



Statement by

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South-South Cooperation

Mr. Chairman

Excellencies, distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

Thank you for giving me opportunity to speak before this august gathering.

Introduction

Today, South-South cooperation (SSC) is a dominant debate in the international development field and is appealing as an indispensable means of international development cooperation. In the developing world, it is seen as a magical elixir to bring socio economic and political change through technical cooperation from other peer countries. Inherently, south south cooperation means southern countries taking ownership of development and leading technical cooperation for peer countries. It promotes the transfer of practical experience among contexts that often share characteristics and constraints and southern solutions to development problems which can often be better adapted to a peer country conditions than northern-inspired solutions. SSC is now espoused by development agencies around the world and it is meant to foster policy dialogue, public private partnership, knowledge generation and exchange of information on the development experiences in the southern countries.

South-South cooperation is ever growing due to prosperous of southern countries economic growth that enables an increasing number of countries to engage in cooperation and increase their provision of development assistance. The SSC opportunities seem to be strongest among middle income countries than the least-developed, landlocked and small island states.

The idea of south south cooperation is not new but emergences through different strategies.

A. South South Cooperation: the first generation strategies (essence)

The first initiative for south south cooperation was established by a developing country in the name of “The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development” in 1961 with the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA). The bank’s operation was started in the mid-1970s. In the late 1960s China started to provide south south cooperation assistance to African countries including constructing the Tazara railway

between Tanzania and Zambia. Since then the numbers of southern development assistance contributors like India, South Africa, Indonesia, Korea and Brazil have provided technical assistance to developing countries. The volume of such South-South development cooperation remains limited, the relative decline in North-South development cooperation has made its growth seem more spectacular. Nineteen Seventies were marked by great optimism about the ability of the south to reshape the international structure of power and economic relations in a more equitable direction. The increased activism of G77 and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) during this period led to the adoption by the UN General Assembly of resolutions on the New International Economic Order and on new forms for technology transfer between countries. NAM established the Group for South-South Consultation and Coordination (G-15) in 1989.

B. South South Cooperation: the second generation strategies (recognition)

South south cooperation concept first phrased strategically at the 1978 United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries that resulted in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. The United Nations General Assembly established the UNDP Special Unit for South-South Cooperation (SU/SSC) in 1978. The primary mandate was to promote, coordinate and support South-South and Triangular Cooperation on a global and UN system-wide basis. The General Assembly High-Level Committee on South-South Cooperation (HLC) provides policy directives and guidance to the Special Unit. This committee as a subsidiary body of the GA reviews world-wide progress in South-South Cooperation. In December 2003, the UN proclaimed (Resolution 58/220) United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation which is being celebrated annually on December 19th. This declaration serves to focus attention on SSC and to promote more extensive participation in SSC efforts.

United Nations provided guidance specific to South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation through the different means and resolutions: a) the New Directions Strategy on technical cooperation among developing countries (1995); b) the Revised Guidelines for the review of policies and procedures concerning technical cooperation among developing countries (2003); c) the Nairobi outcome document of the United Nations High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation (2009); d) Framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation (2012); e) Leveraging South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation (2013) and f) operation activities for development: the state of south south cooperation issued by the Secretary-General (series of resolutions).

Further, the UN General Assembly urged all UN agencies and other multilateral organizations to mainstream SSC in their program operations and to increase resource allocations to support SSC activities. A number of United Nations agencies have established coordination units and created strategies for South-South cooperation like UNFPA, ILO, ECOSOC, UNDCF and World Bank that have been actively encouraging and contributing towards SSC.

With the continuation of advocacy for SSC, UN states that in its policy and operational work, South-South cooperation to be defined as *“a process whereby two or more developing countries pursue their individual and/or shared national capacity development objectives through exchanges of knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how, and through regional and interregional collective actions, including partnerships involving Governments, regional*

organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector, for their individual and/or mutual benefit within and across regions.”

South-south Cooperation maintained its momentum. There are now many regional mechanisms for promoting and coordinating South-South cooperation, for example,

- Asia has taken a lead role in promoting South-South Cooperation through regional and sub-regional integration. The 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) continues to be a leader in this area. Under a framework agreement signed in 2000, ASEAN members pursued increased digital readiness in the region.
- The South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) formed in 1985 with comprised of 7 countries but today it membership raised to 8 countries.
- The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has been among the most dynamic sub-regional groupings in the past four years. South Africa has been the engine of this progress. Its economy has dominated the whole region and provided the main source of FDI flow in that sub-region.

