a way we have to recover. We need an agenda on education and sustainability, so I could go on and on.

I thank the South Centre, and Dr. Carlos Correa, with his expertise in many areas, in particular in Intellectual Property Rights, who has always been a force for good in that area. And we hope you continue to support this very important issue. There have been attempts to revisit TRIPS towards TRIPS plus commitments. I hope you can support us in not allowing that to happen. There have been attempts to redefine transfer technology in ways that are not very beneficial to developing countries. It happened with the Pandemic Treaty; we managed to keep at least a reasonable outcome. It is not the greatest outcome, but some worse proposals on the table did not prosper.

We have a lot of work ahead of us. We hope we can continue to count on the South Centre to help developing countries navigate this very difficult current international context.

Thank you.

Statement by
His Excellency Mr. CHEN Xu
Ambassador of Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China
to the United Nations Office at Geneva and Other International
Organizations in Switzerland
**at the Twenty-fifth Meeting of the Council of Representatives of
the South Centre**
8 May, 2025

Chairperson of the Board, (H.E. Thabo M. Mbeki)

Convenor of the Council of Representatives, (H.E. Ajit Kumar)

Executive Director, (Dr. Carlos Correa)

Excellencies and Colleagues,

Good afternoon. I would like to take this opportunity to thank H.E. Ambassador Ajit Kumar, and thank President Thabo Mbeki's statement and the Executive Director, Dr. Carlos Correa's report on activities and finances of the South Centre. I also congratulate Mr. Dinesh Trivedi on his appointment as new Board Member.

China appreciates the substantial works and excellent achievements of the South Centre Secretariat under the leadership of Dr. Carlos Correa.

China agrees with the analysis made by the South Centre on current trajectory of global economy. In the past month, the United States announced the so-called "reciprocal tariffs", which are the protectionist measures that severely impact the rules-based multilateral trading system and the global economic order and

seriously infringe upon the legitimate rights and interests of all countries. To respond to the US's unilateral tariff measures, we must firmly uphold multilateralism and safeguard the rules-based multilateral trading system with the WTO at its core. We need to act on solidarity and mutual assistance, jointly oppose all forms of unilateralism, protectionism, and economic bullying, raise the voice of developing countries in international affairs, and work together to uphold fairness and justice.

This morning, the Permanent Mission of China and the South Centre co-organized the dialogue “Impact of Global Trade Tensions On Developing Countries”, providing a dialogue and exchange platform for developing countries to enhance solidarity and cooperation for the purpose of jointly addressing unilateralism and trade protectionism. We look forward to greater voices from the South Centre in the future in defending of the multilateral trading system and developing countries' rights and interest.

We took note of the financial situation of the South Centre, and stand ready to work together with other Member States within our capacity, to help overcome the financial difficulties. To support the work of the South Centre, China is positively considering to resume the annual contribution to 300,000 US dollars starting from this year. Meanwhile, we call on other Member States pay their due contribution on time, to ensure necessary funds for the South Centre to fulfill its important mandates.

Dear colleagues,

over the past 30 years since its founding, the South Centre has played a positive role in promoting South-South cooperation, assisting developing countries in participating in global governance and promoting sustainable development, and made extraordinary

achievement in these fields. China looks forward to working hand in hand with the South Centre and its Member States and strengthen solidarity and cooperation, in order to jointly defend the international system with the United Nations at its core and the multilateral trading system with the WTO at its core, jointly oppose unilateralism and trade protectionism, and promote economic globalization towards a more open, inclusive, equitable and balanced direction.

I thank you for your attention.



MISIÓN PERMANENTE DE LA REPÚBLICA DE CUBA
ANTE LA OFICINA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS EN GINEBRA
Y LOS ORGANISMOS INTERNACIONALES EN SUIZA

INTERVENCIÓN DEL EMBAJADOR RODOLFO BENÍTEZ VERNON, REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE CUBA ANTE LA ONU EN GINEBRA, EN LA VIGÉSIMA QUINTA REUNIÓN DEL CONSEJO DE REPRESENTANTES DEL CENTRO SUR. Punto 8: Declaraciones generales. Ginebra, 8 de mayo de 2025.

Sr. Presidente de la Junta, S.E. Thabo Mbeki,
Estimado Sr. Carlos Correa,
Sr. Convocante, S.E. Ajit Kumar
Distinguidos representantes, excelencias y delegados:

El Presidente de Cuba Miguel Díaz Canel Bermúdez trasladó al Sr. Thabo Mbeki el siguiente mensaje en agosto pasado, y cito: “Deseo trasladar mi agradecimiento y admiración por la importantísima labor del Centro Sur como tanque pensante de los países en desarrollo, compartiendo saberes de incalculable valor para las naciones del Sur, en su camino a la consecución del desarrollo sostenible. La misión del Centro de aportar la perspectiva del Sur al quehacer de los organismos internacionales es trascendental para los países en desarrollo, cuyos intereses, muchas veces quedan relegados por los de los países desarrollados.” Termino la cita.

Los propósitos para los que fue creado el Centro Sur están hoy más vigentes que nunca, cuando nos enfrentamos a un mundo más complejo y desafiante.

En pleno siglo XXI es inaceptable que a la mayoría de las naciones en el planeta se nos continúe imponiendo un orden internacional profundamente injusto y excluyente, que solo es eficiente para perpetuar el desequilibrio.

Los estudios y recomendaciones ágiles, oportunas y siempre bien argumentadas sobre los temas de mayor impacto para los países en desarrollo, se han convertido en un rasgo característico de esta institución.

En los primeros 30 años de su historia, el Centro ha sido mucho más que un lugar de investigación, análisis y asesoramiento. Ha sido un escenario de reflexión y debate; un articulador de narrativas alternativas.

Sr. Presidente:

Cuba agradece profundamente el apoyo del Centro en nuestra batalla contra el bloqueo económico, comercial y financiero impuesto por los Estados Unidos, que viola el Derecho Internacional y la Carta de las Naciones Unidas, incluyendo las reglas del Sistema Multilateral de Comercio.



MISIÓN PERMANENTE DE LA REPÚBLICA DE CUBA
ANTE LA OFICINA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS EN GINEBRA
Y LOS ORGANISMOS INTERNACIONALES EN SUIZA

El actual gobierno estadounidense, de manera injustificada ha incluido nuevamente a Cuba en la Lista unilateral de Estados supuestamente patrocinadores del terrorismo y ha arreciado su campaña de descrédito contra la cooperación médica internacional de Cuba.

Ni las campañas de desacreditación ni los efectos devastadores del recrudecido bloqueo impedirán que Cuba continúe salvando vidas y compartiendo sus escasos recursos con otras naciones del mundo que lo necesitan.

Sr. Presidente:

El Centro debe continuar siendo un factor catalizador en los esfuerzos para que los países en desarrollo hablemos con una sola voz y cerremos filas frente a los que pretenden dividirnos y cercenar nuestros derechos. Solo cuando actuamos de manera cohesionada, los países en desarrollo somos un actor relevante en defensa de los intereses de nuestros pueblos.

El Centro se ha convertido en una voz auténtica y confiable, ganándose con su labor un merecido prestigio.

Cuba propone que en ocasión de celebrarse este año el 80 aniversario la firma de la Carta y la creación de la ONU, el Centro organice un evento sobre la contribución al multilateralismo de la Proclama de América Latina y el Caribe como Zona de Paz.

Para concluir, trasmito a nombre del gobierno y pueblos cubanos nuestras felicitaciones a todo el equipo del Centro Sur en su 30 aniversario y nuestros deseos de mayores éxitos en el futuro.

Muchas gracias



MISIÓN PERMANENTE DE LA REPÚBLICA DE CUBA
ANTE LA OFICINA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS EN GINEBRA
Y LOS ORGANISMOS INTERNACIONALES EN SUIZA

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR RODOLFO BENÍTEZ VERNON, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CUBA TO THE UN IN GENEVA, AT THE TWENTY-FIFTH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SOUTH CENTRE. Item 8: General Statements. Geneva, May 8, 2025.

Mr. President of the Board, H.E. Thabo Mbeki,
Dear Mr. Carlos Correa,
Mr. Convener, H.E. Ajit Kumar
Distinguished representatives, Excellencies, and delegates:

Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez sent Mr. Thabo Mbeki the following message last August, and I quote: "I wish to convey my gratitude and admiration for the extremely important work of the South Centre as a think tank for developing countries, sharing knowledge of incalculable value to the nations of the South on their path to achieving sustainable development. The Center's mission to contribute the perspective of the South to the work of international organizations is crucial for developing countries, whose interests are often relegated by those of developed countries." I conclude the quote.

The purposes for which the South Centre was created are more relevant today than ever, as we face a more complex and challenging world.

In the 21st century, it is unacceptable that the majority of nations on the planet continue to be subjected to a profoundly unjust and exclusionary international order, which only serves to perpetuate the imbalance.

Swift, timely, and always well-argued studies and recommendations on the issues of greatest impact on developing countries have become a hallmark of this institution.

