



GROUP OF FIFTEEN
The Summit Level Group of Developing Countries

G-15/02/PR72/2

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SEVENTY-SECOND MEETING
OF THE PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE GROUP OF FIFTEEN
Geneva, 25 January 2002

SUMMARY RECORDS

1. The 72nd Meeting of the Personal Representatives (PRs) of the Heads of State and Government of the Group of Fifteen was held on Friday, 25 January 2002 in Geneva, under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Werner Corrales Leal, the Personal Representative of the President of Venezuela.

2. In his opening remarks, the Chairman welcomed the PRs to the first meeting to be held in the year 2002 and expressed his best wishes to them. The Chairman and the Personal Representatives welcomed Ambassador Mohammad Reza Alborzi, Personal Representative of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Group of Fifteen and expressed confidence that, like his worthy predecessor, Ambassador Alborzi will enrich the deliberations and work of the PRs. Responding, Ambassador Alborzi gave assurances of his support and commitment to the Group's activities. He noted that Iran's active participation in the Group was in recognition of the high principles and objectives of the G-15, which were central to the foreign policy of his country.

Item 1 – Adoption of the Agenda

3. The meeting adopted, without amendment, the Provisional Agenda contained in Document **G-15/02/PR72/1/Rev.1**.

Item 2 - Presentation of Elements of the Draft Joint Communiqué of the XII Summit

4. The Chairman formally presented the Elements of the Draft Joint Communiqué of the XII Summit proposed by Venezuela. The proposed outline, circulated as document **G-15/02/L.1** and entitled "Draft List of the Structure and Themes for the XII Joint Communiqué", contains four thematic blocks. The Chairman observed that the outline represented Venezuela's suggestions from which a preliminary Draft Joint Communiqué (DJC) could be elaborated and presented to the next meeting of the PRs. He stated that thereafter, a Drafting Group at the Experts level will be convened to commence substantive work on the first draft text, taking into account the suggestions and comments of the PRs. He

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reiterated the previous decision of the Group that the Draft Joint Communiqué should be short and focused, and not exceeding five pages, to make the desired political impact.

5. Several PRs who took the floor commended Venezuela for the early presentation of the draft elements of the DJC. It was noted that the suggested themes and structure represented a good basis for further work to prepare a first draft of the XII Summit Joint Communiqué. The following preliminary comments and views were generally shared among the PRs on the Draft List of the Structure and Themes for the XII Joint Communiqué:

- i. That all the international conferences mentioned in the draft outline, and the forthcoming World Summit on Information Society should be treated under Section 1.1;
- ii. International financial issues should be considered under Section 1.1;
- iii. Section 1.2 should be amended to include all aspects of terrorism, including its impact on the world economy;
- iv. That reference to LDCs should be deleted from Section 1.4 to avoid the fragmentation of developing countries;
- v. There should be adequate reflection on the tasks and mandates emanating from the XI Summit in Jakarta;
- vi. Theme 2 should be amended to read “Assessment on the activities of the Group, its achievements and way forward”;
- vii. That efforts should be made to keep the DJC short and focused, not exceeding five pages;
- viii. That it was desirable to have a separate Declaration, based on the theme of the XII Summit – Energy and Development; accordingly, a paragraph or two should be introduced into the DJC, linking it with the Declaration, as was the case with the XI Summit Joint Communiqué;

Item 3 – Establishment of a Committee to re-examine and make recommendations on the Structure of the TSF in light of the increasing responsibilities of the TSF as well as a review of the conditions of service of TSF staff, as earlier agreed by the PRs

6. The Chairman recalled that, at the 66th Meeting of the PRs held on 15 February 2001, comments were made on the possible impact of the imminent departure of the Head of the TSF on the staffing structure and the capacity of the TSF to discharge its increasing responsibilities. In the circumstance, PRs also felt the need for a review of the working conditions of TSF staff. He noted that as a result of these considerations, it was agreed to establish a Committee, after the XI Summit, to re-examine the organizational structure of the TSF and the working conditions of its staff. He drew attention to document **G-15/02/PR72/INF.3** containing the Terms of Reference for the proposed Committee, as agreed upon at the 66th Meeting of the PRs. The Chairman underlined that, since the restructuring of the TSF in 1996, as approved by the 5th Summit in Buenos Aires, the need had always been felt in the intervening years, to revisit the organizational structure of the TSF, in light of new experiences and evolving needs of the Group. He therefore invited the PRs to propose modalities for constituting the membership of the Committee.

