



GROUP OF FIFTEEN
The Summit Level Group of Developing Countries

G-15/OO/FM21/2

Date issued: 13 December 2000

Distribution: GENERAL

**TWENTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE GROUP OF FIFTEEN**
Mexico City, 30-31 October 2000

REPORT OF THE CO-CHAIRMEN

1. The 21st Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of Fifteen was held on 30 –31 October 2000 in Mexico City. Her Excellency Ambassador Rosario Green, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico and His Excellency Dr. Alwi Shihab, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia co-chaired the meeting. All member countries of the Group, including Iran and Colombia who are to be formally admitted into the Group at the XI Summit, participated in the meeting (The List of Participants is Annexed to this Report).
2. In her opening remarks, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico extended a warm welcome to the participating G-15 delegations, with particular note to Iran and Colombia, the two new members joining for the first time a meeting of the Group of Fifteen at Ministerial level. She expressed the conviction that both countries will have a constructive and valuable contribution to the cause of the Group of Fifteen. Mexico acknowledged that the Group of Fifteen is one of the most relevant and representative mechanisms of dialogue and collaboration in the developing world. By the same token, Mexico values its active contribution towards generating innovative and imaginative ideas to foster cooperation amongst G-15 countries. Minister Rosario Green stated that the meeting should enable the Group to continue advancing in its search for consensus that will help strengthen the G-15 so as to provide member countries with instruments that will enable them to benefit more effectively and adequately from the opportunities offered by this century.
3. Minister Rosario shared few reflections with Ministers on challenges which require priority attention. In order to successfully face complex problems, such as extreme poverty, environmental deterioration and transnational organized crime, it is indispensable that global and comprehensive solutions be designed based on principles of shared responsibility and international solidarity. As a result, one of the main challenges facing the Group of Fifteen is to foster innovative and imaginative schemes of coordination and cooperation, both amongst G-15 member countries as well as with industrialized countries and international organizations. To successfully address this challenge, it is fundamental to supplement the efforts that the Group undertakes towards sustained economic growth and sustainable development of G-15 societies. Minister Rosario Green reiterated Mexico's vision for developing the "Mystique" that the Ministers of Foreign Affairs undertook at

their 18th Meeting in Montego Bay, Jamaica in February 1999. She emphasized the need to consolidate the Group as a forum for enhancing dialogue and cooperation amongst G-15 member countries, and at the same time the Group should reinforce its capacity to dialogue with other parties, with a view to fostering the Group's presence in the international community.

4. On his part, H. E. Dr. Alwi Shihab, Chairman of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of Fifteen started his introductory remarks, by expressing his thanks and appreciation for the warm welcome and hospitality extended by the Government and people of Mexico to all participating delegates. He also extended a special welcome to Iran and Colombia who will become full members of the Group at the forthcoming XI Summit in Indonesia. Minister Shihab emphasized that this meeting was held at a very opportune time for the members of the Group to review and evaluate their activities. After many years of earnestly trying to integrate their economies into the global economy, developing countries have found themselves swept aside by the forces of globalization and liberalization and marginalized in the processes of international decision making on issues that vitally affect their peoples. South-South cooperation has therefore become more crucial than ever. The G-15 is thus called upon to create a new vision for the south so as to foster development and eradicate poverty in an environment of globalization and interdependence. The Indonesian Minister further stressed that G-15 members are expected to lend greater cohesion and credibility to the efforts of developing countries to pursue a more positive and productive North-South dialogue.

5. Minister Shihab stressed that environment and Information and Telecommunication Technology (ICT) are two issues of great importance to Indonesia. He underscored that developed countries should fulfill all their commitments in the implementation of Agenda 21. He also stressed the need to enhance the implementation of Regional Action Programmes and to strengthen institutions in G-15 countries concerned with environment policies. Regarding ICT, the Minister pointed out that it is the main driving force of globalization and liberalization, and that while it offers great opportunities for developing countries, it brings about new challenges that these countries should be prepared to confront. He welcomed the G8 Okinawa Charter on Global Information Society, which established a Digital Opportunity Task Force (DOTForce) to bridge the digital divide between the developing and developed world. He underscored that the G-15 should play an active role in the development and actions of the DOTForce.