In the first 30 years of its history, the Center has been much more than a place of research, analysis, and advice. It has been a forum for reflection and debate; an articulator of alternative narratives.

Mr. President,

Cuba deeply appreciates the Center's support in our battle against the economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed by the United States, which violates

international law and the Charter of the United Nations, including the rules of the Multilateral Trading System.

The current U.S. administration has unjustifiably once again included Cuba on the unilateral list of alleged state sponsors of terrorism and has intensified its campaign to discredit Cuba's international medical cooperation.

Neither the discrediting campaigns nor the devastating effects of the intensified blockade will prevent Cuba from continuing to save lives and share its scarce resources with other nations in need.

Mr. President,

The Center must continue to be a catalyst in efforts to ensure that developing countries speak with one voice and close ranks against those who seek to divide us and curtail our rights. Only when we act cohesively can developing countries become relevant actors in defending the interests of our people.

The Center has become an authentic and trusted voice, earning a well-deserved reputation for its work.

Cuba proposes that, on the occasion of this year's celebration of the 80th anniversary of the signing of the Charter and the creation of the UN, the Center organize an event on the contribution to multilateralism of the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace.

In conclusion, I extend, on behalf of the Cuban government and people, our congratulations to the entire team of the South Center on its 30th anniversary and our wishes for greater success in the future.

Thank you very much.

Statement by the Dominican Republic at 25th Meeting of Council of Representatives of South Centre delivered by His Excellency Mr. José R. Sánchez-Fung, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Dominican Republic to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

Thanks Chairman distinguished former president of South Africa Mr Thabo Mbeki.

I also thank the Convenor, and the Board Members for their valuable service.

Dear Colleagues

The Dominican Republic congratulates the South Centre on reaching this important milestone.

The Centre is a valuable organization in international Geneva – a competitive market with multiple sources of competing ideas and policies. We appreciate the Centre's historic contributions via dedicated research programmes.

Particularly, the Centre's policy-focused research on international trade adds value to thinking by diplomatic missions in Geneva. The Centre also contributes meaningful analysis on international investment and on international taxation standards.

We welcome the Centre's 30th anniversary and look forward to continuing our interaction with its Membership and Staff.

Thank you Chair.

Statement by Egypt at the 25th Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre

Good afternoon, Your Excellency, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, Chairman of the South Centre Board, Ambassador Ajit Kumar, Convener of the Council of Representatives, and Dr. Carlos Correa, the Executive Director of the South Centre. Fellow colleagues and ambassadors, this year's meeting of the Council of Representatives comes at a very critical time to the developing countries. These countries are facing unprecedented challenges now.

Many factors contribute to this alarming situation, such as the geopolitical tensions, international turbulences, high levels of debt, humanitarian crises, food insecurity, climate change, and the lingering impact that we're still witnessing of COVID, the pandemic. Such challenges add further burden not only on the developing countries, but also on the South Centre, making its active role more needed today than ever. Since its establishment in 1995, the South Centre has always been a source of support to the developing countries.

It has been providing high-quality policy-oriented research and actively assisting developing countries in multilateral negotiations, as well as carrying out the capacity-building activities. Such great work is always needed and appreciated. We welcome with appreciation the updates that we had today on the South Centre Annual Report on the activities conducted in 2024.

We praise the efforts of the Centre in various sectors. And allow me here to highlight as an example of cooperation, which is the successful work of the South Centre that contributed and benefited the developing countries in the negotiations on the WHO pandemic agreement. And luckily, we succeeded after three years of intensive negotiations to forge a draft agreement.

I hope it will pass in the upcoming meetings this month. Such efforts, in addition to others, were exerted despite the internal challenges of the South Centre in relation to financial deficits. Egypt, as one of the first signatories to the agreement establishing the Centre, believes in the Centre's role, and we will do whatever in our capacity to help.

And allow me, just a final thought to put here. Of course, as PRs, we're in meetings here and there, and everybody talking about the crisis of multilateralism. It's evident in all the talks that we have and the financial challenges.

But looking ahead, I mean, we have to deal with the realities of this time, which is we have to do this course-cutting and all this exercising. It's everywhere that we have to do. But just a final thought.

It has been always that the South Centre was providing assistance for developing countries to help them when they are participating in the multilateral sphere, being the multilateral trading system or multilateral negotiations. And it has been always the position of many of the developing countries that we were on the defensive, when it comes to different negotiations that's taking place in the multilateral system. Just an example, in the WTO, we're always on the defensive.

We're always, you know, needed expertise of why to articulate our position into having more policy space, more exceptions. I think that the dynamics now has been changed. It is the developing countries, who are the proponents now of the multilateral system.

I think some of the work should focus on why multilateralism is in the benefit of the developing world. We need to be a little bit offensive on this because the dynamics have changed and we have to be aware of the change in dynamics. So no more I would think that we would be on the defensive when it comes to proposals, when it comes to suggestions regarding trade in the WTO here and there.

I think that this is because it's evident in all the discussions. We all need multilateralism. Multilateralism, we have a place on the table.

So I think that some of the work should be focused on what benefits could we reap from the multilateral system and a little bit try to be on the offensive. Thank you. And I just wanted to throw this idea as a food for thought, but it is a reflection of what we have been talking in the last few weeks and months here in Geneva.

Thank you.



**Statement by India at 25th Meeting of Council of Representatives of South Centre
delivered by Ambassador Arindam Bagchi, Permanent Representative of India**

Geneva, 8 May 2025

Agenda Item 8: General Statements

His Excellency President Thabo Mbeki, Chairperson of the Board

Ambassador Ajit Kumar, Convener of the Council of Representatives

Esteemed Members of the Board

Professor Carlos Correa, Executive Director

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates

Members of the Secretariat,

1. At the outset, I congratulate the Centre on its 30th anniversary. I also warmly congratulate Mr. Dinesh Trivedi on his appointment to the Centre's Board. As a founding member and strong supporter of South Centre's work, India is honoured to continue to have a member in its Board.

Mr. Chair, Excellencies,

2. In the past three decades, the South Centre has been a key institution in amplifying the voice of developing countries in global governance fora. The Centre's research and advocacy across a wide range of issues – climate change, South-South cooperation, health, intellectual property, trade, taxation, development, e-commerce – have made an invaluable contribution.
3. The Centre's engagement with UN bodies and international organisations, such as UNCTAD, WTO, WIPO, WHO, UNCITRAL etc. has ensured that the perspectives, interests and concerns of developing countries are effectively represented. Its work has brought critical issues to the forefront and highlighted the persistent imbalances in global financial and development relations.
4. India firmly believes that the Global South can and must find its own solutions to challenges. Self-reliance, sharing of best practices, and reform of the multilateral system are essential. The South Centre's role in these efforts would be critical.

5. We have been reaffirming our commitment to fellow countries of the Global South in the three editions of the Voice of Global South Summit organized by India till now. In the third Summit in August 2024, Prime Minister Modi highlighted the need for Global South countries to speak in one voice and become each other's strength in articulating our developmental concerns and priorities. Prime Minister also reiterated India's commitment to share our experiences and capabilities with partner countries, as also reflected in our development cooperation partnerships with over 78 countries. As India advances in digital delivery, emerging tech and AI, green growth, and affordable healthcare, the Global South remains central to our international engagement. We stand ready to share our progress with our partners, as well as learn from their success stories.

Mr. Chair,

6. My delegation appreciates the reports shared by the Secretariat in preparation of this meeting. We note a small increase in number of member countries contributing this year. We also appreciate the efficiency measures put in place by the management, which has led to some savings. However, we share concerns regarding the decrease in project funding and the overall level of voluntary contributions from member states.
7. Financial stability is crucial for the South Centre's effectiveness. We encourage all member states to fulfill their annual commitments and would also request the Centre to actively seek voluntary contributions from members states. There is also a need to continue looking for suitable project funding as it continues to be an important part of South Centre's financial portfolio.
8. We should recognize that the capitals may not always fully appreciate the Centre's invaluable guidance, as the policy advocacy work and coalition building done by the South Centre impacts us directly in Geneva. As direct beneficiaries of the Centre's work, missions in Geneva will have to proactively advocate for adequate funding from their respective capitals.
9. Apart from having this annual gathering at the CoR level, my delegation would advocate more frequent gatherings of member states by the South Centre here in Geneva and its leadership on funding, efficiency measures and exchange of ideas in informal settings over the course of the year.
10. In today's world where there is an overall funding crisis across international institutions, it is all the more important to ensure that South Centre's requirements do not get de-prioritized.
11. Allow me to highlight some other priorities for the Centre's future:

First, the Centre must continue to adapt based on evolving priorities of developing countries, and in line with the changing global landscape.

Second, the Centre should seek to expand the Centre's membership and engagement across the Global South, which will also help address funding challenges. The list of 55

member states has been stagnant for some years now and we need to seek more member states.