7. In the ensuing interventions, the following comments were made by the PRs:

- That the Committee should be open-ended and ad hoc, with a limited time-frame

within which to report to PRs;

- The Committee should have a core group of members, representative of the three geographical regions of the G-15 and chaired by the Chairman;
- Some suggested that the Committee should be at the level of experts, who will examine the conditions of service of the United Nations organizations in Geneva and recommend appropriate conditions of service to the PRs for consideration;
- The Committee should be provided with previous decisions relating to the restructuring of the TSF and the result of the exercise on the possible establishment of a permanent secretariat;
- The need to have a functional secretariat, without necessarily expanding the TSF, was highlighted;
- While some noted that the present size of the TSF was adequate and that costs should be taken into account, another view called for serious consideration to be given to the strengthening of the TSF to enable it perform its increasing responsibilities;
- That the use of consultants could be considered, particularly as we approach the next Summit;
- Reference was made to the Terms of Reference of the Commission to the effect that, its activities should be undertaken within the limited resources of the TSF, entailing no additional costs to members and that thematic Coordinators should invite the participation of experts and specialised resource persons to provide them with assistance;
- More progress was demanded on the recruitment of a new Head of the TSF;
- Noting that it would be difficult for the Troika PRs to form the core of the Committee, the meeting agreed on the nomination of Egypt (Africa), Chile (Latin America/Caribbean) and Iran (Asia) to membership of the Committee, to be chaired by Venezuela.

8. In his summary of the discussions, the Chairman undertook to consult with the Troika PRs and the nominated members of the Committee to decide how best to proceed with the task. As a result of the comments made on the recruitment of a new Head of the TSF, the PR of Indonesia, in his capacity as Chairman of the Selection Panel briefed the meeting on the progress of the recruitment process. He noted that the panel could not commence its work as earlier envisaged because one of its members was only able to confirm acceptance recently. The members of the Selection Panel, it was noted, included Indonesia (Chairman), Jamaica, Malaysia and Senegal. The PR of Indonesia informed that the Selection Panel will meet on 13 February 2002 to assess and short-list the candidates as well as fix a date for the interview of short-listed candidates; the third week of February 2002 for extending invitations to short-listed candidates for the interview; and the fourth week of February 2002 for conducting the interviews and recommendation of the name of the successful candidate to the PRs. Responding to a question on whether the curriculum vitae of the candidates could be circulated to all PRs, the Chairman observed that, the established practice of the Group had been to delegate recruitment exercises to a Selection Panel, assisted by the TSF, which subsequently reports back to the PRs.

Item 4 – Briefings on the outcome of recent G-15 Meetings:

(a) The inaugural meeting of the G-15 Commission held on 22 January 2002.

9. The Chairman informed the meeting that the inaugural meeting of the G-15 Commission to Improve the Implementation of the Group's Decisions, held on 22 January 2002, was very fruitful. He reported that the consultations led to the designation of the following Coordinators for the thematic areas of the Commission's work:

- a. South/ South Cooperation, including Intra G-15 Trade, Investment and Technology Development - **Algeria**
- b. North-South Dialogue – **Venezuela** (Chairman)
- c. International Trade – **Zimbabwe**
- d. International Financial Issues - **Malaysia**
- e. Poverty Alleviation and Eradication - **Nigeria**
- f. Sustainable development (Environment) - **Peru**
- g. Technology, including ICT - **India**
- h. Labour, Health and Social Development - **Brazil**
- i. Enterprise Development, including Small and Medium Enterprise (SME's) – **Indonesia**

10. The Chairman informed the meeting that the Commission members agreed that, in the meantime, each Coordinator Country will study the Inventory of Summit Decisions relevant to its thematic area with a view to identifying those that are no longer valid and those that have continuing relevance. Based on this assessment, each Coordinator will prepare and submit proposals in this regard and recommend new initiatives aimed at contributing to the effectiveness and efficiency of the Group.

(b) G-15 Experts Meeting on Science and Technology held on 6-7 December 2001 in Caracas – Venezuela.

