



GROUP OF FIFTEEN
The Summit Level of Developing Countries

G-15/99/FM19/4

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**NINETEENTH MEETING OF THE
MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE GROUP OF FIFTEEN**

New York, 24 September 1999

SUMMARY RECORDS

1. The nineteenth meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of Fifteen was held in New York on Friday 24 September, 1999 under the Chairmanship of H. E. Mr. Amre Moussa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt.

2. The Chairman welcomed his colleagues and expressed the high importance attached to this meeting, being the last meeting before the closing of the Century and turning into the new millennium, and maybe also the last meeting before holding the Tenth Summit in Egypt in the year 2000.

Item 1 - Adoption of the Agenda

3. The provisional agenda contained in document **G-15/99/FM19/1/Rev.1** was adopted by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

Item 2 - Report of the Chairman of G-15 PRs

4. On behalf of the Personal Representatives (PRs), Ambassador Mounir Zahran, Personal Representative of the President of Egypt to the Group of Fifteen and Chairman of the PRs, introduced his report on behalf of the G-15 PRs on the activities of the G-15 since the Ninth Summit. The report is contained in document **G-15/99/PR56/4** and **G-15/99/FM19/2**, enclosed herewith.

Item 3 - Global developments and implications for G-15 countries

5. The Chairman pledged with his colleagues, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of Fifteen, to work together toward a clearer definition of long-term strategies of the Group and, in this regard, the Ministers underscore the historic importance of the South Summit to be held in Havana, Cuba, from 12 to 14 April 2000, which will follow the Third WTO Ministerial Conference in Seattle (November/December 1999) and UNCTAD X in Bangkok, Thailand in February 2000. They undertook to further mobilize the collective strength and solidarity of developing countries through strengthening South-South cooperation.

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6. The Chairman, along with his colleagues, undertook to strive, through the United Nations and other fora for a world characterized by democracy, equity, justice, genuine human solidarity and the full realization of the right to development. This should be accorded the utmost priority by the United Nations in the Twenty-first century.

7. Unfortunately, the international economic environment continues to be unfavourable for the developing world. Developing countries as a whole experienced a deceleration in economic growth in recent years. While there were individual cases of continued growth in different regions, countries witnessed slow-down of economic activity while others experienced devastating economic crisis and deep recession.

8. There must be a concerted multilateral action to achieve the objectives of the United Nations Charter in promoting peace and security and in solving economic and social problems. The Ministers called for the establishment of a just international economic order and for measures to ensure the full and effective participation of developing countries in the process of decision-making aimed at resolving world economic problems in this era by ensuring the democratization of the international relations.

9. Globalization has generated economic asymmetries both at the global and national levels and poses new challenges to the development aspirations of developing countries. Many developing countries have faced difficulties in their efforts to integrate effectively into the world economy and have suffered the consequences of globalization. The impact of these processes was increasingly pronounced in the areas of finance and trade. Their impact was also extended to the social and cultural domains. It was agreed that this matter must be subject to further analysis and evaluation of the possible implications of these trends for developing countries in the 21st Century.

10. As reflected in the Report by the Secretary General of UNCTAD, dated 29 July 1999, International Trade, International Financial Flows, Foreign Direct Investment and other forms of transborder linkages among private firms are the main instruments of globalization, which in turn create conditions leading to the further expansion of these flows and linkages. The troubled relationship between globalization and development results from a number of imbalances as the process of globalization is progressing.

11. The Ministers stressed that national efforts need to be complemented by intensified international cooperation in order to reverse the marginalization of many developing countries in the international economy and manage the risks, overcome the challenges and seize the opportunities created by globalization.

12. It was noted that a number of activities took place during the Ninth Summit to address various global developments such as the seminar on electronic commerce which is one of new advents of the information society. Furthermore, a number of bilateral agreements for the promotion and protection of investment were signed during the Ninth Summit. Since the Ninth Summit, a number of activities have also taken place, others are planned for the near future. The Chairman emphasized that these activities along with the ongoing implementation of the G-15 projects would have a positive contribution and would assist in dealing more effectively with the global developments that are being witnessed today as well as the anticipated challenges of tomorrow.

13. The Chairman also stated that the G-15 has succeeded in line with the agreement reached during the Ninth Summit, to further “the Mystique” of the G-15 through enhanced

consultations and deliberations in various fora. This took place in FAO, on WTO issues, and in advancing a “Comprehensive Employment Strategy” in the ILO, and getting the G-15 positions known to ECOSOC, the General Assembly, UNCTAD, WTO and other fora. Egypt - during its chairmanship - will spare no effort in pursuing this path and the Egyptian Authorities are open to further suggestions. One area where the G-15 may make a positive contribution is in relation to the preparation for the Conference on Finance for Development. A second area is in relation to the preparation of the UN Millennium Assembly. Yet, other possible areas are UNCTAD X, the South Summit in Havana and, to continue intra G-15 consultations and coordination on WTO issues. The Ministers agreed to the Chairman’s proposal to take these challenges into consideration during the preparations for the Xth Summit.

