



GROUP OF FIFTEEN
The Summit Level Group of Developing Countries

**XIII SUMMIT OF THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT
OF THE GROUP OF FIFTEEN
14 September 2006, Havana, Cuba**

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

1. We, the Heads of State and Government, members of the Summit Group for South-South Consultation and Cooperation, the Group of Fifteen, assembled in Havana Cuba, on 14 September 2006, for our 13th Summit meeting under the theme “Rural and Agricultural Development and the Management of Water Resources”. In that regard, we gave special attention to the management of water resources and its impact on rural and agricultural development. At the same time, we examined, in the spirit of dialogue, the many and varied issues that are of current international interest and which have a direct impact on the economies of our countries.

2. We discussed with profound interest the recent developments in the world economic situation and their impact on developing countries. We welcome the efforts made by developing countries to contribute to the search for sustainable solutions to the numerous problems caused by the current world economic system. In this connection, we emphasize the importance of a conducive international economic and financial environment, including the compelling need for collective and concerted coordination at the global level in order to make the sustainable development dimension the corner-stone of the international economic process. We recognize that the elimination of poverty is a challenge and a fundamental priority in achieving collective well-being and the development of our countries. To this end, we reiterate our commitment to fight poverty, social exclusion and inequity, by addressing their causes. We also highlight the need for a strategy of development emphasizing human dignity and guided by, *inter alia*, the principles of equity, justice, social inclusion, solidarity and respect for human rights.

3. We are deeply concerned about the delay and the limited progress recorded in respect of the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. We therefore underscore the need for all members of the international community to work in a coherent and concerted manner to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, as reaffirmed at the Millennium Summit + 5 held in September 2005 in New York. We also call for greater efforts aimed at the implementation and follow up of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences, especially the World Summit on Social Development held in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1995, the International Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey in 2002 and the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002.

4. We support the initiative for the establishment of innovative development financing aimed at mobilizing, on a predictable and lasting basis, additional financial resources to supplement the traditional financing mechanisms, including Official Development Assistance (ODA), on a voluntary acceptance basis, and without conditionality that contradicts the sovereignty and national interest of recipient countries, in order to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In this regard, we acknowledge the Meeting of the Pilot Group on Innovative Financing Mechanisms held in Brasília in July 2006, which helped to consolidate a global awareness of the need for innovative sources of financing aimed at fighting world hunger and poverty, as well as to advance negotiations on a pilot project based on solidarity contributions on air tickets, the revenues of which are to be channeled to the creation of an international drug purchase facility against the three diseases that most affect developing countries, namely, AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

5. We note with grave concern the growing food insecurity affecting an increasing number of people in the world. We reiterate our commitment to the FAO's Special Programme for Food Security and to combine our resources to achieve the goal of halving the number of the hungry in the world by 2015. To this end, we are committed to strengthening our cooperation to support the enhancement of national food security programmes of all member countries.

6. We recognize the importance of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization strategy for the eradication of poverty, especially extreme poverty, in supporting the Education For All programmes as a tool to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education by 2015, including eliminating gender inequalities in education. In that regard and in order to implement the Dakar Framework for Action adopted at the World Education Forum in 2000, we call for the fulfillment of commitments made during the World Summit 2005.

7. We remain, nonetheless, convinced that the achievement of the MDGs, as integral parts of a comprehensive, balanced and equitable economic and social development strategy, also depends on the adoption of coherent and integrated national and international development policies that are freely chosen.

8. We recommit ourselves to the urgent goals of achieving gender equality, of eliminating discrimination and violence against women and of ensuring their full participation in all spheres of life and at all levels. We take note in this regard of the outcome of the World Summit 2005 on gender equality and advocate the promotion and protection of the equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and reaffirm further that gender equality and the full participation of women in all spheres are crucial to building a just society for all and must be at the centre of all economic and social development. To this end, it is important to mainstream gender issues in the international efforts aimed at attaining the goals of the Millennium Declaration.

9. We reaffirm the importance of world trade in the economic and social development of our countries and emphasize the crucial role a fair and equitable multilateral trading system can play in responding to the expectations and legitimate concerns of our countries.