11. The Chairman informed the meeting that the G-15 Experts Meeting on Science and Technology, held on 6-7 December 2001 in Caracas, was well attended by officials of member countries and representatives of international organizations such as the Economic System of Latin America (SELA), UNCTAD, UNESCO and the UNDP. He noted that the meeting was very successful and that the report had already been circulated. He reiterated that the Second Meeting of G-15 Experts on Science and Technology will be held on 20-22 March 2002. In welcoming the outcome of the Experts Meeting, the PR of Egypt observed that some of the activities envisaged in the report were already provided for in the G-15 ICT Online Resource Center initiated by Egyptian. The task ahead, he noted, was how to coordinate these activities with the G-15 Task Force on ICT. In response to the latter remark, the Chairman stated that the outcome of the First Experts Meeting on Science and Technology will be presented to the Meeting of the G-15 Task Force on ICT, as well as to the Meeting of G-15 Ministers of Science and Technology.

(c) Informal Meeting of G-15 Experts on Finance, held in New York on 15 January 2002, on the occasion of the 4th Meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the International Conference on Financing for Development – Mexico.

12. The Chairman recalled that the Informal Meeting of G-15 Experts on Finance was held in New York on 15 January 2002, back-to-back with the 4th Meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the International Conference on Financing for Development. The objective was to enable G-15 delegates to exchange views on the important Conference on Financing for Development to be convened on 18-22 March 2002 in Monterrey, Mexico. In his oral report on the meeting, the PR of Mexico informed that delegates of most member countries participated in the meeting. He noted that there was a convergence of views among G-15 experts that the last Revised Draft Outcome prepared by the Facilitator, was a good basis for the work of the Conference on Financing for Development. The PR of Mexico observed further that it was agreed that G-15 delegates to the Conference should send a message of moderation and call for effective and productive results, in line with the agreed Work Programme of the Conference. G-15 delegates also agreed to work closely with all developing countries, before and during the Conference, and to support the position of the latter in order to ensure success.

Item 5 – Information on forthcoming meetings of the G-15

13. The Chairman drew the attention of the meeting to the Preliminary List of Forthcoming G-15 Meetings, earlier circulated by the TSF as document **G-15/02/PR72/INF.1/Rev.1**. He noted that Malaysia circulated at this meeting, documents relevant to the two experts meetings to be hosted by it shortly. In her intervention, the PR of Malaysia informed the meeting that the Meeting of the G-15 Experts Group on the Reform of the International Financial Architecture will be held in Kuala Lumpur on 5-6 February 2002, with the last day devoted to post-meeting familiarization visits. She remarked that the Government of Malaysia will defray the cost of a round-trip economy class ticket and provide accommodation for one (1) participant from each member country. She mentioned that, so far, Argentina and Senegal had informed of their inability to attend the meeting, while Algeria, Kenya and Jamaica were the only countries yet to respond to the invitation. On the First meeting of the G-15 ICT Task Force, the PR of Malaysia informed that the meeting will now be held on 18-20 February 2002 in Kuala Lumpur. She stated that the Government of Malaysia will bear the cost of accommodation and meals for two (2) experts from each member country. She urged that duly completed registration forms should be faxed to the numbers mentioned therein by 10 February 2002. The PR of Egypt observed that the direct transmission of correspondence on impending meetings to agencies in member countries will make coordination difficult for PRs.

14. On the meetings to be hosted by Venezuela, the Chairman remarked that information on agenda and logistical arrangements for the 1st Experts Meeting on Energy and Development scheduled for 25-26 February 2002 had already been circulated. He indicated that relevant documents for the 2nd Experts Meeting on Science and Technology, to be held on 20-22 March 2002, will be circulated soon.

15. Nigeria informed the meeting that preparations for the Experts Meeting on Collaboration in the Development and Utilization of Non-Metallic Mineral Raw Materials, to be held on 4-5 April 2002 in Abuja, Nigeria, were on course. Against the background that no

responses had been received in respect of the note circulated recently on the forthcoming meeting, PRs were urged to facilitate early confirmation of the participation of their experts in the event to ensure adequate preparations.