C. South South Cooperation: the third generation strategies (institutionalization for engineering the promotion of reproductive health, family planning, population and development)

South-South cooperation existed even before the UN recognised it officially. The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Program of Action (PoA) acknowledges SSC as a key strategy for achieving its goals and an important instrument of development and technical cooperation among developing countries. The ICPD is widely acclaimed as a landmark multi-country agreement, which committed governments to achieving, by 2015, a range of goals that placed individual people and human rights at the centre of development. Further the Millennium Summit held in 2000, the world community called attention for the partnership for development as its included MDG goal 8 “Develop a global partnership for development”

The UN recognition gave a tool or strategy for developmental cooperation much impetus as was evident to creation of Partners in Population and Development (PPD) as an Inter-Governmental Organisation during the ICPD in Cairo in 1994 for institutionalising the South South Cooperation in the field of Reproductive Health, Population and Development. PPD started with 10 founding member countries and currently it has a membership of 25 developing countries (Bangladesh, Benin, China, Colombia, Egypt, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, South Africa, Thailand, Tunisia, Uganda, Vietnam, Yemen and Zimbabwe) that are home to over 58% of the world’s population. PPD reflects the international acceptance of SSC as a vital means towards attainment of universal access to sexual reproductive Health and rights and sustainable development. Over the years, PPD has built a well acknowledged and credible reputation for its successful dedication to high level advocacy, policy dialogues, exchange of information, best practices, research, training and technical cooperation. This has assisted both its member countries and many non-member countries in the implementation of the ICPD PoA within the broader framework of the MDGs.

PPD developed a mechanism for institutionalisation of south south cooperation at national level. Sixty percent of its member countries have created south south cooperation structure (National Taskforce) at national level for fostering and sustaining south south cooperation for reproductive health, family planning, population and development. The taskforce comprises of key stakeholders from relevant ministries, INGOS, CSOs, and research and academic institutions. It has established a network of 21 Partner Institutions as centres of excellence for reproductive health, family planning population and development.

PPD organizes policy dialogues on global, regional and national level priority issues of importance related to population, development and reproductive health including HIV/AIDs, family planning and adolescent health in the form of international and regional for a for member and non-member countries. These events are opportunities to review the challenges and to identify the lessons to be learned from other member countries in a South-South Cooperation (SSC) frame work. The International Inter-Ministerial Conferences are mechanisms for policy makers from the 25 PPD alliance member countries to define and build consensus on priority standards of critical issues affecting population and development in their respective countries. These commitments guide the actions by governments and other stakeholders in improving the sexual and reproductive health of individuals and couples in the southern countries. They provide impetus for adopting and enhancing laws, policies and programmes that bring about sustainable development. This includes, addressing the challenges of population dynamics, attaining sustainable population growth through, voluntary family planning, ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, gender and social equity and rights of every individual to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health. The member countries share expertise and resources in the spirit of SSC.

The 2013, 10th annual International Inter-ministerial conference of PPD will be held at a critical stage of the global dialogue on the development goals of post ICPD and MDGs. The South-South Cooperation (SSC) development partnership has emerged as an effective strategy in addressing population dynamics challenges including population stabilization, family planning, sexual and reproductive health and sustainable development. Technical cooperation, sharing of best practices, pooling of resources, shared advocacy and global diplomacy have emerged as some of the means for achieving the goals of SSC.

The scope of South to South Collaboration in the context of post ICPD/MDG, sustainable development goals will be explored in the following thematic areas.

1. Family Planning for Sustainable Development
2. Integrating Population Dynamics into National Development Goals
3. Investing for Demographic Dividend
4. Sexual and Reproductive Health for All

The role of adolescents and young people, and the ageing population in the post ICPD/MDG development goals will be of special interest for the Global South. Gender, equity and rights approach will be explored as cross cutting themes.

The conference will be organized jointly with the Government of China and PPD on 22 & 23 October 2013 in Beijing. The outcome of the Conference will be a declaration, adopted by 25 member countries and conference participants with commitments and a road map for SSC towards ICPD PoA beyond 2014 and MDGs beyond 2015 for RH, Population and Development.

In conclusion, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, time is on our side. But we have to work hard to face challenges and seize opportunities. I have no doubt, if we work together collaboratively and in partnership, if we share our lessons learned, we are sure to achieve our goals and targets. The international community should give more attention with direct financial support on south south cooperation in mainstreaming SRH&Rs ICPD beyond 2014. The priority areas are:

1. to provide opportunities for documentation, evidence based knowledge and experience sharing for SRHRs policy and program change in southern countries
2. to support for creating and strengthening multi-sectoral partnerships to utilize evidence based knowledge, realization of national and international commitments and accountability
3. to increase opportunities for Technology/Commodity exchange among southern countries and utilize the capacity of southern manufacturers for affordable and quality production of contraceptive for male and female and other RH commodities
4. to provide support for capacity building of southern parliamentarians and youth groups for creating new generation of leaders/champions for advocacy on SRHRs through utilisation of evidence based knowledge and field visits in southern countries
5. to explore and strengthen Networks (regional association/organisation, parliamentary networks, private sectors, CSOs, research and academic institutions)

I thank you all.