6. The Ministers adopted the Provisional Agenda for the Meeting and proceeded with the consideration of the following agenda items:

**I. Strengthening of cooperation and coordination among members of the G-15:
Exchange of national and regional experiences on fields of common interest:**

7. With a view to strengthening cooperation and coordination among member countries as a Group, the Ministers exchanged views on national and regional experiences in the following fields of common interest:

- Poverty alleviation
- Trade and investment promotion and liberalization
- Reform of the International Financial Architecture
- Environmental issues (Rio + 10)
- Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
- Incentives for small and medium-sized enterprises
- Migrations flows and Movement of Natural Persons
- Human Resources Development

Poverty Alleviation

8. On the issue of poverty alleviation, H. E. Dr. Ahmed El Dersh, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation of Egypt and H. E. Mr. Ajit Kumar Panja, Minister of State for External Affairs of India made lead presentations followed by exchange of views among the Ministers. The following were some of the highlights of the exchange of views:

- a) Poverty alleviation must be accorded high priority within national, regional and international efforts. Developed countries should support the call by the United Nations Secretary General to consider abolishing all official debts of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) in the framework of making demonstrable commitments to poverty reduction. This call should be operationalized without any further delay or conditionality. In addition, as poverty relates directly to human rights, the G-15 may be able to add its voice and introduce some ideas to the commendable work being carried out by the Human Rights Commission, particularly as far as the right to development is concerned.
- b) Some countries felt that the enhanced HIPC initiative is not sufficient to contribute effectively to national efforts directed at eradicating poverty or to improving international environment for development financing, particularly that it does not inject fresh funds for economic and social development in the countries concerned. As a result, industrialized countries were called upon to provide sufficient additional resources to that end and to accelerate their disbursements of ODA to ensure that all eligible countries could benefit from debt relief.
- c) G-15 countries should develop a joint strategy on how to define poverty individually and collectively. Approach to the problem of poverty alleviation and its definition should be based on a Poverty Index rather than a Per Capita Income Index. The Per Capita Index is not a good indicator of income distribution.
- d) In defining poverty, G-15 countries should take into account, amongst other definitions, those based on the monetary value of consumption and on the calorific intake. G-15 countries should also examine how to ascertain the number of people below the poverty line in a given country. There should be a greater understanding of the parameters that should be taken into account for defining poverty.
- e) There is a great need for the G-15 to design poverty alleviation strategies that will provide opportunities to generate employment to the poor and the unemployed and to go from low productivity to high productivity profiles. In addition, the G-15 must place itself in the forefront of efforts to galvanize concrete action to attain the goals of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development and other resolutions adopted by major world conferences of the 1990s which address poverty eradication in developing countries.

Trade and Investment Promotion and Liberalization

9. On the issue of Trade and Investment Promotion and Liberalization, H. E. Mr. Cheikh Tidane Gadio, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Senegal made a lead presentation followed by exchange of views. The following were some of the highlights of the exchange of views:

- a) Any move towards a new round of multilateral trade negotiations must first adequately address the concerns of developing countries. It must adequately tackle the problem of implementation of the Uruguay Round commitments and decisions. It must also not introduce any extraneous issues such as labour standards and environmental conditionalities.
- b) A proposal was made by a delegation that the G-15 should support the holding of a World Summit on Globalization that may propose appropriate regulation mechanisms in international trade and investment exchanges.
- c) Reinforcement of trade exchanges between G-15 member countries to go beyond what is presently accorded at the Regional Level. Some Ministers indicated that this should ultimately lead to concluding a global intra-G-15 free trade agreement that will offer greater benefits to member countries.
- d) Some Ministers also expressed that Bilateral investment treaties concluded between a number of G-15 countries should be expanded to trade and services in addition to capital. It is therefore, essential to give a priority to establishing an inventory of trade and investment barriers among G-15 countries. It is also essential to enter BITs and to utilize instruments such as the GSTP to promote intra-G-15 trade.
- e) The difficulties encountered by countries seeking accession to the WTO and the importance of ensuring the universality of the multilateral trading system were highlighted.
- f) Attention was drawn to the use of protectionist measures by developed countries to prevent developing countries from realizing their potentials to benefit from the expansion of world trade.