10. We regret the suspension of the negotiations in all aspects of the Doha Development Agenda, and express our profound frustration at the unwillingness of developed countries, by far the greater beneficiaries of previous rounds of trade negotiations, to take seriously the development dimension of trade negotiations. The stalemate is not only a setback for the development promises of the Doha Round, but also a threat to the emergence of an equitable international trading regime. It is a missed opportunity to cut down on the huge trade-distorting subsidies lavished by developed countries on their agricultural sectors. The policies that have long displaced developing country products in domestic and international markets are set to continue to threaten the livelihoods of farmers in the developing world. The consequences of the failure of the DDA is not limited to trade issues and the future of the Multilateral Trading System, as a successful DDA is also crucial to finding appropriate answers to the multiple challenges of globalization and is of direct concern to the international system as a whole. We therefore call upon all developed partners in the WTO, to demonstrate flexibility and political will necessary to bridge the existing gaps so that there will be an early formal resumption of negotiations in a manner that can ensure success as measured by the terms of the Doha Mandate for the conclusion of the Development Round in the spirit of the Doha and Hong Kong Declarations. In this context, we take note of the text of the G-20 High Level Meeting issued at Rio de Janeiro on 9 September 2006.

11. We note the recent developments on Aid-for-Trade and hope it will help developing countries integrate fully into the multilateral trading system and provide them with increased trade opportunities as a way to enhance growth prospects and reduce poverty. However, it cannot be a substitute for the development benefits that will flow from a successful Doha Round.

12. Special and Differential Treatment for developing countries must be strengthened and made more precise, operational, cross-cutting and integral to all aspects of the negotiations and its outcome in order to address the development concerns of our countries. The central agreed principles of proportionately lower overall tariff reduction commitments in Agriculture and “less than full reciprocity” in tariff reductions in NAMA by developing countries as compared to the commitments by developed countries must be upheld. Special Products and Special Safeguards Mechanism in Agriculture and paragraph 8 flexibilities in NAMA are crucial development instruments which must be effective without prejudicing South-South cooperation. In this context, we stress the relevance of paragraph 24 of the Hong Kong Declaration which calls for a comparably high level of ambition in market access for agriculture and NAMA.

13. We reiterate the importance for developing countries of paragraph 44 of the Doha Declaration, outstanding implementation issues, the relation between TRIPs and CDB, among other issues, which are in jeopardy. Therefore, we call for the expeditious resumption of the suspended Doha negotiations on these issues.

14. We wish to express our firm support for developing countries, especially G-15 members currently in the process of accession, in order to ensure their speedy integration into the multilateral trading system and thereby strengthen the universality of the WTO. We do not accept the imposition, on these countries, as an accession prerequisite, of any commitments that are incompatible with their special development needs and of concessions that go over and beyond those agreed by and among existing Member States. We believe that the process of accession of

developing countries must remain immune to the influence of non-economic factors and be conducted solely in line with technical considerations.

15. The particular concerns of small, vulnerable developing economies should be given special consideration. Therefore, we emphasize the need to address the trade-related issues identified for the fuller integration of small, vulnerable economies into the multilateral trading system.

16. We reaffirm the need for additional measures for progressive improvement in market-access for least developed countries. In this context, we call upon WTO members to implement the Decision of the 6th Hong Kong Ministerial Conference on duty-free quota-free market access to products originating from least developed countries.

17. We also reaffirm our commitment to engage in the ongoing discussions on UN reform, including that relating to system-wide coherence in its operational activities. We aim to see this process proceed in a deliberate and well thought through manner, in a way that would result in an empowered UN development system that is more attuned to the needs and interests of developing countries. The reformed UN system needs predictable funding, coordination and cohesion among different UN activities at country level, as well as the strengthening of the oversight and system-wide coordination functions of ECOSOC.

18. We further reaffirm the importance of the independence of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), as a principal organization within the United Nations System for integrated treatment of trade and development and interrelated issues through its primary working pillars of policy analysis, the building of intergovernmental consensus and technical assistance for developing countries. We emphasize the need to strengthen UNCTAD and remain convinced of the relevance of the fundamental principles underlying the creation of UNCTAD in 1964.

19. We note with satisfaction the progress made so far in UNCTAD in the ongoing Mid-term Review to evaluate the implementation of the São Paulo Consensus and to take into account major events and new developments since UNCTAD XI as well as to give clear indications as to the direction the organization should take in its work in the run-up to its next conference. We reiterate our commitment to ensuring that the outcome of this process would lead to the strengthening of the three pillars of the organization. In this regard, we expect and will work towards ensuring that the concluding phase of the Mid-term Review, in particular the high-level policy dialogue on the way forward, reinforces and mainstreams the vital importance of policy space for developing countries in UNCTAD's work.

20. We recognize the importance of exploiting the full potential of South-South trade and thus stress the need to work towards further expansion and deepening of preferential trade liberalization among developing countries on a global basis. We therefore reiterate our commitment to the Global System of Trade Preferences (GSTP) among developing countries. We emphasize, in this regard, that the 3rd round of negotiations launched in Sao Paulo in 2004 at UNCTAD XI has considerable potential for strengthening South-South trade and cooperation. We urge developing countries to intensify negotiations on market access and rule-making towards the speedy conclusion of this Round, in accordance with the Sao Paulo mandate.