Third, and most importantly, we need to continuously remind ourselves that South Centre's success and uniqueness lies in its nature as an Intergovernmental think tank that undertakes policy advocacy for the members of the Global South. This should continue to remain the Centre's guiding principle, without privileging any particular perspective or view point.

Mr. Chair,

12. In conclusion, I thank the South Centre team for their diligent work and assure you of India's continued and constructive support to the Centre.

Thank you.



STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA
AT THE 25TH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE SOUTH CENTRE
8 MAY 2025

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 **thank** the Executive Director, Dr. Carlos Correa, and the Secretariat for organizing the meeting and preparing the documents.
2. We also extend our **sincere appreciation** to the Chairperson of the Board, Board Members, Convenor, Executive Director, and staff of the Centre for **their commendable** in fulfilling the mandate to provide the **valuable support** to the members of the Centre.
3. This year's meeting holds particular **significance**, as we commemorate the **30th anniversary of the establishment of the Centre**. **Indonesia believes this is also a timely moment for reflection and direction-setting**. Over the past three decade the Centre served as a **vital institution** that **advances solidarity, knowledge exchange, and joint advocacy** among developing countries.
4. We also commend the great work of Centre last year. It has **consistently amplified** the voices of developing countries and provided **thoughtful, timely** policy analysis to navigate the evolving global landscape.
5. We continue to value the **critical role** of the Centre, particularly in supporting developing countries navigating today's complex global challenges, exacerbated by the trade war and geopolitical challenges. The Centre's **technical and policy support** across multiple thematic areas has been **instrumental** in shaping developing countries' positions.

Mr. Convenor,

6. We recognize the Centre's ability to **continue serving** developing countries effectively depends not only on the **relevance of its work**, but also on its **financial sustainability**.
7. Based on the report, we note the Centre's **prudent financial management** particularly its effective use of liquidity buffers and interest income to help offset the 2024 budget deficit. This reflects **strong institutional resilience**.
8. It is also worth noting that as shown in the financial report **Indonesia's standing as one of the largest contributors to the Centre for total both capital and operational funds from the Centre's inception up to 31 December 2024** reflects our longstanding and tangible commitment

Mr. Convenor,

9. In order to better improve the financial governance of the Centre, **Indonesia encourages the Centre to adopt a more strategic and forward-looking approach to ensure its financial sustainability and institutional resilience**.
10. To this end, we would like to highlight several **avenues for exploration**.
11. First, we emphasize the importance of addressing **outstanding contributions**. The Centre should **engage** constructively with members who have **yet to fulfill their contributions**. With the support of the Board, the Centre could **send letter** to missions and countries' related institution, offering solutions where needed.
12. Second, **expanding the Centre's membership base** should be a **strategic priority**. With **around** 50 current member states, there remains considerable scope to **reach out to other developing countries**, especially **high-income developing countries** whose membership would strengthen both the Centre's financial base and geopolitical standing. The Centre could increase its participation in **high level international meetings**, showcase expertise and promote itself
13. Third, we **encourage the Centre to further enhance its use of Article X of the Establishment Agreement**, as a key instrument for expanding its access to **financial support** from a broad spectrum of sources. Increasing **potential partnerships**, including both government and non-government entities. It is indeed not easy at this moment... in the period where international organizations are competing to find donors
14. Fourth, the Centre could **open secondment for fund manager**, from countries that have capacity to do so. To support the Centre in developing new and innovative financing source. Secondment could also support the work of Centre in general
15. **Lastly**, we see value in the **Board's continued engagement** in supporting the Centre's **financial governance** and in identifying **opportunities for sustainable and innovative funding**, in coordination with the wider membership. As a follow up of all recommendation the Centre could also make a small team consisting of representatives

from members, Council, and Board to explore more the options to overcome the financing issue.

Mr. Convenor,

16. Looking ahead, **Indonesia encourages the Centre to remain responsive to the evolving needs of developing countries by aligning its strategic direction with pressing global priorities.**
17. The Centre's **continued relevance** depends on our **collective ability** to **adapt** to **emerging challenges** and **reinforce** our **shared commitment** to **development.**
18. Indonesia reaffirms our **continued support** look forward to **constructive collaboration** with all to uphold the Centre's role as a **beacon of South-South cooperation.**

Thank you.



Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran
to the United Nations Office and other International
Organizations

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-Fifth Meeting of Council of Representatives of the South
Centre
8 May 2025

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

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,

It is with great honor and sincere appreciation that I address this esteemed gathering of the 25th Council of Representatives of the South Centre. I wish to commend the South Centre for its unwavering commitment and significant initiatives in championing the voice and priorities of developing countries across multiple global platforms. The South Center activities were well reflected in the report of Doctor Corea, the Executive Director of the Center as well as the Center annual Report of 2024. The Center tireless efforts to advocate for the concerns of the Global South are truly commendable and deeply valued.

During the previous day's session, we engaged in meaningful deliberations on several crucial matters related to the Center and arrived at some important decisions. In light of these discussions, I would like to offer the following observations:

Mr. Chairman,

Our world is currently confronted by a confluence of escalating crises—geopolitical tensions, climate change, and the lingering effects of

the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges are further compounded by rising unilateralism in the form of protectionist tariffs and, most notably, unilateral coercive measures, which undermine the very foundations of sustainable development.

Development hinges on several key enablers—foremost among them: financing. When global resources are increasingly diverted toward military expenditures, the prospect of development finance fades into uncertainty. This is particularly evident in the stagnation of Official Development Assistance (ODA) and other essential funding streams.

Technology transfer is another pillar of development. Yet, when North-South cooperation is conditioned on diluted terms such as "technology transfer on mutually agreed terms"—and more recently, "voluntary technology transfer on mutually agreed terms"—the result is a further erosion of commitment. Similarly, responsible foreign direct investment and capacity-building initiatives are falling short of expectations.

Nevertheless, the South continues to demonstrate its strength. According to UNCTAD, South-South trade has grown significantly, now reaching around \$6 trillion, representing nearly 30% of global trade. Key sectors include electronics, machinery, textiles, and agriculture. In parallel, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows between developing economies have surpassed \$459 billion, with investments surging in areas such as renewable energy, infrastructure, and manufacturing.

Mr. Chairman,

These statistics affirm the vital role of South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTrC) in advancing cross-sectoral collaboration among developing countries. In the face of global economic uncertainty, this cooperation must deepen. As of early 2025, developing countries—collectively referred to as the Global South—account for approximately 40% of global exports, a significant leap from 22% in 1964. South-South trade alone now constitutes one-third of all global trade, with continued growth driven by dynamic economies in East and South Asia.

However, the world's Least Developed Countries (LDCs) continue to struggle, maintaining only a 1% share of global trade—a figure unchanged for over a decade and far from the SDG target of doubling their share.

Mr. Chairman,

While the Global South has made laudable progress, persistent disparities—particularly for the most vulnerable—must be addressed. During the 15th UNCTAD Ministerial Conference (UNCTAD XV), held from 29 March to 1 April 2025, we reaffirmed the need to enhance South-South cooperation and strengthen support for a transparent, inclusive, rule-based, and development-oriented multilateral trading system, with the WTO at its core.

In this context, the Islamic Republic of Iran assigns high importance to the role of the South Centre. We welcome its 2024 Annual Activity Report, which rightly emphasizes areas critical to the Global South—development finance, international trade, unilateral coercive measures, responsible investment, technology transfer, digital transformation, and more.

We firmly believe the South Centre plays a pivotal role in strengthening the capacity of diplomats stationed in Geneva, particularly those engaged in complex negotiations. This essential mandate must be preserved and further reinforced.

Mr. Chairman,

The financial challenges faced by the Centre, as outlined in its financial report, remain a pressing concern for all member states. As Vice-Convenor, I viewed and overviewed the financial report and the scaling up the contribution and urge member states especially those which have less limitations, to bolster the Centre through voluntary contributions and explore innovative funding mechanisms. The ultimate decision on contribution levels rests with national capitals, and we suggest that a decision timeframe ahead of the next Council meeting would allow adequate deliberation.

I would also like to stress the importance of maintaining and enhancing the Centre's work on Global Economy, Trade, Finance, Investment, Technology transfer, and the implications of unilateral coercive measures. Timely, firsthand analysis from the Centre is invaluable in enabling our negotiators to perform with greater effectiveness particularly on the 4th International Conference on Financing For Development (FFD), in Seville (June –July 2025) in Spain as well as the negotiation process of the 16th Conference of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD 16), going to be held in October 2025 in Vietnam.

Mr. Chairman,

Once again, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the South Centre for its exceptional efforts. I wish the Council every success in its deliberations and remain confident that the outcomes of this session will further empower the South Centre in fulfilling its crucial mission. Let us continue to stand united—our shared strength and solidarity are the keys to overcoming the challenges before us and building a future of prosperity for all.

Thank you.

Jamaica Statement
25th Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre
8 May 2025; Geneva, Switzerland

Jamaica welcomes the 25th Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre and at the outset commends the organization for its longstanding support over the past 30 years in assisting developing countries in their efforts to boost economic growth and achieve sustainable development.

