



**STATEMENT BY MR. K. NATWAR SINGH, MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, AT THE TWENTY-NINTH ANNUAL MEETING OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE GROUP OF 77 AT THE 60<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON SEPTEMBER 22, 2005**



Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to felicitate Jamaica on the outstanding leadership provided to the Group of 77 since the beginning of this year and for promoting the Group's interests in all UN fora.

I also take this opportunity to welcome our incoming Chairman, South Africa. We wish South Africa a productive tenure and look forward to a constructive engagement with it in the pursuit of our common goals and objectives.

I would also like to express our appreciation to Qatar for hosting the Second South Summit earlier this year and for their generous hospitality and excellent organisation. We commend their initiative to establish the South Fund on Development and Humanitarian Assistance. India has pledged a contribution of US \$ 2 million for development projects by India in the countries of the South and is happy to be associated with this initiative.

Mr. Chairman,

You have suggested a most appropriate theme for discussion today, "Implementation of the Development Agenda following the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly." This underlines the fact that the Group continues to face the same underlying systemic challenges that originally brought developing countries into a united and cohesive force in the Sixties, although under markedly different conditions. While an increasingly globalising world reinforces the interdependence among nations, making the process of globalisation fairer and equitable poses a major challenge.

Today, in many respects, the international economic environment is harsher and calls for redoubled efforts and greater solidarity. The outcome document adopted by Heads of State and Government at the conclusion of the 2005 World Summit has underlined the need strengthening the United Nations in order to equip it to deal with the challenges of development and security. We also recall, in this context, the decision of our leaders at the Second South Summit to revitalise and strengthen the role of the UN system and to fight for democratisation and transparency in the international financial, monetary and trade institutions. Democratic deficit in the governance of Bretton Woods Institutions needs to be addressed to enhance legitimacy, transparency, accountability and ownership of the decision-making processes. Since Monterrey, progress has been limited to, and distracted by, peripheral issues which are not central to enhancement of 'voice' and participation of the developing countries in decision-making. Raymond F. Mikesell in his book 'The Bretton Woods Debates: A Memoir' has written that the US Treasury Secretary had telephoned him in 1945 and told him how much quota USA and European countries should get. This question must be addressed now. India is continuing to urge gaining of momentum [raised yesterday by India's Executive Director at the IMF] to address the question of weightage and quotas so as to give 'voice' to developing countries.

We should build on the Outcome Document in addressing the gigantic developmental challenges confronting the developing countries, whether in the areas of employment, rising energy costs, protection of the environment, or addressing communicable diseases. We hope that the implementation of the agreements contained in the Outcome Document will lead to the creation of a more favourable international economic environment that would be more supportive of our development efforts.

India recognises that the Group had much higher expectations from the high level plenary event in the area of development. Several studies had concluded that enhanced levels of international cooperation would be crucial for the realisation of Millennium Development Goals. The challenge for the Group in coming months would be to build on the recognition in the outcome document of the need for strengthening efforts at both national and international levels. Not only increase in the level of Official Development Assistance would be important but also enhanced resource flows to developing countries through innovative sources of financing, as well as the realisation of development dimensions in the trade negotiations, would be crucial. The developing countries had much higher expectations from the event to give a clear direction to the Doha round of trade negotiations. The developing countries need to face the struggle that lies ahead when details are negotiated to safeguard our position on the issues of agriculture, subsidies, market access and tariffs. Special and differential treatment must remain an integral component in the final outcomes of negotiations in all areas, particularly, Agriculture, Non-Agricultural Market Access and Services.

The role of science and technology for development cannot be over-emphasised. The revolution in information and communication technologies offers us the most promising tool to face the challenges of globalisation. It is ironic that the shrinking of the world as a result of technology and communications should be accompanied by evolution of controls that restrict movement of the people of the developing world. This also applies to the intellectual property rights regimes which are often used as tools to restrict, control and deny technologies rather than facilitate their transfer to developing countries. It is imperative that development dimensions are integrated into such regimes as quickly as possible. The international community also needs to find pragmatic ways to promote research and development in developing countries building on the recommendations of the UN Millennium Project.

Mr. Chairman,

I take this opportunity to underline our firm belief and unwavering support for greater South-South cooperation and to continue, in the spirit of South-South solidarity, to enhance our cooperation with our partners in developing countries. India would be willing to share its expertise including in frontier areas of science and technology and is indeed doing so already with several partner countries. The Group of 77 has been a valuable asset for developing countries. We shall remain engaged in a continuing consultative process to explore cooperative solutions both among ourselves and with the wider international community. I reiterate India's full support and involvement in this effort.

Thank You, Mr. Chairman.

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