21. We emphasize the need for enhancing the coherence in international economic policies in all areas, especially in trade, investment and development assistance. Furthermore, it is important to ensure that those policies do not further constrain national development strategies in developing countries. This coherence is necessary to allow developing countries to adopt the measures and actions best suited to their own national interests and priorities.

22. We follow with much interest the ongoing discussions for reforming the Bretton Woods Institutions (BWIs). Since the establishment of the BWIs, the architecture of the global economy has changed which needs to be reflected in their governance structure and voting pattern to make them more representative, inclusive, transparent and accountable. It is our view that any such reforms should aim at increasing those institutions' abilities to serve the goal of development and to reflect the priorities of developing countries. It should also enhance the BWIs' ability to monitor the policies and performance of major economies, given their considerable impact worldwide, and to provide them with enforceable advice.

23. We urge the international financial institutions to continue assisting countries upon their request, in assessing their structural and social sources of vulnerability and their response to crises, to promote international financial stability, a necessary condition for stimulating economic growth and poverty alleviation. We urge the IFIs to ensure the full and effective participation of developing countries in the design and development of measures necessary to promote international financial stability and ensure that onerous conditionalities and criteria are not unduly imposed on them in the process.

24. We note the World Summit Outcome 2005 on the debt problem and reiterate the importance of considering the inclusion of debt-for-sustainable development swaps or multi-creditor debt swap schemes on a voluntary basis. We underline the central role of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in developing the debt sustainability framework in this regard in a fashion that does not detract from Official Development Assistance resources, while maintaining the financial integrity of the multilateral financial institutions. While acknowledging the decision of the G-8 in June 2005 to cancel the debt of the eligible HIPC owed to the IMF, IDA and the African Development Bank, we further stress the need to consider additional measures and initiatives, aimed at ensuring long-term debt sustainability through increased grant-based financing and consideration of significant debt relief or concessional restructuring for low and middle income developing countries with an unsustainable burden, in the fashion mentioned above. In addition, efforts should be made to ensure that the export capacity of a country is not the only criterion to be applied in evaluating its debt-payment capacity and that no additional costs are imposed by creditor countries on indebted countries.

25. Aware of the devastating impact of pandemics on the health of the populations and economies of developing countries, we commit ourselves to and support the implementation of the Declaration of Commitments on HIV/AIDS adopted by the international community in June 2001 and the 2003 decision on TRIPs and public health and call upon the international community to implement effective evidence-based measures to deal with tuberculosis and malaria. We again urge the international community to work towards mobilizing additional financial resources for funds and programmes designed for the prevention and treatment of these diseases and to facilitate access to these resources. In particular, we reaffirm the right to use to

the fullest, flexibilities to promote access to medicines for all including the production of generic antiretroviral drugs and other essential drugs for AIDS-related infections.

26. Bearing in mind the initiatives taken by the United Nations, notably the first United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS, held in New York from 27 to 29 June 2001, and the two high-level meetings of the General Assembly, held in New York in June 2005 and June 2006 respectively, to assess the effectiveness of national and international actions aimed at implementing the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, we note with concern that the pandemic continues to outgrow the progress achieved in counteracting it. Furthermore, the present efforts remain insufficient and current spending levels are far from adequate to curb the pandemic. Therefore, we call upon the international community to support the joint efforts of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to promote the aim of universal access to treatment, information and comprehensive care for those in need by 2010 and to lend support to the efforts of countries to achieve this goal, in accordance with the Declaration of commitment on HIV/AIDS.

27. Aware of the importance of the links between migration and development, we call upon the international community to adopt, at the United Nations General Assembly High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, being held in New York on 14 and 15 September 2006, a comprehensive, humane and balanced approach to this phenomenon, taking into account both the benefits and the challenges that international migration presents to the global community, in order to identify appropriate policies and measures for maximizing the development benefits of international migration. The international community should make the most of this momentum for evolving a political consensus in order to develop and promote cooperative arrangements for regular migration in an orderly, safe and non-discriminatory manner as well as mitigating the risks associated with irregular migration, including through upholding of human rights.

28. We note with regret the unsatisfactory level of implementation of the recommendations of the Rio Summit of 1992 and the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development of 2002, in particular, with regard to the responsibilities of developed countries.

