



Equity, Rule-of-Law, Coordination, Inclusiveness and Action
Intervention by Carlos Correa, South Centre Executive Director

Seminar on Global Governance

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President of the Xinhua News Agency, Mr. FU Hua, Ambassador JIA Guide, UN Director-General in Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya,

Excellencies, esteemed delegates,

On behalf of the South Centre, let me thank the organizers for the invitation to this seminar.

We also appreciate the launching of the new book by Xinhua News Agency and the thoughtful concept paper circulated for this event.

'Equity, Rule-of-Law, Coordination, Inclusiveness and Action' are essential for the preservation and further improvement of the multilateral system, which is of vital importance for developing countries and the international community as a whole.

Given the limitation in time, I will make three observations concerning the themes suggested for this panel.

First, how the countries of the Global South can leverage the United Nations and Geneva-based platforms to elevate development issues to a priority position on the international agenda, is a question of great importance.

At the South Centre we have identified several problems and actions that are necessary in this regard.

One problem is the proliferation of Geneva-based forums addressing interconnected issues. Discussions on some matters often occur in parallel across multiple organizations with overlapping mandates. A noticeable example is digital governance and AI, where several bodies engage with issues such as digital divide, data governance, algorithmic bias and digital trade.

Improved coordination among the organizations, led by their respective memberships, is necessary.

A second problem is that there are clear thematic silos. The interconnections of issues such as human rights, trade, finance for development, environment, climate change, investment, taxation and other matters are often overlooked. There is a need to engage in more comprehensive analyses and integrate different thematic areas to effectively address the global challenges.

In addition, developing countries often have difficulties to establish a nexus between the work in Geneva and the multilateral processes taking place in other UN locations, such as New York, Vienna, Bonn, Rome and Nairobi.

These problems may be aggravated by the reduction in resources available to Geneva-based multilateral institutions and in the financial support for the participation of developing countries' delegations, particularly of LDCs and capital-based officials.

Although the South Centre can, of course, only make a limited contribution to address these multiple problems, we already focus a significant part of our work on the interphase between different thematic areas.

We have also elaborated an initiative to implement, subject to the availability of resources, two new mechanisms to support the Global South participation in international negotiations and improve its internal coordination: a **Global South Hub** and a **Virtual Forum** enabled by AI.

My second observation relates to the role that Geneva-based institutions can play in advancing rule-making to address key socio-economic and technological challenges faced by the Global South, including in emerging areas such as artificial intelligence governance. We think that such a role is key and has no substitute in the multilateral system.

To fully play that role, however, it is essential to overcome the fragmentation I referred to before, and to enhance the collective negotiating capacity as well as the agenda-setting ability of the Global South. This is also indeed one of the key mandates of the South Centre.

Third, and finally, it is our view that dialogue and mutual understanding can take place among different civilizations and cultures. Cultural diversity is not an obstacle for international cooperation; it may rather become a driving force for global cooperation and innovation.

South-South cooperation, which has been boosted in the last decades by an impressive number of initiatives led by China, has never been stopped by cultural differences. There are many examples to prove this. For instance:

The Belt and Road Initiative;

The expansion of BRICS;

China and Brazil have worked together for more than two decades to develop Earth Resource Satellites to monitor environmental changes;

Cuba has supported West Africa in combating Ebola and COVID-19;

Mexico has shared expertise in diversifying corn products to improve health and nutrition in Kenya.

There are hundreds of examples like these, and, in fact, our expectation is that they will continue to grow as South-South and Triangular Cooperation is increasingly becoming a powerful tool for development.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

We have no doubt that strengthening the role of International Geneva under recognized principles of global governance and international solidarity, can effectively support the development efforts in the Global South and that it can contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The South Centre, as always, is ready to cooperate in this endeavor.