Since Jamaica's signing of the international agreement establishing the South Centre on 23 November 1994, the initiatives, analyses and various contributions of the organization have proven to be an invaluable asset, providing critical and timely policy research and advice, capacity building and technical cooperation to support our work in keeping with our national priorities.

As a Small Island Developing State, operating within a very dynamic global environment, we recognize the need for unity, deeper cooperation and effective collaboration in our efforts as developing countries to overcome our development deficits, across all dimensions. It is, therefore, important that collective action is undertaken to remedy our shared challenges, including in relation to climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, geopolitical tensions and the disruptive and rapid changes to the global trade and economic landscape, such as through the emergence of the digital economy and the use of new technologies, including artificial intelligence, as well as unilateral trade measures.

Without being adequately addressed, these challenges have the potential to stymie, or possibly reverse gains, as well as the ability of our countries to achieve sustainable development. However, by pooling our resources and expertise, the Global South can, through deeper solidarity, continue to leverage South-South cooperation to boost economic resilience, complemented by North-South and Triangular Cooperation.

In this regard, we note with appreciation the breadth of work undertaken by the South Centre, as reflected in the 2024 Annual Report. We congratulate and commend the Centre's efforts, under the astute leadership of Executive Director, Dr. Carlos Correa, to advance critical discourse and understanding on matters related to development finance, e-commerce and international taxation, climate change and sustainable development, Health, Biodiversity, International trade, digital transformation and development, Investment, Business and Human Rights, and the impact of unilateral coercive measures on the right to development.

We therefore encourage the South Centre to continue this important work to support the efforts of developing countries, which oftentimes grapple with severe human-resource and capacity constraints that impact their ability to afford representation across the many multilateral institutions, not only those based in Geneva, but also in many instances those based in Vienna and Rome.

Mr. Chairman, our delegation is cognizant of the international developments and financial challenges facing the multilateral system and intergovernmental organizations, like the South Centre, more generally. This is precipitated by the difficult domestic fiscal environment and circumstances facing many developing

countries, which are now further compounded by a dynamic and unpredictable global economy.

Therefore, while Jamaica remains committed to providing financial support to the South Centre and is reviewing the proposal for a revision of the voluntary contributions, we view this session of the Council of Representatives as providing a timely opportunity for us to take stock of and evaluate the organization's work programme as well as undertake a deeper reflection on its efficiency and impact.

This will better assist Member States in critically assessing how the Centre can effectively utilize the limited available financial resources to deliver on the organization's mandate, as well as in reaching agreement on appropriate methods for determining the assessed contributions of Member States and establishing a strategic plan to ensure the organization's future financial viability, among other things.

We view these matters as critical to the ability of the organization to fulfill its mandate of supporting developing countries to respond to the various longstanding and emerging challenges, as well as in future-proofing the organization and its programme of work.

In closing, Jamaica remains committed to and will continue to be actively engaged in the work of the South Centre; and reiterates its strong support for the ongoing efforts of the organization in empowering developing countries to achieve their developmental goals and objectives.



25TH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SOUTH CENTRE

8 MAY 2025

3.00 – 6.00 PM

ROOM XXIII | PALAIS DES NATIONS

AGENDA ITEM 8: GENERAL STATEMENTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Chair,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Malaysia would like to express our appreciation to the Secretariat for the preparation of the 25th Meeting of the Council of Representatives. We also commend the continued leadership of His Excellency the Chair and the Executive Director, Mr. Carlos Correa, and his team for their unwavering commitment to serving the Global South.
2. Malaysia reaffirms its strong support for the South Centre. The Centre plays a critical role in helping Member States navigate the rapidly evolving global landscape. In 2024, the Centre demonstrated its relevance and responsiveness by addressing a broad range of issues — from the negotiations of the pandemic agreement and antimicrobial resistance to digital governance, intellectual property, investment reform, and international tax cooperation.
3. These efforts are not only timely but essential, especially as the multilateral system faces increasing strain and the Global South continues to bear a disproportionate burden of economic, social, and environmental challenges. We particularly commend the Centre's ability to provide high-quality policy research, negotiation support, and capacity-building while operating on a limited budget amidst financial uncertainty.
4. Malaysia notes with concern the budgetary deficit experienced by the Centre in 2024 — the first in 16 years. While the deficit was modest and partly offset by exchange gains and prudent financial management, the underlying structural

vulnerabilities remain. The end of the Swiss Government's host country contribution and the conclusion of major project grants have underscored the need for a more sustainable and predictable financing model.

5. Malaysia is of the view that it is important for the Centre to engage constructively with Member States to address the financing challenges and to find a sustainable solution. Malaysia remains fully committed to the Centre's mandate and to upholding the principle of shared responsibility among Member States. We believe the financial future of the South Centre must be underpinned by a model that is equitable, flexible, and reflective of the diversity within our membership.
6. Malaysia will continue to contribute to the Centre and remains committed to supporting its work within our national capacity.
7. In conclusion, Mr. Chair, Malaysia reiterates our confidence in the leadership of the South Centre and our appreciation for the Secretariat's dedication. We stand ready to work with all Member States in strengthening this unique institution so that it may continue to serve as an important engine of South-South cooperation and a trusted voice for the Global South.

Thank you.

**25th MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE SOUTH CENTRE
STATEMENT OF H.E GERALDO SARANGA, AMBASSADOR
AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF
MOZAMBIQUE**

AGENDA ITEM 8
GENEVA, MAY 8, 2025

**Your Excellency Ambassador Kumar, Convenor of the
Council of Representatives,**

**Your Excellency Thabo Mbeki, Former President of South
Africa and Chairman of the South Centre,**

**Dr. Carlos Correa, Executive Director of the South Centre
Distinguished Participants,**

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

My delegation wishes to commend **H.E. Dr. Thabo Mbeki** for his distinguished leadership of this institution, which plays a critical role in advancing policy research on development and enhancing the ability of developing countries to engage effectively in international negotiations related to the SDGs.

My delegation conveys its respectful greetings to the esteemed members of the Board of the South Centre.

Mr. Convenor,

Mozambique wishes to express its appreciation to H.E. Dr. Thabo Mbeki, Chair of the Board, for his presentation, and takes due note of the 2024 report on the activities and the worrying financial situation of the South Centre.

Despite the challenges faced by the global economy in 2024, including a significant slowdown in growth, high interest rates, rising geopolitical tensions, and a decline in international trade volumes, the Centre continued to effectively carry out its activities and provide technical support to its members.

My delegation welcomes the emphasis placed on South-South and triangular cooperation in the 2024 report, which reaffirms their relevance in addressing global development challenges. Looking ahead, the Fourth Conference on Financing for Development, scheduled for June–July 2025, offers a strategic opportunity to further integrate as a core mechanism for implementing the conference outcomes.

We would also like to acknowledge the invaluable technical support provided by the South Centre in 2024, which has contributed to enhancing the capacity of countries to effectively participate in international discussions and negotiations on critical and complex issues, including development, agriculture

and food security, fisheries, TRIPS, health, human rights, among others.

In this context, I would like to recognize the South Centre's contribution to supporting developing countries in these complex negotiations.

Mr. Convenor,

We reaffirm our call for the South Centre to continue its support for our countries to ensure their full and equal participation in multilateral processes and negotiations. This support is particularly important in the lead-up to the Fourteenth WTO Ministerial Conference (MC14), scheduled to take place in March, next year in Yaoundé, Cameroon.

Mozambique reaffirms its commitment to effectively supporting the mandate of the South Centre by actively assisting developing countries through policy-oriented research, technical reports, guidance on critical international negotiations, and training and capacity-building initiatives. Additionally, we commit to continuing our voluntary financial contributions.

In closing, Mozambique aligns with the previous speakers in expressing their appreciation to the Convenor for his outstanding

leadership of this session and congratulates the Centre on its 30th anniversary.

Thank you for your kind attention!