29. As a follow up to paragraph 169 of the September 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, we note the consultations that have been undertaken on the UN system-wide coherence as it relates to environmental activities. In this regard, we believe that the different evaluation and future conclusions of this process should not in any way compromise the integrity of the three pillars: the right to economic growth, to social development and environmental protection. We expect that the outcome of the exercise will address the need for more efficient environmental activities in the United Nations system, with enhanced coordination, improved policy advice and guidance, strengthened scientific knowledge, assessment and cooperation, better treaty compliance, while respecting the legal autonomy of the treaties, and better integration of environmental activities in the broader sustainable development framework at the operational level, including through exploring the possibility of a more integrated structure, building on existing structures and internationally agreed instruments, as well as the treaty bodies and the specialized agencies. No institutional reform in this respect should be a pretext to legitimize introduction of further environmental conditionality.

30. We reaffirm our commitment to the goal of sustainable development, *inter alia*, through the implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the Rio Principles and Promotion of Poverty Eradication, changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and protection and management of the natural resource-base on the basis of common but differentiated responsibility. We also reaffirm our commitment to achieving the internationally agreed development goals on water and sanitation, in accordance with the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the recommendations of the Millennium Summit.

31. We recognize the current global energy challenges and emphasize the need to enhance endeavors directed at seeking alternative renewable energy resources. In this regard, we stress the urgent need for South-South cooperation to enhance access to adequate, reliable and affordable energy, advanced energy technologies, affordable and cleaner energy efficiency and energy conservation technologies, and to promote energy for sustainable development and poverty reduction.

32. We underline the basic and inalienable rights of the Group's member countries to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, material, know-how and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses and production of all kinds of non-renewable and renewable energy, including biomass, tidal, wind and nuclear energy, for peaceful purposes, consistent with their respective international obligations.

33. We underline the importance of water as a critical natural resource and a basic human need. We reaffirm the need to achieve the MDG relating to safe drinking water and sanitation by 2015. In this connection, we reaffirm our commitment to work towards ensuring access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation in keeping with national objectives, with full awareness of the adverse effects of inefficient irrigation methods and of the need for rationalization of water uses.

34. We take note of the Fourth World Water Forum, held in Mexico in March 2006.

35. We reaffirm, in particular, our commitment to the decisions adopted by the 13th Session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-13), in April 2005, on policy options and practical measures to expedite implementation in water, sanitation and human settlements. We further reaffirm the importance of the involvement of relevant stakeholders, particularly women and youth, in the planning and management of water resources and, as appropriate, decision-making processes.

36. We welcome, in this regard, the G-15 Seminar/Workshop on "Rural and Agricultural Development and the Management of Water Resources" held in Geneva on 3-4 July 2006. We note with interest the conclusions of the technical experts who participated in the meeting, which are being analyzed and evaluated by member countries of the Group. In this connection, we request the incoming Chairman of the Group to organize a follow-up higher-level meeting to review the conclusions formulated by the experts at this Seminar/Workshop and to explore the possibility of establishing a G-15 mechanism or clearinghouse for the exchange of experiences on rural and agricultural development and the management of water resources aimed at enhancing good practices and information sharing among member countries.

37. We welcome the outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society which reaffirmed the commitment to establish a people-centered, inclusive, and development-oriented information society aiming at bridging the digital divide. We reiterate our commitment to pursue the building of partnerships among different stakeholders on the national, regional and international levels to further enhance the capacity of our people to participate in the building of the global information society.

38. We call upon the international community to uphold its commitments undertaken at the Summit towards enhancing international cooperation through the Summit follow up mechanism. We invite the developed partners to further support the Digital Solidarity Fund established in March 2005, in Geneva, recognizing the need to mobilize resources, both financial and human, and to find improvements and innovations in existing financing mechanisms for ICT for development.

39. We reaffirm the need for enhancing the development dimension of the intellectual property rights system, taking into account the different levels of development of developing countries with a view to, *inter alia*, ensuring affordable access to necessary basic products, including medicines and educational tools and software, the transfer and dissemination of knowledge and technology, the promotion of research and development, the establishment of national legal systems of IP rights based on the economic and social development needs of each country and the stimulation of innovation and creativity. In this regard, we urge WIPO, as a UN Agency, to include in all its programmes and activities a development dimension to promote, *inter alia*, access to knowledge for all, pro-development norm-setting activities including proper consideration of the potential social and economic costs of upward harmonization of laws on IP protection, the establishment of development-friendly principles and guidelines for the provision of technical assistance and the adoption of measures to enhance the transfer and dissemination of technology. We call upon WIPO to intensify efforts for the protection of traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions against misappropriation and misuse.