16. The Chairman announced the following dates for the preparatory meetings of the XII Summit in Caracas:

- 12 July 2002 - PRs Meeting and Meeting of the Ministers of Energy
- 13 July 2002 - Meeting of Foreign Ministers
- 14 July 2002 - Arrival of Heads of State/Government
- 15-16 July 2002 - XII Summit of Heads of State/Government

17. For practical and logistical considerations, the PR of Egypt advised that the meetings of the PRs and the Ministers of Energy should not be held on the same date, since the outcome of the Meeting of Energy Ministers would be taken into account by the PRs, in their final consideration of the Draft Joint Communiqué of the XII Summit. In response to questions on the non-inclusion of the Meeting of Trade Ministers, the Chairman stated that in line with the decision of the Foreign Ministers at their 21st Meeting in October 2000 in Mexico City, Venezuela had no intention of convening a Meeting of Trade Ministers in the course of the XII Summit. He remarked that it was for this consideration that Venezuela had proposed to convene a Trade Ministers Meeting in Caracas in October/November 2001, but was shelved for lack of consensus among PRs. Besides, he added, past records indicated that the holding of regular Meetings of Trade Ministers has not been institutionalized in the G-15.

18. Some PRs noted that the proposed Meeting of Trade Ministers in Caracas was not possible because of the tight schedule of the Trade Ministers and that Venezuela could give further consideration to convening the meeting before July 2002. Some PRs however contended that, in the absence of an agreed common ground on multilateral trade issues or compelling necessity, there was no reason to convene a Meeting of Trade Ministers before the XII Summit. They advised on the necessity to keep to the decision to streamline pre-Summit meetings. The Chairman undertook to refer the suggestion to reconsider the convening of a Trade Ministers Meeting to Caracas, along with the suggestion not to hold the Meetings of the PRs and Energy Ministers on the same date.

19. The representative of Brazil informed the meeting that the country was giving serious consideration to the possibility of convening a meeting on the subject of access to medicines in the context of pandemic diseases and public health. He stated that further developments on the matter will be brought to the attention of PRs.

Item 6 – Further consultations on the establishment of the proposed Working Groups on International Trade Matters and Intra-G-15 Trade

20. The Chairman recalled that Colombia had reported to the 71st PRs Meeting on the outcome of the consultations on the establishment of the proposed Working Groups on International Trade Matters and Intra-G-15 Trade. He noted that in light of the divergent views expressed, PRs could decide on the establishment of two Working Groups as proposed by the Ministers of Trade/Economy, or a single Working Group to deal with both assignments. Furthermore, he invited PRs to determine and agree upon the procedure for the facilitation of intra-G-15 trade, taking into account the mandate of the CITT. With respect to

the proposed Working Group on multilateral trade matters, he called on the PRs to follow-up on the earlier understanding to resume the consideration of the matter after the Doha Ministerial Conference of the WTO, with a view to the determination of a common ground among member countries to facilitate effective consultations and coordination in the WTO.

21. In the ensuing interventions, the following comments and suggestions were made by PRs:

- Expression of concern on the tendency to proliferate G-15 bodies, particularly on matters within the mandate of existing mechanisms; in this context, it was noted that the facilitation of intra-G-15 trade was the responsibility of the CITT, a body that should be made more effective; also mentioned in this regard was that the newly established Commission had already appointed a Coordinator for International Trade Matters;
- While some PRs welcomed the proposal to establish a Working Group on multilateral trade issues, others cautioned that, in the absence of a common ground among member countries, it would serve no useful purpose and that such efforts had failed in the past;

22. In his summary of the discussion, the Chairman stated that there was no consensus on the establishment of the proposed Working Groups. He observed however that, this situation should not preclude member countries from trying to coordinate their efforts on multilateral trade issues. He noted that a possible Meeting of Trade Ministers might help in facilitating the identification of a common ground among member countries on multilateral trade issues.

Item 7 – Other Business

23. The Chairman formally presented the Budget Variance Report for the Third Quarter of 2001 on the expenditures and investments of the Group, as at 30 September 2001. The Report was noted by the PRs. On the Chairman's proposed dates for the future Meetings of the PRs, the meeting agreed to hold the next PRs Meeting (the 73rd) on 1 March 2002. Finally, the Chairman sought and received the approval of the PRs for the Troika to host the former Head of the TSF to a farewell lunch.

24. The meeting was adjourned on that note.