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



STATEMENT BY
H.E JULIA IMENE-CHANDURU
AMBASSADOR/PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
DURING THE TWENTY-FIFTH MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES

Agenda Item 9. General Statements from
Representatives
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND
8 MAY 2025

1. Thank you, Chairperson, for giving me the floor. It is both an honor and a pleasure for me and my delegation to participate in the 25th Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre.
2. Namibia commends the Secretariat for the Annual Report 2024 of the South Centre, which details its activities, achievements, and the role of South-South Triangular Cooperation in addressing the global challenges faced by developing countries. We look forward to the Fourth Conference on Financing for Development to be held in June-July 2025, in; Seville, Spain, as an opportunity to advance meaningful reforms in global financial governance. Furthermore, as a member of the global south and co-chair of the Pact for the Future, Namibia acknowledges the message from the Executive Director, Dr Carlos Correa, and thanks him for the support during this and other processes.
3. Chairperson, we are meeting today during a period when many developing countries are facing geopolitical tensions, as highlighted in the Report. The report further enumerates numerous other challenges, including debt vulnerabilities, economic fragmentation, resistance from developed countries, and several other issues. Addressing these challenges requires continuous collective efforts, strategic policy support, and enhanced cooperation among developing countries to build a more equitable and sustainable trade system.
4. In 2024, the South Centre made significant contributions to empowering nations in the Global South to adeptly navigate complex trade negotiations and advocate for outcomes that align perfectly with their development priorities. Namibia recognises the pivotal role of South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTrC) in driving international trade. This collaboration is not only beneficial but also essential for promoting trade growth, attracting investment, and advancing economic integration. SSTrC effectively diversifies supply chains, builds capacity, and delivers crucial policy support. Through South-South cooperation, developing countries enhance their trade capabilities, accelerate economic growth, and contribute to a more inclusive and equitable global trade system. We underscore the importance of leveraging platforms such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the South Centre's foresight work to ensure our economies move up the value chain, especially in sectors like critical minerals, agriculture and digital innovation.
5. Namibia congratulates and commends the Secretariat for its support to Member States in preparing for the WTO's 13th Ministerial Conference (MC13). The South Centre provided critical analysis of key issues, including electronic commerce and Intellectual Property rights.

6. Namibia supports the South Centre's efforts in the areas of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) and Responsible Investment. This initiative aids developing countries in utilizing ESG frameworks to attract responsible investments and foster equitable growth. By adopting ESG principles, investment practices are increasingly aligned with sustainable development objectives, ensuring that businesses make a positive contribution to both society and the environment. Relatedly, Namibia underscores the critical importance of our commitment to developing robust legal frameworks that mandate due diligence by business entities to ensure respect for human rights throughout their operations and value chains. The South Centre's continued support on Business and Human Rights is crucial for States in advancing the negotiations on the Legally Binding Instrument.
7. In addition, Namibia is a member of the Global Coalition for Social Justice under the ILO. One of the key interventions under the Coalition is sustainable investment for social justice, with a focus on an initiative that aims to incorporate social justice into investment decisions by guiding the allocation of financial resources, targeting specific outcomes, and improving measurement and reporting. It focuses on enhancing the social aspect of sustainable finance frameworks and related regulatory approaches, as well as Environmental, Social, and Governance ESG frameworks, to promote models that balance social, environmental, and economic outcomes. Given the South Centre's contributions in ESG, Namibia would like to know if there is current or future collaboration with the Global Coalition in this field.
8. On the proposal to revise the assessed voluntary contributions of member states, Namibia welcomes the innovative four-tier scale, which reflects the diverse economies of the member states.
9. In conclusion, as we look to the future, Namibia reaffirms its commitment to the values and vision of the South Centre and requests that the Center continues its role as a think tank for the countries of the South, as its support is more vital than ever despite the current geopolitical tensions.

I thank you.



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

Statement by Pakistan

at the

Twenty-fifth Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre

(8 May 2025 Geneva, Switzerland)

Thank you Chair

Hon'ble Chairman of the Board

Convenor of the Council of Representatives

Executive Director – Excellencies and

Distinguished Delegates,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate the South Centre and the member states on the 30th Anniversary of the South Centre.

Pakistan expresses its appreciation to the Executive Director of the South Centre, Mr. Carlos Correa, for his leadership and advocacy for the Global South. Under his stewardship, the South Centre has consistently amplified the voice of developing countries – 75% of the world's population – on critical global issues related to trade, finance, health, and technology sectors.

As detailed in the 2024 Annual Report, the South Centre has participated in a large number of multilateral negotiations and published an equally larger number of policy briefs and reports – cited widely in intergovernmental discussions and a key resource for negotiators. We particularly commend its technical assistance in the area of international tax negotiations, where it has supported over 80 developing countries through capacity-building workshops and advisory services. The Centre's advocacy for a Pandemic Accord that ensures equitable access to medical countermeasures is another highlight of the year, resonating deeply with Pakistan's health equity priorities.

Furthermore, we acknowledge the Centre's growing engagement with emerging issues including digital economy governance, AI, data rights and climate finance.

Looking ahead, Pakistan would like to offer a few reflections for the Centre's future work.

First, the South Centre should deepen its work on the reform of international financial institutions, especially as developing countries now account for more than 60% of global debt service payments. Analytical work proposing fairer, development-oriented financial reforms would be highly valuable.

Second, we encourage the Centre to expand its research and technical support on technology-related policy areas, particularly digital rights and AI governance. With the

digital economy projected to represent 25% of global GDP by 2030, the South must be prepared to shape its own digital futures.

Third, we believe the Centre can play an even stronger role in promoting climate justice, especially around operationalizing the Loss and Damage Fund agreed at COP28. As developing countries face an estimated \$400 billion in annual climate adaptation costs by 2030, robust South-South advocacy remains essential.

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

In conclusion, Pakistan reiterates its full support for the South Centre and its work. We look forward to deepening our collective efforts to advance the priorities of the Global South.

Thank you.

INTERVENCIÓN DEL EMBAJADOR JUAN ALBERTO CASTILLERO CORREA,
REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE PANAMA ANTE LA ONU EN GINEBRA, EN
LA VIGÉSIMA QUINTA REUNIÓN DEL CONSEJO DE REPRESENTANTES DEL
CENTRO SUR.

Muchas gracias, señor Coordinador, Sr. Ajit Kumar, señor Presidente, Sr. Thabo Mbeki, y señor Director Ejecutivo, Dr. Carlos Correa,

Permítanme saludar también a todos los embajadores y delegados presentes en esta vigésimo quinta reunión del Consejo.

Aprovecho esta oportunidad para felicitar al Centro por su trigésimo aniversario —un hito que refleja décadas de trabajo comprometido, visión estratégica y una firme defensa de la cooperación entre países en desarrollo, especialmente bajo el liderazgo del Director Ejecutivo y la orientación de la Junta.

Agradecemos los informes presentados en esta jornada y valoramos especialmente la labor del Centro en temas clave como la salud global, el cambio climático, la economía digital y la propiedad intelectual. La capacidad técnica y la proyección política del Centro son activos esenciales para nuestros países, particularmente en un contexto internacional cada vez más desafiante.

En relación con la propuesta de revisión de las contribuciones voluntarias evaluadas, tomamos nota de que su discusión ha sido postergada debido a la situación financiera actual. Panamá, que ha contribuido de manera constante dentro de sus capacidades, reafirma su compromiso con la sostenibilidad del Centro y su disposición a participar constructivamente en los debates que se reanuden sobre esta materia.

Quisiera reiterar, para concluir, el respaldo firme de Panamá al mandato del Centro Sur, así como nuestra voluntad de seguir colaborando estrechamente con todos los Estados miembros, con esta mesa y con su Dirección, en la construcción de un sistema multilateral más justo, inclusivo y efectivo.

Muchas gracias.

ADDRESS BY H.E. MR. JUAN ALBERTO CASTILLERO CORREA, PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF PANAMA TO THE UN IN GENEVA AT THE TWENTY-FIFTH
MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SOUTH CENTRE

Thank you very much, Mr. Convenor, Mr. Ajit Kumar, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, and Mr. Executive Director, Dr. Carlos Correa,

Allow me also to greet all the ambassadors and delegates present at this twenty-fifth meeting of the Council.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Centre on its thirtieth anniversary-a milestone that reflects decades of committed work, strategic vision and strong advocacy for cooperation among developing countries, especially under the leadership of the Executive Director and the guidance of the Board.

We appreciate the reports presented today, especially the Centre's work on key issues such as global health, climate change, digital economy and intellectual property. The Centre's technical capacity and policy outreach are essential assets for our countries, particularly in an increasingly challenging international context.

With regard to the proposed revision of the assessed voluntary contributions, we note that its discussion has been postponed due to the current financial situation. Panama, which has consistently contributed within its capabilities, reaffirms its commitment to the sustainability of the Centre and its willingness to participate constructively in the discussions to be resumed on this matter.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Panama's firm support for the mandate of the South Centre, as well as our willingness to continue to work closely with all member states, with this Bureau and with its Directorate, in building a fairer, more inclusive and effective multilateral system.

Thank you very much.



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES



25th Meeting of the Council of Representatives
of the South Centre
08 May 2025



Delivered by Ms. Kristine Leilani R. Salle

Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Philippines
to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva



We would like to thank the Chair for convening this meeting and the Executive Director for sharing with us the programs and activities of the South Centre amidst the many challenges we are facing in terms of global trade and development, public health, and climate risks, among others.

We commend the South Centre for its unwavering support to developing countries. For countries like the Philippines, the Centre has provided critical research, policy support and a space for cooperation, including working through shared challenges - from trade and public health, intellectual property and climate change, among others. We acknowledge the vital role that the South Centre can have in advancing development goals of the Philippines and other countries from the Global South by supporting their voices in multilateral negotiations, including by providing policy and technical advice as well as capacity building, and helping to promote the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals.