40. We underline that wide divergence of views persist with respect to negotiations on a Substantive Patent Law Treaty and that only an inclusive approach towards proposals put forward by developing countries regarding public interest flexibilities, exceptions and limitations, transfer of technology and anti-competitive practices, among other issues of relevance, can pave the way towards new forward movements in these negotiations. We also emphasize the rights of countries of origin over their own biological resources as well as the protection of associated traditional knowledge.

41. We endorse the recommendations of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs on the study on the challenges facing the Group of Fifteen and the evaluation of its South-South cooperation projects undertaken by the panel of external consultants and the need for further deliberations among member states to evolve a consensus on the recommendations and further course of action. We reaffirm our commitment to collectively strengthen our Group to achieve our objective to promote South-South cooperation.

42. We recall the proposal at our 12th Summit in Caracas to explore the possibility of establishing, among others, a G-15 Africa Cooperation Fund, to assist needy African countries in their efforts to combat poverty and to promote sustainable development. With a view to

demonstrating solidarity with Africa as well as consolidating South-South cohesion, we approve in principle, the launching of the initiative. To this end, we mandate our Personal Representatives to constitute a working group to work out the modalities for its implementation and to report back to the 29th Meeting of the Foreign Ministers for consideration and approval.

43. We welcome with satisfaction, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which is an expression of the determination of African countries to take their destiny into their own hands in order to promote the development of the continent so as to ensure its smooth integration into the world economy. We call upon the international community to encourage and renew its commitment to the successful execution of this development programme.

44. We welcome the establishment of the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership (NAASP) and its Plan of Action adopted at the Asian-African Summit held in Bandung, Indonesia on 22-23 April 2005 as an important building block in further strengthening South-South Cooperation. We underline the challenge to work on the elaboration of the areas of recommendation of the Partnership in accordance with the development priorities of the developing countries. We therefore stress the importance of enhanced action-oriented programme and cooperation to enable the Partnership to make meaningful contribution to the current regional effort to integrate into the world economy. The G-15 also applauds such cooperative efforts in Latin America/Caribbean, Africa and Asia.

45. We also recognize the importance of the Summit of South American and Arab countries, which took place in Brasilia, on 10-11 May 2005, as an innovative initiative of South-South bi-regional cooperation in the economic, social, technical, scientific and cultural fields, with the purpose of establishing a partnership to pursue development, justice and international peace. To this end, we support the efforts to ensure the follow up to the decisions contained in the Brasilia Declaration.

46. We note with concern the growing intensity and recurrence of natural disasters, particularly in our member countries. We recognize the impact of such disasters on the development process of the countries and agree to work towards establishing a disaster risk-reduction strategy among our countries to reduce vulnerability, address risk assessment and disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and recovery, in conformity with our long term development objectives.

47. We wish to promote international dialogue and commit ourselves to pursuing our efforts to strengthen the exchange with our development partners, including the G-8, in order to foster the harmonious growth of international development cooperation in all its facets.

48. We remain convinced that multilateralism, based on the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, as well as the respect for and adherence to international law is essential for the preservation and promotion of international peace and security as well as the promotion of international cooperation and development.

49. We strongly deplore the massacres and widespread destruction of human life in Lebanon, through the bombardment of civilians, the intensive shelling of infrastructure and food supplies, and the imposition of an air and sea blockade, contrary to established international conventions

and principles of international humanitarian law. Such actions are also responsible for the destruction of the economy, infrastructure, tourism, cultural sites, and vast natural and human resources, which adversely affects economic and social development for millions of people in Lebanon and the region. We condemn such actions by Israel, and clearly assert its full responsibility for the large-scale destruction, which calls for the provision of adequate compensation for both human and material loss. We deplore the deaths and injuries of all civilians in the region as a result of this conflict.

50. We express our strong support for Resolution A/HRC/S-2/L.1, adopted by the Council of Human Rights, on 11 August 2006 on the grave situation of human rights in Lebanon caused by Israeli military operations.

51. We believe, the delayed response of the Security Council underlines the need to reform the United Nations system as regards the maintenance of international peace and security with special focus on the Security Council.

52. We also express grave concern at the detrimental impact of Israeli practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, in particular in the Gaza strip, in the already deteriorating humanitarian and economic conditions of the Palestinian people. We express our strong support for Resolution A/HRC/S-1/L.1 adopted by the Council on Human Rights on 6 July 2006 on the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

53. We reaffirm that development is a human right whose realization must remain unhindered by selectivity in development assistance practiced by some developed countries.

54. We wish to express our deepest gratitude to the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria for its exemplary presidency of the Group and are grateful for the excellent organization of this Summit.

55. We also wish to thank warmly the Government of the Republic of Cuba for hosting this meeting and facilitating its organization.

56. We highly appreciate the generous offer of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the Group's 14th Summit.
