



GROUP OF FIFTEEN
The Summit Level Group of Developing Countries

G-15/08/PR94/2
Date issued: 26 February 2008

Distribution: GENERAL

NINETY-FOURTH MEETING
OF THE PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE GROUP OF FIFTEEN
Geneva, 7 February 2008

SUMMARY RECORDS

1. The 94th Meeting of the Personal Representatives (PRs) of the Heads of State and Government of the Group of Fifteen was held on 7 February 2008 in Geneva, under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Ali Reza Moaiyeri, the Personal Representative of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Group of Fifteen.

2. Welcoming the participants, the Chairman mentioned that the meeting had been convened principally to enable PRs to initiate follow-up actions on the decisions taken at the 29th Meeting of G-15 Ministers of Foreign Affairs held in New York.

Item 1 – Adoption of the Agenda

3. The Meeting adopted the Provisional Agenda, as amended orally during the Meeting, as contained in Document G-15/08/PR94/1.

Item 2 – Consideration of the request by the Chairman of the G-15 Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Services (FCCIS) to hold regular FCCIS meetings on the sidelines of G-15 Summits of Heads of State and Government

4. Introducing the agenda item, the Chairman recalled that the FCCIS, and other G-15 bodies that are no longer in operation, were allowed in the past to hold their meetings on the sidelines of G-15 Summits. However, as a result of the demand by member countries to streamline the duration of Summits by reducing the number of days spent by Heads of State and Government, G-15 Foreign Ministers decided in 2001 that such meetings should be held outside the framework of a Summit. It was therefore agreed that the reports of meetings of such bodies were to be submitted as inputs to the Summit.

5. Against this background, the Meeting considered the request made by the Chairman of the G-15 Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Services (FCCIS) to hold regular FCCIS meetings on the sidelines of G-15 Summits of Heads of State and Government. The Personal Representative of Egypt stated that the request by FCCIS members was based on the experience that in recent years, their activities have suffered from the increasing inability of some members of the federation to participate in FCCIS meetings unless they

were part of larger official delegations attending Summit meetings. He stressed the advantages of such an arrangement, as apart from ensuring better participation from business communities of member countries, it would also enable constructive interaction between senior government officials and representatives of the private sector of G-15 member countries. He mentioned that the FCCIS has decided to hold its next meeting in Iran, based on the invitation of the Iranian Federation of Chambers of Commerce, and the consent of the Indian Chamber of Commerce, which was supposed to host the forthcoming meeting of the FCCIS.

6. Most speakers who intervened in the ensuing discussion did not in principle, disagree with the proposal, acknowledging that it could contribute to enhancing the profile of Summits. An issue was raised as to whether the business delegations that would come to participate in the FCCIS meeting would be part of the official member country delegation to a Summit Meeting? Given that Summits were being held biannually, questions were raised as to whether the requested changes would not slow down the momentum of the FCCIS, which had thus far been meeting annually? The Head-of-Office of the TSF informed the meeting that in many previous Summits, a number of activities like Business Forum or trade fairs and exhibitions and meetings such as those of G-15 Trade Ministers or of the CITT used to be organized as part of the official agenda of the Summit. However, as Heads of State and Government found it difficult to stay away for a protracted period of time, the practice of holding such meetings had been done away with. It was also mentioned that in case an FCCIS meeting was allowed to take place alongside the Summit, the event would have to take place outside the formal framework of the Summit.

7. The Chairman stated that holding FCCIS meetings on the sidelines of G-15 summits was an interesting proposal that perhaps needed further consultations with the capitals. Some speakers believed that it could add value by attracting attention and could also contribute to the strengthening of the political will of member states to promote their economic and business relations. Furthermore, it was suggested that the question of FCCIS meetings during Summits should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Meeting agreed with the Chairman's suggestion that a decision on the FCCIS request be taken at the next meeting of Personal Representatives, after PRs had consulted with their capitals on the issue.