25th Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre

As we approach the 30th anniversary of the South Centre, it is important to continue supporting its mission. In a world where the voice of developing nations usually gets drowned out, the South Centre reminds us that there is strength in solidarity. Now more than ever, the Centre's role as an essential platform for developing countries proves to be more crucial.

We hope that more support can be gathered to enable the South Centre to continue its important work in advancing the growth and development of the Global South.

Thank you.



**STATEMENT DELIVERED AT THE TWENTY-FIFTH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
OF REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SOUTH CENTRE**

AMBASSADOR MXOLISI NKOSI

PALAIS DES NATIONS, ROOM XXIII

08 MAY 2025

Check against delivery

Thank you Chairperson,

Your Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki, Chairperson of the Board of the South Centre,

Esteemed Board Members of the South Centre,

Esteemed Professor Carlos Correa, Executive Director of the South Centre,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me at the outset to extend my appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki, the Chairperson of the Board of the South Centre for his wise and exemplary leadership of the Board. I also thank the Executive Director and the Secretariat for the commendable work carried out by the Centre in 2024 as reflected in his report to this Council meeting.

On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of its existence, South Africa salutes the South Centre, and expresses its deep appreciation to the Centre, which has a proud record of conducting research, analysing data, and formulating policy recommendations that have helped developing countries to make informed policy choices on a wide range of social, economic, and development issues.

Chairperson,

In the preceding year, the South Centre played a critical role in supporting delegations with valuable advice which helped to ensure that the interests of the Global South are reflected in two important treaties within the framework of international property, namely, the Treaty to protect Traditional Knowledge and Genetic Resource in Geneva in May 2024, and the Design Law Treaty in Riyadh in November 2024. The Centre was also pivotal in empowering delegations from the Global South with important advice in WHO negotiations on the treaty on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response which will be considered later this month at the World Health Assembly.

At the WTO MC13 in February 2024 in Abu Dhabi, the South Centre's support was crucial for the development agenda, helping with the incorporation of the concept of "digital industrialisation" in the outcome document of the MC13. From an African perspective, the South Centre's support has been significant in promoting the adoption of industrial development trade policies and trade rules which are consistent and aligned with the broader African continental development trajectory including Agenda 2063 and the AfCFTA.

Chairperson,

As mentioned by several speakers before me, the beginning of 2025 has been marked by unprecedented disruptions to the international order, leading to heightened geopolitical tensions, broader economic and financial fragmentation, and increased marginalisation of developing countries. The recently imposed tariffs serve as a barrier to trade, undermine the sustainable development agenda, and are contrary to the letter and spirit of the multilateral rules-based trading system under the WTO. The countries of the Global South should rally in defence of the multilateral trading system under the

WTO. This is a moment for us to intensify economic cooperation, regional trade integration and South-South Cooperation.

Chairperson,

Having assumed the Presidency of the G20 Presidency on 01 December 2024 South Africa is proud to count on the South Centre as a knowledge partner.

South Africa's Presidency will conclude an unprecedented four consecutive G20 Presidencies by developing countries Indonesia, India and Brazil.

In order to tackle the current global polycrisis, the theme of South Africa's G20 Presidency is "Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability". The high-level deliverables and priorities under this theme lie at the core of the original G20 mandate of promoting Strong, Sustainable, Balanced and Inclusive Growth. In the meetings of the G20 that have taken place thus far, South Africa has ensured that development agenda of the Global South which includes sustainable development, climate action, inclusive growth, and digital transformation, is retained in the overall agenda of the G20 and its working groups.

Chairperson,

More than ever before, in view of the current global situation and the threat it poses to the development aspirations of the Global South, we join the Board and the Executive Director in making a plea to member states to renew their commitment and support to the Centre by honouring their financial commitments. In a rapidly changing geopolitical context, characterised by increased vulnerability, uncertainty and complexity, it is urgent that we endow the Centre with the financial resources that will enable it to provide incisive analysis to enable us to navigate the contours of this new global terrain.

Such a commitment will ensure that the South Centre remains an effective and viable instrument for advancing and defending the interest of the Global South.

I thank you.

Intervention by Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations Office in Geneva at the 25th Council of Representatives of the South Centre

8 May 2025

Excellency, President Thabo Mbeki, Chairman of the Board

Distinguished Members of the Board

Representatives of the Council

Excellencies,

Allow me to start by congratulating the South Centre on its 30th Anniversary. Sri Lanka wishes the South Centre many more years of productive engagement and effective interaction in helping the global south to strengthen its collective voice in an increasingly complex and challenging multilateral environment.

Sri Lanka joins other Members, in thanking the distinguished Chairman, Members of the Board, the Executive Director, and the Secretariat staff of the South Centre for their commitment and hard work in achieving this successful landmark. I would also like to congratulate the new members of the Board appointed today.

The contribution of the South Centre, in navigating the technical intricacies of meetings in a growing number of sectors in international Geneva has been invaluable to developing country delegations, particularly the smaller ones working without subject experts of their own, in understanding the nuances and implications of technically complex issues,

My delegation has benefitted from the technical inputs and policy guidelines of the Centre in a diverse areas economic and development challenges spanning across international trade, debt, taxation, intellectual property, climate change and health just to name a few.

We are living through difficult times not only for Member States but also for the UN and international organisations. The financial projections are not good for many organisations while our countries are also going through challenging times. While we understand the need to revise the assessed voluntary contributions it is important that such contributions reflect the economic realities of Member States.

Despite our domestic economic challenges Sri Lanka is pleased to have continued our financial contributions to the Centre including in the year 2024, in recognition of the important work it carries out in our common interest.

Sri Lanka also encourages the Centre to explore new avenues and approaches to increase its finances.

Finally, as a long-standing member state, Sri Lanka believes that it is our collective responsibility to ensure the long-term sustainability of the South Centre.

I Thank you.



**PERMENENT MISSION OF
THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
GENEVA**

**STATEMENT BY DR. ABDALLAH SALEH POSSI, AMBASSADOR
AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC
OF TANZANIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE IN GENEVA**

ON

**THE TWENTY – FIFTH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SOUTH CENTRE**

GENEVA 08 MAY 2025

**STATEMENT BY DR. ABDALLAH SALEH POSSI, AMBASSADOR AND
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE IN GENEVA, ON THE TWENTY – FIFTH
MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SOUTH CENTRE,
GENEVA, 08 MAY 2025**



PERMANENT
MISSION OF
TANZANIA
GENEVA

**Your Excellency Thabo Mvuyelwa MBEKI, Former President of
the Republic of South Africa and Chair of the Board of the South
Center,**

**Your Excellency, Ajit Kumar, Convener of the Council of
Representative,**

**Prof. Carlos María Correa, Executive Director of the South
Centre**

Members of the Board

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Chair,

We extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation for the outstanding work you have put into preparing the 25th Meeting of the Council of Representatives. We believe your attention to detail, careful planning, and commitment to excellence were clearly reflected in what could be perceived as smooth execution; and because of all of this, we are confident things will develop into the overall success of the event.

This year will mark the 30th Anniversary of the Centet. This milestone is a testament to your unwavering commitment to advancing the interests and solidarity of the Global South through policy research, advocacy, and international cooperation.

Chair,

The United Republic of Tanzania wishes to express its sincere gratitude to the Centre for its invaluable support, expertise, and unwavering commitment to advancing the interests of developing countries in global multilateral fora. For three decades, the Centre has been a pivotal platform for amplifying the voices of developing nations, promoting equitable global governance, and fostering sustainable development.

Honouring the work of Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere, whose dedication to South-South solidarity, justice and equity was instrumental to the establishment of the centre, the Centre has continued to play a pivotal role in strengthening our capacity to engage effectively in international negotiations, particularly in areas such as trade, intellectual property, human rights, health, science and technology, tax, and sustainable development. Through its policy research, technical assistance, and strategic guidance, the Centre has empowered our delegations and capital-based expertise to articulate and defend our positions with greater confidence and clarity.

Tanzania deeply values the Centre's contributions to shaping policies that address our shared challenges.



PERMANENT
MISSION OF
TANZANIA
GENEVA

Chair,

The rise of our group's global GDP from 25% in 2000 to an expected 45% in 2025 is noteworthy. The increased interdependence among our Group, which now accounts for over 40% of global exports of goods and services, reflects a positive development for our group that should be acknowledged and celebrated.

Given the current geopolitical tensions, armed conflicts, digital divides, climate change, worsening inequalities, and the rise of unilateral measures, it is essential for us to strengthen our unity and foster closer bonds among ourselves. In this era of unprecedented challenges, we must resist the forces of neoliberalism that prioritize profit over people and the planet. We must champion a new paradigm that places social justice, equity, and the well-being of all peoples at the forefront of our global agenda.

Chair,

We deeply appreciate the Centre's role in fostering solidarity among developing nations, ensuring that our collective voice is heard in shaping fair and equitable global policies. The South Centre's dedication to promoting South-South cooperation aligns with Tanzania's vision for inclusive and sustainable development. We must continue to challenge the structures of power that perpetuate inequality and exploitation, and work towards a world where resources and opportunities are shared equitably among all nations.