Reform of the International Financial Architecture

10. On the issue of the Reform of the International Financial Architecture, the Honourable Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia and H. E. Dr. Guillermo Fernández de Soto, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia, made lead presentations followed by exchange of views. The following were some of the highlights of the exchange of views:

- a) The reform of the International Financial Architecture cannot be isolated from the priorities in economic growth and social development. Therefore, a larger opening of the international financial system is required with the objective of enabling wider participation of developing countries in the decision making processes.
- b) Some delegations were of the view that the reform should include a review and complete overhaul of not only the role of the IMF but also of the World Bank and other International Financial Institutions (IFI) and regulatory agencies. Concern was expressed on the increasing use of non-economic considerations by the Bretton Woods institutions in granting their facilities to developing countries. A review is required on how regional IFIs can assist in the capacity building of regional financial systems, to avoid or to reduce the impact of another financial crisis. The aim is:

- To enable developing countries introduce global prudential safeguards to ensure orderly stable conditions in the international financial system so that benefits of globalization can be maximized while reducing the risks involved.
 - This will enhance transparency and accountability of the IMF, other multilateral and regional institutions
- c) The International Financial System must take into account the interests and circumstances of all countries. The industrialized and all developing countries must be equal stake-holders in shaping and implementing any reform. There is a need to ensure a symmetrical treatment in encouraging both the public and private sectors to be more transparent in order to promote efficient and stable financial markets. The private sector must be subjected to transparency standards to make it more accountable for its actions particularly in relation to cross-border capital flows and the role of highly leveraged institutions and international credit rating agencies.
- d) The provision of additional funds to guarantee adequate liquidity levels constitute another central access of that new architecture that developing countries should support. Active participation is also required by regional and sub-regional financial institutions as supplementary sources of financing as well as to mitigate adverse economic effects generated by the crises.
- e) One of the important lessons from recent crises is closely related to the particular characteristics that the G-15 countries have assumed at regional level. It is therefore, essential to continue working on the harmonization and coordination of macroeconomic policies in countries with emerging economies.
- f) Priority should be given to export promotion and market access in industrialized countries as a means to finance developing economies. Reference should be made here to the high complementarity between international trade and the financial agenda as well as between access to capital markets and to markets for goods and services, and between the removal of financial barriers and the dismantling of trade restrictions.
- g) In light of the role of the United Nations as a consensus building organization, the forthcoming United Nations High-level Event on Financing for Development was considered an important development in the area of international financing.
- h) It is extremely important that the Group of Fifteen identifies points of convergence around the themes to be addressed by the United Nations, giving priority to the study of proposals on relevant topics such as prevention and management of external crises, improved access of G-15 countries to international capital markets, the increase of national savings rates and efficient channeling of investments towards social development. To enhance collaboration by G-15 member countries on issues related to the reform of the international financial architecture, it is necessary for more G-15 member countries to speak out.
- i) Increased coordination with the Group of 24 is highly recommended in order to formulate a common view on a number of key issues relating to the Reform of the International Financial Architecture.

Environment Issues (Rio +10)

11. On Environment Issues (Rio + 10), H. E. Ambassador Jorge Voto-Bernales, Personal Representative of Peru, made a lead presentation followed by exchange of views. The following were some of the highlights of the exchange of views:

- a) The exchange of views focused on the important issue of environmental protection and sustainable exploitation of natural resources and the use of human environment with a view to attaining sustainable development. To this end, commitment to the goals and principles enunciated in Agenda 21 was reaffirmed. The environmental consciousness generated by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro have not been matched with practical action in the fulfillment of the undertakings arising from Rio. The industrialized countries who bear responsibility for the larger share of environmental degradation have not taken meaningful action to reverse their unsustainable patterns of economic activities and consumption. These countries, it was noted, have not equally fulfilled their commitments to provide the necessary assistance, such as the provision of financial assistance, transfer of environmentally friendly technology and technical expertise, among others, to developing countries.
- b) Several Ministers underlined the imperative for the international community, particularly the developed countries, to take urgent and practical actions to fulfill their international commitments with respect to poverty eradication in developing countries. Therefore, the forthcoming Rio+10 should have as its priority, the identification of concrete measures to ensure that the developed countries in particular, fulfill their commitments under Agenda 21.
- c) In the light of the foregoing considerations, the Rio+10 was considered as an opportune moment to evolve G-15 cooperation on environmental issues with a view to protecting the biodiversity, including cooperation in the training of local communities to improve their use of natural resources and capacity to benefit from their ecosystems. Therefore, the exchange of experiences and expertise in the area of environmental protection was encouraged. The Rio+10 process was considered a unique opportunity for G-15 member countries to initiate common actions at the international level with a view to galvanizing international actions for the realization of the goals set in Agenda 21 which serve the interest of developing countries.