Item 3 - Follow-up consultations on the outcome of the 29th Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs held on 28 September 2007 in New York:

a) The Directives of Foreign Ministers on the recommendations of the High Level Meeting on Water Resources Management and Rural and Agricultural Development;

8. The Chairman invited PRs to note that the Foreign Ministers favourably considered the recommendations of the High Level Meeting on Water Resources Management and Rural and Agricultural Development and directed the Personal Representatives to follow-up on the matter and to ensure that the recommendations of the High Level Meeting, as approved by them, are carried out. He recalled in this regard that the Ministers approved the establishment of a Working Group on Water and another Working Group on Agriculture and Rural Development as well as the agreed G-15 Website to be hosted by the Islamic Republic of Iran. He noted that the Ministers agreed that these mechanisms would serve as G-15 instruments for the exchange of experiences on water resources management and rural and agricultural development, aimed at enhancing good practices and information sharing among member countries. The Chairman recalled that the Ministers further directed that both Working Groups

should report the outcome of their work to the Personal Representatives for consideration and further action. Finally, the Chairman observed that the Foreign Ministers also directed that PRs should undertake further consultations on a possible G-15 facility or vehicle for the mobilization of resources in support of the envisaged collaborative activities in the water sector.

9. Many delegates appreciated the efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran in hosting the High Level Meeting and also welcomed the decision to establish the Working Groups and website. It was suggested that the activities of the Working Groups should focus on exchange of experiences, training, and networking among institutions. As limited resources were at the disposal of the G-15, the concept of a G-15 facility for the mobilization of resources in support of the envisaged activities needed to be clarified. The Meeting agreed that the Islamic Republic of Iran, in its capacity as coordinator, should propose modalities for activating the Working Groups, together with related matters, for consideration of the rest of the PRs.

10. The Chairman assured the Meeting that in the light of their endorsement by the G-15 Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the two Working Groups will begin their functions very soon. He remarked that they would first address their terms of reference and identify areas of activities and the parameters of their work, which would then be reported to this body. The Meeting appreciated the assurance given by the Chair and urged the need for concrete action in this regard.

b) Further consultations on the selection of new G-15 projects, including the proposed meeting of technical experts in the field of technical cooperation to be held in Geneva;

11. The Chairman observed that Foreign Ministers expressed satisfaction with the Personal Representatives' active consideration of the project proposals presented by Iran, particularly in the areas of water management and renewable energy. They also took note of PRs intention to carry out a number of exercises before finally selecting any new project for implementation as well as our desire to recommend the launch, by the time of the 14th Summit, of one or more new projects that could enhance the profile of the G-15. He noted that the Ministers endorsed the proposal to organize a meeting of technical experts in the field of technical cooperation in Geneva to decide on the criteria for the selection of new projects as well as to recommend to the PRs the new projects to be taken up for joint implementation by member countries.

12. To set the exercise in motion, the Chairman invited PRs to suggest one or two specific project proposals among the ones presented by Iran in the areas of water management and renewable energy that could be considered for joint implementation among member countries. He also invited PRs to exchange views on a suitable date for the Geneva meeting of the technical experts in the field of technical cooperation and to consider the draft Terms of Reference prepared by the TSF that would guide their deliberations.

13. The Meeting welcomed the proposal to hold in Geneva a meeting of Technical Experts and emphasized the need for them to take into account the observations and guidelines provided by the Ministers regarding new projects. These included the need for proper feasibility studies; financial sustainability; simplification and revitalization of G-15 structures; cost effectiveness; as well as the consideration of other potential areas of cooperation suggested. While noting that the Criteria and Guidelines for the Selection and Implementation of G-15 Collaborative Projects (**Document G-15/07/PR91/4/ Rev.1**) was a

useful starting point for the technical experts, some PRs proposed that it was not necessary for a new project to be attractive to the generality of membership of the Group, as this presumed the drawing up of mega-projects for which adequate funds did not exist. The delegate of India stated that while revising the criteria for G-15 project selection, it was necessary to recognize that not all G-15 projects were unsuccessful or moribund. He pointed out that India's solar energy project undertaken in Senegal has been functioning successfully since January 2000 and solar energy lighting has been installed in 250 villages of Touly and Sone near Dakar. Furthermore, under the project relating to Small-scale industries Cooperation with Senegal, Zimbabwe and Nigeria, India had completed the revival of the Nigerian Machine Tools Plant in Lagos at a total project cost of approximately US\$ 5 million, established an Entrepreneurial Training and Development Centre in Senegal that provides training to nearly 650 personnel from various African countries and has recently finalized an MoU with Zimbabwe in June 2007 for establishing an India-Zimbabwe Technology centre with an estimated project cost of US\$5 million^[11].