Item 4 - Pursuing and fostering G-15/G8 dialogue- Recommendations for action

14. Reference was made to a number of developments that took place regarding dialogue between the G-15 and developed countries in general on the one hand, and the G8 in particular on the other. President Mubarak, as Chairman of the G-15 Summit level sent messages to the Federal Chancellor Schroeder of Germany, in his capacity as Chairman of the G8 following the Ninth Summit. This item was also on the Agenda of the talks between the two leaders during President’s Mubarak visit to Bonn in February 1999. In this regard, the President of Egypt also sent messages to all the Heads of State and Government of the G8. However, the dialogue between the G-15 and the G8 is not limited to the correspondence between the Chairmen of the G-15 and G8 conveying the outcome of Summit meetings, since an informal meeting took place between the Sherpa of Germany - current chair of the G8 and the PRs on 31 March 1999 where open and substantive discussions took place.

15. As a follow-up to this meeting and in response to the interest expressed by the German Sherpa in receiving a list of issues of interest to the G-15’s future dialogue, the PRs agreed on a list of topics that were communicated to the German Sherpa. These are:

1. The international financial crisis and the reform of the international financial system.
2. Job creation and employment issues including aspects related to a comprehensive employment strategy.
3. Financial flows including ODA and dept issues.
4. The evolution of the multilateral trading system (MTS) including its development objectives.
5. Education and training.
6. The millennium bug (Y2K) problem.

16. As indicated in the report of the Chairman of the PRs (enclosed), a second informal encounter with the German Sherpa will take place in Geneva on 21 October 1999 to pursue further that dialogue. This is a useful exercise which will enhance the dialogue in a concrete, pragmatic and constructive manner. The Ministers will be apprised of the outcome of the

informal meeting with the German Sherpa on 21 October 1999. The G-15 – G8 dialogue will also be considered during the Xth Summit.

Item 5 - The Xth Summit: substantive, logistical and other arrangements

17. The Foreign Ministers reviewed the new dates proposed by Egypt for the Xth Summit and which should be around end April/early May 2000. The Xth Summit will coincide with the Xth Anniversary of G-15 which will provide an opportunity for stocktaking of the G-15 achievements and forward looking projections to meet the challenges of global developments. The Xth Summit will comprise meetings of the FCCI, CITT, including the private sector and business community of the G-15 countries, in addition naturally, to the meeting of G-15 Trade Ministers, meeting of the PRs and the meeting of the Foreign Affairs Ministers preceding the Xth Summit. A G-15 Trade Exhibition and related activities will also be scheduled. The Chairman expressed his thanks to the PRs for submitting to the meeting the provisional agendas proposed for the Xth Summit as contained in document **G-15/99/L.2/Rev.1**, dated 23 September 1999.

18. On the substantive arrangements, the Chairman informed the Foreign Ministers that, the PRs recommend that the “**Theme**” of the Summit would be “ Global Developments at the beginning of the XXIst Century and Prospects for the South”. In addition to the evaluation of the G-15’s past experience, the Summit will be forward looking with the hope that the G-15 will be able to chart their way at the dawn of the new century.

19. Ministers of Foreign Affairs agreed that, all G-15 countries are committed to, and will urge all members of the international community to implement the commitments of the several United Nations World Conferences, High-level meetings and Summits. The G-15 countries will work together to ensure the success of the several Summits and UN Conferences to be held in the year 2000 including UNCTAD X, the South Summit in Havana (April 2000), the UN Millennium Assembly and the UN Conference on Financing for Development suggested for the year 2001. The Chairman informed that, all of these considerations and conferences should be borne in mind in the preparations for the Xth Summit of the G-15 which Egypt has the privilege to host in the year 2000, under the Chairmanship of President Hosni Mubarak.

20. Administrative arrangements for the Xth Summit: as soon as the dates are decided, a note will be circulated with all the logistical details including the venue - accommodation - transportation - the retreatetc. The Chairman drew attention to an important conference that will take place in New York between 24 April and 19 May 2000, i.e. The NPT Review Conference. An overlapping between that Conference and the G-15 Xth Summit should be avoided. That is why after consulting the President of Egypt following the presidential elections (26 September 1999), the dates for the Xth Summit may be suggested for end of May or June 2000.

21. In addition, the Chairman referred to suggestions by some member states to shorten the duration of the Summit itself including the Retreat to be within the limits of two days. He stated that this matter will be also considered in the preparations for the Summit.

Item 6 - G-15 Administrative and financial matters.

22. The G-15 Budget for the year 2000, contained in document **G-15/99/L.1/Rev.1**, was distributed before the meeting. The budget amounting to US\$ 796,568.55 is to be financed from equal contributions by each of G-15 member countries of US\$ 46,860.00. The budget was reviewed by the PRs at their meeting of 23 September 1999, and recommended it for endorsement and approval by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs. The Budget for the year 2000 was approved. The Chairman urged those countries which have arrears to settle them at the earliest possible date.

23. The 19th Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of Fifteen was concluded with thanks and appreciation to the Chairman, Minister Amre Moussa for the well prepared work.