Information and Communication Technologies

12. On the issue of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), His Excellency Dr. Alwi Shihab, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia made a lead presentation, followed by exchange of views among the Ministers, on the dynamic role of ICT in the new information and knowledge-based global economy. The following were some of the highlights of the exchange of views:

- a) A number of member countries shared their experiences with other member countries in the area of ICT acquisition and application and expressed their willingness to foster mutual cooperation in this field. In recognition of the dynamic role of ICT in the globalization process, it was stressed that its accessibility and widespread application by developing countries holds a great promise for addressing

the challenges of development facing developing countries and their beneficial integration into the global economy as well as in bridging the income and welfare gaps between them and the developed countries. However, for these prospects to be realized, the imperative for affordable and equitable access and connectivity for developing countries was underscored in light of their inadequate basic physical infrastructure such as electricity, telephones, computer hardware and software, as well as low-level of the critical mass of human resource attributes such as high rate of literacy, ICT skills, incomes, etc., needed to transform the information explosion into a knowledge revolution.

- b) The present trends and patterns in the new economy indicate that access to and application of information and knowledge are dependent on connectivity, capabilities and content which are currently monopolized by the developed countries. The global imbalance in the development, ownership, application, content and benefits of ICT has created a digital divide between developing and developed countries. The need for national and international actions for the conscious development of the national information infrastructure in developing countries was therefore emphasized. This should include enhancement of human and institutional capabilities, the adoption of a strategic framework and acquisition of skills necessary for the use of ICT and the Internet and the evolution of a linguistically and culturally diverse digital content.
- c) Information and Communications, especially as represented by the Internet, form the primary conduit for information and knowledge. The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) was formed in October 1998 in California to administer and manage the Internet. However, concern was expressed on ICANN as there has been inadequate participation by developing countries in the process of finalizing its form and it is negotiated outside established structures for international cooperation. The developing countries must participate in the Internet Governance to ensure global Internet Governance is firmly incorporated in the international system of political representation, cooperation and decision-making.
- d) The G8 Okinawa Charter on the Global Information Society and in particular, the establishment of a Digital Opportunities Task Force (Dot Force) in which developing countries will participate, was considered as a step in the right direction in promoting access by all to digital opportunities. G-15 countries should play an active role in the activities of the Dot Force in order to derive its benefits. This was opportune in light of the adoption of Towards E-Development: Closing the Digital Gap as the theme of the XI Summit to be held in Jakarta in May 2001.

Incentives for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)

13. On the issue of Incentives for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), H. E. Dr. Ahmed El Dersh, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation of Egypt made a lead presentation followed by exchange of views among the Ministers. The following were some of the highlights of the exchange of views:

- a) The prominent role played by SMEs in the economies of developing countries was emphasized. This includes the significant contributions of SMEs to economic growth, income generation, job creation and general social economic development in

developing countries. It was noted that SMEs provide the bulk of employment in the economies of G-15 countries and serve as practical vehicles for the development and integration of the informal sector into the mainstream of the national economies of developing countries. In the light of these considerations, the need for supportive policies for SMEs development through national and plurilateral actions within G-15 member countries was stressed.

- b) The need for supportive policies has become particularly urgent in the face of the competitive pressures brought about by the increasing liberalization and globalization of the world economy. It was therefore observed that the policy and business environments in which SMEs operate are changing rapidly as a result of market-oriented reforms and technological change. These pressures, it was noted, call for the development of an effective, comprehensive and coherent strategy for SMEs development to enable them adjust to new market conditions and to identify and take advantage of new opportunities. To this end, should strengthen national programmes and policies as well as existing G-15 projects aimed at fostering SMEs development, including the promotion of their investment opportunities, competitiveness and modernization. G-15 Governments should foster interaction and partnerships with the private sector and NGOs to create a supportive and coherent policy framework for SMEs development. This should include development of measures to promote effective inter-firm cooperation, involving clustering, networking and technology partnerships.
- c) It was noted that the drastic reduction and removal of some of the incentives and protective policies traditionally enjoyed by indigenous enterprises, particularly SMEs, have left them open to fierce competition from the more powerful transnational corporations (TNCs). It was observed that the challenges faced by SMEs have become more acute in the face of the intensifying trends of mergers, acquisitions and strategic alliances among major corporations. A call was addressed to relevant international organizations and institutions, particularly the ILO, ITC, UNCTAD, UNIDO, and the WTO to study within their respective mandates, the impact of this phenomenon on the survival, employment-generation and competitiveness of SMEs.
- d) With a view to consolidating the collaborative project on Cooperation at Institutional and Enterprise Level for G-15 SMEs, G-15 countries were urged to facilitate the active participation of their Experts in the forthcoming G-15 Expert Meeting on SMEs to be held in Cairo, Egypt, from 19-20 February 2001.