Chair,

We remain concerned that the Centre continues to face significant financial challenges that threaten its ability to effectively fulfill its mandate. While we acknowledge the suggestions put forward by Member States, as well as the steps the Centre has taken during these difficult times to mitigate the impact of financial constraints, we are also mindful of our collective financial responsibility to support the Centre.

In light of our discussions, let us move forward with the implementation of our agreed-upon strategies in the spirit of enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of this organization. Let us remain steadfast in our commitment to building a more just and equitable world for future generations.



PERMANENT
MISSION OF
TANZANIA
GENEVA

Chair,

Having said so, I thank you very much for giving me the floor.



REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

**STATEMENT
BY AMB. ARTHUR KAFEERO**

**DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
PERMANENT MISSION OF UGANDA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

AT

**THE 25TH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
SOUTH CENTRE**

AT THE

**UNITED NATIONS
GENEVA**

THURSDAY 8 MAY 2025

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Chairperson of the Board, H.E. Thabo M. Mbeki, former President of South Africa
Convenor of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre, Amb Ajit Kumar
Executive Director of the South Centre, Dr. Carlos Correa,
Distinguished Representatives,

At the outset, I wish to thank the Executive Director, Dr. Carlos Correa and the entire team at the South Centre Secretariat for its work and organizing this 25th session of the Council Representatives.

Uganda commends HE Thabo Mbeki the Chairperson of the Board, for his leadership and extend our sincere appreciation to all the members of the Board for giving guidance and direction to the Centre.

I thank the Executive Director for his report. Uganda commends the South Center for fulfilling its mandate as well elaborated in the Annual Report. The report details the significant support the Center has continued to provide to developing countries, especially to promote their common interests in the international arena.

As the chair rightly stated, the world is facing a polycrisis. The challenges of Covid19 and its impact on developing countries were plain to see. Collective action of the developing countries in international fora is an imperative. There is a need to exercise to the full potential this collective influence on the global scene by working more effectively and closely together.

The South Centre has remarkably facilitated and informed this critical work, and this should continue. We are cognizant that the international agenda is busy and broad and thus the Center cannot do everything. We urge the Center to continue its important work and we welcome the attention it has attached to promoting South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

We commend the Centre for its technical reports, advice on key international negotiations and policy-oriented research, which as stated, in the report, has seen the Centre in 2024 publishing major research outputs (40) addressing issues relevant to developing countries. These have provided useful analyses and informed participation in international negotiations.

We also are glad to note that a significant number of these publications were the result of cooperation with other institutions and academics, mostly from developing countries. This support has enabled countries to play an active role in various intergovernmental

processes. We commend the Centre for closely following these processes and supporting developing countries in their efforts to ensure outcomes reflect their needs and interests.

We have seen this valuable support in processes here in Geneva such as; addressing international taxation issues, negotiations on a draft covenant on the Right to Development, negotiations at the World Health Organization (WHO) for a pandemic agreement, a wide range of issues in the World Trade Organization (WTO) including preparations for MC13 and the follow-up, addressing unilateral coercive measures, new treaties on intellectual property of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) like the one on Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge, among others.

On capacity building, the Centre has been active in multiple fields. We note for example, the Executive Director will participate in a Capacity Building Workshop on Plant Variety Protection organized by the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa, in Uganda next week. We look forward to welcoming him and the opportunity to explore areas of further cooperation and collaboration.

We commend the Centre for its work and efforts in supporting cooperative frameworks of developing countries. We witnessed the direct and indirect support as chair last year of the Group of 77 and China, and value its continued support as current chair of the Non-Aligned Movement.

We share concern regarding the financial situation and take note of the measures in treasury management, tightening project cost allocations and non-personnel cost reductions taken among others. We believe that the long-term sustainability of the Center needs to be ensured, which may require creative and innovative ideas on how to address it.

Finally, I wish to reiterate Uganda's commitment to strengthen collaboration and support for the Center.

Thank you.



**MENSAJE DEL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE LA REPUBLICA
BOLIVARIANA DE VENEZUELA,
S.E. EMBAJADOR ALEXANDER YÁNEZ DELEUZE,
ANTE LA VIGÉSIMA QUINTA REUNIÓN DEL CONSEJO DE REPRESENTANTES
DEL CENTRO SUR**

JUEVES, 8 DE MAYO DE 2025

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

Inicio mi intervención manifestando nuestro sentimiento de júbilo con motivo a la celebración de esta Vigésima Quinta reunión del Consejo de Representantes del Centro Sur, al tiempo que nos sumamos a la celebración del 30 aniversario de tan destacada institución, a la cual hacemos un enérgico reconocimiento a su importante labor en apoyo a los pueblos del sur. Esta conmemoración coincide también con los 80 años de la firma de la Carta de la ONU.

Excelencias,

La República Bolivariana de Venezuela valora altamente como estratégico el papel desempeñado por el Centro Sur, no sólo por representar en tiempos tan complejos en el espacio internacional un espacio favorable para los países del sur, en el ámbito multilateral, sino también por el importante aporte del centro frente a las complejas y desafiantes realidades a nivel mundial, vistas desde la óptica del sur global.

Hemos escuchado con atención el informe presentado por el director ejecutivo sobre las actividades del centro y su situación financiera. Conocemos y agradecemos el trabajo de análisis, investigación y procura de consenso en temas de la agenda multilateral, no visto desde el enfoque eurocentrista. De manera que el Centro Sur ha sido un positivo aliado articulador en materia de comercio internacional, propiedad intelectual, salud, desarrollo sostenible, financiación para el desarrollo, el derecho de los pueblos al desarrollo entendido en el marco de los derechos humanos y la cooperación sur-sur.

En el caso de Venezuela creemos propicio hacer una especial mención por el apoyo recibido por el Centro Sur en la divulgación de los efectos de las medidas coercitivas unilaterales, al visibilizar y concientizar desde una perspectiva académica sobre el

impacto de estas criminales medidas, tanto para los países que la sufren como sus repercusiones sobre la agenda de desarrollo en general, mostrando su verdadera significación como armas utilizadas por las grandes potencias contra los países resueltos a conducirse desde la soberanía y la autodeterminación.

Actualmente y ante un vacilante sistema de Naciones Unidas, ya son más de 37.000 medidas coercitivas unilaterales que se aplican en el mundo. Una gran cantidad de ellas han sido dirigidas contra potencias energéticas. En el caso de Venezuela han sido aplicadas 1.027 medidas coercitivas unilaterales desde este año 2025. Estas medidas califican como crímenes de lesa humanidad.

Se trata pues, de un contexto que deja en evidencia la agresión contra el multilateralismo, los derechos de los pueblos y su libre desarrollo. Además, contra la dignidad humana. No cesan los intentos por parte de las potencias occidentales, bajo una lógica neocolonialista, de pretender debilitar y desnaturalizar al multilateralismo en sus propósitos para enfrentar los complejos retos actuales a partir del respeto mutuo.

En otras palabras, nos encontramos resistiendo en medio de una coyuntura histórica que amenaza la paz a raíz del quiebre de la unipolaridad frente al surgimiento de un nuevo orden mundial en el que ya hacemos vida, el cual avanza inevitablemente hacia un mundo multicéntrico y pluripolar. Un nuevo orden que demanda con creciente fuerza trascender la actual crisis del derecho internacional y del derecho internacional humanitario, cuyo alcance y aplicabilidad ha pretendido ser relativizado ante los ataques criminales en la Franja de Gaza, perpetrados en absoluta inobservancia de todas las leyes y convenios internacionales, en un plan para exterminar al hermano pueblo palestino.

Frente a esta lectura de la situación global, resaltamos la gran importancia del Centro Sur como tanque de pensamiento que contribuye a contener el pensamiento único que se pretende imponer de los países occidentales.

Venezuela también quiere agradecer el acompañamiento recibido de la mano del Director Ejecutivo del Centro, el Sr. Carlos Correa, durante la visita de nuestro Vicecanciller para Asuntos Multilaterales, Rubén Molina, en noviembre de 2024, donde se logró discutir importantes temas de interés, entre los cuales destacamos el deseo de Venezuela de unificar esfuerzos entre el Centro y nuestras universidades, a los fines de impulsar la creación de estudios y análisis, principalmente en materia económica, favorable para los países en desarrollo.

Desde este mismo espíritu articulador, excelencias, reiteramos igualmente nuestro deseo de concretar una visita de las autoridades del Centro Sur a Venezuela y desarrollar una agenda de trabajo a favor de acciones colectivas.

Un trabajo que también merece ser destacado por parte del Centro, es el relativo a los análisis sobre acceso a medicamentos, patentes farmacéuticas y resistencia a los antimicrobianos con sentido de prioridad, contribuyendo en las negociaciones del Proyecto de Acuerdo sobre Pandemias a presentarse en la próxima 78 Asamblea Mundial de la salud.

Finalmente, el Centro es sin duda una evidencia para reafirmar lo que Mario Benedetti subrayaba en su poesía inmortal: *El sur también existe*.