14. With regard to identifying specific projects from the proposals presented by the Islamic Republic of Iran, the meeting re-emphasized the need for Iran to submit detailed project proposals in the areas of water resources management and energy, which the experts would study before their proposed Geneva meeting. It was broadly agreed that in view of the fact that the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the technical experts meeting, which was noted by the meeting, envisaged both the finalization of revised criteria for project selection as well as identification of new projects, there was need for Iran to expedite the details of their project proposals so that there was adequate material for the technical experts to consider.

15. The Chairman gave assurances that preparations for the Technical Experts Meeting would begin very soon. It was clarified that participation in the Technical Experts Meeting would have to be at the level of experts in the field of technical cooperation. The Chairman observed that the outcomes of the experts meeting would be presented to the PRs for further consideration.

c) Further consultations on a possible profile for the G-15 Africa Cooperation Fund and the modalities for its operationalization;

16. The Chairman recalled that on the question of the establishment of the G-15 Africa Cooperation Fund, the Foreign Ministers had noted the inability of PRs to share a common viewpoint in this regard. While urging PRs to expedite consultations and to convey its outcome to their next Meeting, the Ministers had made a series of observations and suggestions on the manner in which PRs should proceed in the matter. He therefore invited PRs to come forward with suggestions that would break new grounds to enable a consensus on the establishment of the G-15 Africa Cooperation Fund.

17. In view of the observation made by the Foreign Ministers that a political decision had been made to establish the Fund, there was no disagreement among delegates to the notion that the Group now had to proceed and find ways to operationalize the Fund. The Meeting agreed that in view of the financial constraints within the membership of the Group, there was a need to look for innovative ways to finance projects that would be undertaken under the aegis of the G-15 Africa Cooperation Fund. Delegates made a number of useful suggestions in this regard, including making use of assistance in kind as well as dovetailing projects under existing technical cooperation programmes of member countries into the G-15 Africa Cooperation Fund. There was general consensus on the need to look beyond the Group's

members to development partners and multilateral agencies for funding. In this context, the point was made that traditional donors as well as beneficiary countries in Africa would need to know the manner of value addition if funds were to be channeled through the G-15 Africa Cooperation Fund. It was also suggested that a study of recent triangular funding initiatives could throw further light on how the concept of the G-15 Fund could be sold to multilateral donors.

18. The Chairman remarked that he would convene a meeting of three PRs drawn from the three constituent geographical regions of the G-15 to further consider the issue and come up with a solution that could address all the concerns as well as facilitate the operationalization of the Fund.

Item 4 - Consultations on a possible Host Country for the 15th Summit of Heads of State and Government

19. The Chairman recalled that the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela had informed the Meeting of the Foreign Ministers in New York that it had consulted with three other members of the Group from the Latin American and Caribbean region regarding a possible host country for the 15th Summit. He noted that it had been agreed that the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela should continue its consultations among the Latin American & Caribbean member countries, whose turn it would be to host the Summit after Tehran. He therefore invited the delegate of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to update PRs on the outcome of this effort.

20. The delegate of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela informed the Meeting that his delegation had been in touch with those countries of the G-15 from the Latin American and Caribbean region that had not yet hosted a G-15 Summit. However, there was no further development to report thus far. He mentioned that his delegation would now be contacting the rest of the G-15 member countries from the region and also considering the possibility of initiating consultations at the Vice- Ministerial level to find a possible host country for the 15th Summit. The Meeting agreed to request the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to continue with his efforts and report the outcome to the next Meeting of Personal Representatives.

Item 5 - Any Other Business

21. Having concluded the discussion on the substantive items of the Agenda, the Chairman appealed to PRs of member countries with arrears of contribution to facilitate early settlement of outstanding contributions. The Head of Office of the TSF urged PRs to commence early action for the payment of the contributions for 2008, recently approved by the Foreign Ministers, which fell due since 1st January 2008.

22. In the absence of any other request from the floor, the Chairman declared the Meeting closed.