Migration Flows and Movement of Natural Persons

14. On the issue of Migration Flows and Movement of Natural Persons, H. E. Ambassador Rosario Green , Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico made a lead presentation followed by exchange of views among the Ministers. Some highlights of the exchange of views, which was positive and did not touch upon the issues of refugees and internally displaced person, were as follows:

- a) Some Ministers stressed the importance of the subject and noted its historical origin and complex nature. The phenomenon, it was observed, is caused by several factors, including demographic pressures, socio-economic conditions and technological

change, among others. It was observed that while efforts to address these factors continue to be given the desired attention, the number of migrant population has been on the rise, reaching a global figure of 130 million persons. The meeting therefore underscored the urgency for a comprehensive global solution to the increasing incidence of migration flows in the context of globalization.

- b) It was felt by some Ministers that that the new approach should, in particular, examine the causes of the phenomenon, identify appropriate measures to reverse the flows and address the conditions of migrant populations in the host countries. They acknowledged the need for dialogue and a comprehensive approach that address the ethical, human rights, political and security dimensions of migrations flows. This has become imperative because of the deplorable conditions of migrant populations and the lack of respect for their dignity and fundamental rights in receiving countries, in spite of their positive contributions to the economic and socio-cultural development of these countries.
- c) In light of the foregoing discussions, some Ministers welcomed the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of their Family was welcomed. The international instrument, it was highlighted, calls for the recognition of the human rights of migrant workers, the need for fair and non-discriminatory treatment, dignified living conditions and obligations of sending and receiving states. Noting that the Convention is yet to come into force, its ratification by G-15 countries was recommended.
- d) It was observed that while negotiations in the WTO had significantly led to the liberalization of trade in goods, equal attention has not been given to the liberalization of trade in services of interest to developing countries, particularly in the modes of supply not requiring commercial presence, such as Movement of Natural Persons. As a result, service providers from developing countries continue to face great obstacles in having access to the markets of developed countries. Therefore, the need was expressed for meaningful progress in the WTO on negotiations on the liberalization of trade in services, particularly, on the Movement of Natural Persons.

Human Resource Development

15. On the issue of Human Resources Development, H. E. Mr. Ajit Kumar Panja, Minister of State for External Affairs of India made a lead presentation followed by exchange of views among the Ministers. The following were some of the highlights of the exchange of views:

- a) The meeting emphasized the importance of human-centered development aimed at empowering and enhancing the productive capacity of peoples in developing countries. It was recognized that education, training and retraining are fundamental to the realization of human potential, for banishing ignorance and prejudice and for a dignified human existence. To this end, it was underscored that immediate priority should be given to the eradication of illiteracy within member countries of the G-15.
- b) It was acknowledged that sustained economic growth and sustainable development could only be attained through the availability of widespread knowledge in G-15 countries. Therefore, this objective should be attained by strengthening cooperation

in human resource training among G-15 member countries, through a holistic and practical approach for the empowerment of the whole populations through skills and knowledge. Within this context, the relevance of skills in the application of modern technology, particularly ICT, which presents enormous opportunities for social and economic development and the empowerment of communities, was recognized. Therefore, the importance of exploring the potential of ICT for harnessing human resource development among member countries was stressed. While recognizing the need to sustain the existing programmes of technical cooperation, through the sharing of expertise, in several member countries, it was noted that G-15 countries had largely depended on their own resources. It was therefore stressed that supplementary funding for human resource development in G-15 countries should be mobilized from multilateral agencies.

II. Institutional mechanisms to strengthen the G-15: The Functioning and Methods of Work of the G-15, including Membership.

16. The Co-Chairman recalled that the 20th Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the X Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Cairo in June 2000 requested the PRs to examine issues relating to G-15 membership, including expansion, as well as the methods of work, and ways to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Group and to submit recommendations to that effect to the Foreign Ministers. He informed the Meeting that the PRs held very useful discussions and have submitted a progress report on the Functioning and Methods of Work of the G-15, including Membership for consideration. The Ministers received the Report with appreciation and made useful comments and suggestions.