Muchas gracias, señor presidente.



**MESSAGE FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOLIVARIAN
REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA,
H.E. AMBASSADOR ALEXANDER YANEZ DELEUZE,
TO THE TWENTY-FIFTH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE SOUTH CENTRE**

THURSDAY, 8 MAY 2025

H.E. 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 Board Members, Ambassadors and Colleagues,

I begin my intervention by expressing our sense of joy on the occasion of this 25th meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre, as we join in the celebration of the 30th anniversary of such an outstanding institution, to which we strongly acknowledge its important work in support of the peoples of the South. This commemoration also coincides with the 80th anniversary of the signing of the UN Charter.

Excellencies,

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela highly values the role played by the South Centre as strategic, not only because it represents a favourable space for the countries of the South at the multilateral level in such complex times in the international arena, but also because of the Centre's important contribution to the complex and challenging realities at the global level, seen from the perspective of the global South.

We have listened carefully to the report presented by the Executive Director on the activities of the Centre and its financial situation. We are aware of and appreciate the work of analysis, research and consensus-building on issues on the multilateral agenda, not seen from the Eurocentric approach. Thus, the South Centre has been a positive articulating ally in the areas of international trade, intellectual property, health, sustainable development, financing for development, the right of peoples to development understood within the framework of human rights and South-South cooperation.

In the case of Venezuela, we believe it is appropriate to make special mention of the support received by the South Centre in the dissemination of the effects of unilateral coercive measures, by making visible and raising awareness from an academic perspective of the impact of these criminal measures, both for the countries that suffer them and their repercussions on the development agenda in general, showing their true significance as weapons used by the great powers against countries

determined to conduct themselves on the basis of sovereignty and self-determination.

Today, in the face of a faltering UN system, more than 37,000 unilateral coercive measures are already in place around the world. A large number of them have been directed against energy powers. In the case of Venezuela, 1,027 unilateral coercive measures have been applied since 2025. These measures qualify as crimes against humanity.

This is a context that highlights the aggression against multilateralism, the rights of peoples and their free development. It is also an attack on human dignity. Attempts by the Western powers, under a neo-colonialist logic, to weaken and denaturalise multilateralism in order to face today's complex challenges on the basis of mutual respect, continue unabated.

In other words, we find ourselves resisting in the midst of a historical juncture that threatens peace as a result of the breakdown of unipolarity in the face of the emergence of a new world order in which we are already living, which is inevitably moving towards a multicentric and pluripolar world. A new order that demands with increasing force to transcend the current crisis of international law and international humanitarian law, whose scope and applicability has been relativised in the face of the criminal attacks in the Gaza Strip, perpetrated in total disregard of all laws and international conventions, in a plan to exterminate the brotherly Palestinian people.

In the face of this reading of the global situation, we stress the great importance of the South Centre as a think tank that contributes to containing the one-size-fits-all thinking that is being imposed by Western countries.

Venezuela would also like to thank the support received from the Executive Director of the Centre, Mr. Carlos Correa, during the visit of our Deputy Foreign Minister for Multilateral Affairs, Rubén Molina, in November 2024, where important issues of interest were discussed, among which we highlight Venezuela's desire to unify efforts between the Centre and our universities, in order to promote the creation of studies and analysis, mainly in economic matters, favourable to developing countries.

In this same spirit of coordination, Excellencies, we also reiterate our desire to make a visit to Venezuela by the authorities of the South Centre a reality and to develop a working agenda in favour of collective action.

The Centre's work on access to medicines, pharmaceutical patents and antimicrobial resistance is also worth highlighting as a priority, contributing to the negotiations of the Draft Pandemic Agreement to be presented at the upcoming 78th World Health Assembly.

Finally, the Centre is undoubtedly evidence to reaffirm what Mario Benedetti underlined in his immortal poetry: The South also exists.

Thank you very much, Mr President.



STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR/PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, HER EXCELLENCY EVER MLILO, AT THE TWENTY-FIFTH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES ON 8 MAY 2025, PALAIS DES NATIONS, ROOM XXIII.

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

Convener of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre, H.E. Ambassador Ajit Kumar

Distinguished Board Members

Executive Director Dr Carlos Correa

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Allow me to extend sincere appreciation to you all for convening this 25th Meeting of the Council of Representative of the South Centre.

The Twenty Fifth meeting coincides with the 30th anniversary of the South Centre and as Members we are thrilled to be part of this momentous occasion. For three decades, the organisation has proved to be an indispensable platform for dialogue and advancement of our development agenda in the context of South-South cooperation.

I take this opportunity to commend His Excellency Comrade Thabo Mbeki for his commitment to outstanding leadership, and his determination to serve the countries of the South. I also express sincere gratitude to the Convenor for efficiently steering the work of the Council of Representatives. To the South Centre Board Members; Egypt, Brazil, India and Tanzania, thank you for your steering leadership of the Board.

We extend our profound gratitude to the Executive Director for his 2024 report. The report details work undertaken and the support provided to

developing countries through research publications, capacity building programs, trainings, meetings, briefings and other activities undertaken during the year. We had hoped that the 2024 would signal recovery and revival from the devastating effects of Covid 19 but it fell short of our expectations. The year presented yet another set of challenges for the developing and least developed countries. We endeavoured to revitalise our economies and enhance resilience, notwithstanding the increasingly uneven and inadequate playing field.

The multilateral system which we have so painstakingly constructed over the past decades has come under increasing strain. The year 2025 presents unique challenges, with escalating geopolitical tensions, pervasive politicisation and increased polarisation hindering the international cooperation and collaboration that developing countries need to thrive.

Throughout this period, as clearly reflected in the Annual Report, the South Centre has proved to be a consistent companion - informing, guiding and advising our countries on a wide range of critical topics. The South Centre has also provided detailed analysis, research-based data and proffered well-argued policy options on pressing issues. These challenges encompassed a broad of issues that include climate change, health concerns, trade in all its forms and its symbiotic relationship with development, food nutrition security, intellectual property, indebt, development finance, increasing migration particularly labour migration and the concerning trend of unilateral coercive measures (UCMs), which affect not only my country but and increasing number of nations. These illegal sanctions or so-called targeted measures continue to inflict widespread damage to lives and livelihoods of millions of ordinary citizens in our countries.

We therefore underscore the continued important role of the South Centre as the only intergovernmental organization in Geneva that advocates a perspective of the South in multilateral negotiations which are often dominated by developed country interests. We express our deep appreciation and continued support for the manner and consistency with which the South Centre has stayed the course in fulfilling its mission as a think-tank and advisor to the Global South. We edge the South Centre to

engage more strongly with capital-based officials and continue its collaboration with other organisations, institutions, and scholars of the South.

As we look ahead, the Global South's prospects continue to be encumbered by the multiple crises and challenges which are further compounded by the resurgence of unilateralism and protectionism and an unravelling of our multilateral system. These challenges have of course been intensified by the outbreak of conflict in various regions resulting in disruptive impacts on the supply and cost of food, agricultural inputs and energy.

Against this background and as we step up our efforts in different fora, it is clear that the role of the South Centre and its contribution, in terms of guiding and enriching our developmental efforts, are more important than ever. We continue to rely on the South Centre's work and support to unpack and fully understand technically complex issues and to assist our delegations in formulating and consolidating positions within the ongoing multilateral engagements.

Indeed, for the South Centre to continue and even increase its invaluable work and, in response to the report on the current financial situation, it is clear that more needs to be done to ensure that the South Centre is adequately resourced. While we encourage the Centre to find innovative ways to source its financing, there is need for all members to meet their financial obligations.

In conclusion Mr Chair, I reassert Zimbabwe's unwavering commitment to and support for the South Centre, and our firm determination to honour our financial obligations and dues.

I thank you!

**Closing remarks by H.E. Mr. Ajit Kumar, Convenor of the Council of
Representatives of the South Centre at the 25th Meeting of the Council of
Representatives of the South Centre, 8 May 2025**

Colleagues, before we close the meeting, I would like to just say a few more words.

I thank you very much for your valuable comments, your time, and your continued commitment to the South Centre.

This year, as we celebrate the legacy of the 30th anniversary of the South Centre, we must acknowledge that the Centre is operating with very serious financial constraints. The demands for our work have been increasing year after year. However, the financial support from the members has not kept pace. In this regard, I would like to thank those members who have made their contributions last year, especially those who pay regularly and in particular those members who have been keeping making their special contributions.

Colleagues, we recognize that many of our members are facing economic pressures of their own. However, the financial situation of the Centre is unsustainable if we don't act together now. Without adequate resources, the Centre risks losing its capacity to provide developing countries with independent analysis, technical support, and strategic coordination they rely on in multilateral negotiations.

As I said last year, the South Centre is a Centre of our own and a Centre of solidarity. So, I call upon all our members to try their best to strength our Centre and to secure its future.

I thank you once again, colleagues, for coming today and the meeting is hereby closed.



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