17. In their preliminary comments, the Ministers acknowledged the general thrust of the Report and noted areas of emerging consensus as well as areas that require further consultations by the PRs. They welcomed the opportunity for the sharing of view points on ways and means of improving the structure and methods of work of the Group, with a view to enhancing its capacity to realize its founding objectives. The exercise, it was noted, has become imperative in the Group's efforts to deepen and broaden South-South cooperation and its desire for a more prominent and credible role in today's rapidly evolving international environment.

18. On the General Objectives and Orientation of the G-15, Ministers acknowledged that the Group has served as a forum for consultation and dialogue among member countries, but noted that it was yet to fully accomplish the goals and objectives set in 1990. They therefore stressed the need to properly orient the Group and to revitalize its mechanisms.

19. The Ministers underscored the continuing relevance of South-South Cooperation and Coordination of positions in Multilateral fora in facing the new challenges engendered by globalization. They therefore emphasized the need for internal consistency and effective harmonization of positions and actions on priority issues, to enable the Group to effectively play a visible and credible role in global affairs. Ministers also highlighted the need for the Group to explore further measures for enhancing consultations and coordination with the wider community of developing countries, if it would serve as a catalyst in advancing the interest of the developing countries. They noted however, that the Group should not attempt to duplicate or replace existing developing country groupings. The Ministers underscored the vital role of G-15 collaborative projects as a practical demonstration of South-South cooperation. While highlighting the need for greater involvement of the private sector in these projects, it was remarked that consideration should be given to the need for revitalizing promising projects and phasing out non-performing

ones. In this regard, procedures for initiating, monitoring and implementing collaborative projects should be fine-tuned.

20. The relevance of the Group's desire and efforts for a constructive North-South relations, particularly G-15/G8 dialogue, which has become more imperative in light of the new challenges of the globalized world was underscored. Therefore, the efforts of the Chairman of the G-15 to sustain the dialogue between the G-15 and the G8, and the recent Meeting between the PRs and the G8 Sherpa of Japan were welcomed. It was however noted that for this dialogue to achieve its ultimate objective, the G-15 must take conscious efforts to enhance its internal consistency and effectiveness as a Group and evolve concerted positions on key global issues of common interest for intervention in relevant international fora.

21. On Frequency and Duration of Summits, Ministers underscored the relevance of sustaining regular political consultations among Heads of State and Government in order to give the desired political orientation and direction to the Group. While most Ministers favoured the continuation of the practice of annual Summits because of the need for timely political directions in the rapidly evolving global environment, some called for consideration to be given to holding bi-annual Summits in order to facilitate a higher rate of attendance. It was noted that the clear identification of the purpose and objectives to be achieved at each Summit would facilitate the attendance of Heads of State and Government. Notwithstanding these views, Ministers recognized the importance of encouraging Heads of State and Government to participate at Summits, as a high priority.

22. Ministers were of the general view that the duration of Summits should be streamlined by giving strong consideration to limiting the number of days. To this end, the view was widely held among the Ministers to hold the meetings of the Ministers of Trade, CITT, BIF and FCCIS few months before the Summit and to submit their respective Report as inputs to the Summit.

23. On the nature and content of G-15 Communiqués, Ministers underscored the relevance of having concise and focused texts with clear political vision and specific objectives to be achieved. They emphasized the need for effective follow-up mechanism to ensure the successful implementation of Summit decisions. To this end, Ministers acknowledged the need for establishing an inventory of decisions and actions taken, highlighting areas of achievements and difficulties and to designate a lead member country to oversee the implementation of each key Summit decision.

24. Ministers recognized the importance of membership in the attainment of the goals of the Group. Some Ministers considered that the Group should consolidate its present membership and enhance its coordination and effectiveness before considering further expansion. However, some other Ministers were opposed to a moratorium, while stressing the need for achieving regional balance among the component regions of the Group before addressing the question of moratorium. In this regard, it was noted that Asia is the least represented; and a delegation suggested that interested Asian countries like Jordan should be allowed to join. It was pointed out by several delegations that the imbalance in geographical representation was an unhealthy situation. Furthermore, it was felt by some member countries that future membership of the Group should be based on clearly established procedure and the value-added to be derived by the Group from the membership of a prospective candidate. This should be without prejudice to the country's national circumstances and existing bilateral or multilateral commitments.

25. On Inter-sessional Meetings of Ministers, the Ministers underscored the continuing relevance of their regular meetings with a view to sustaining constant consultations and coordination among members of the Group. They however held the view that the holding of inter-sessional meetings of other G-15 Ministers should be based on necessity. A view was however held that this should also apply to the inter-sessional meetings of Foreign Ministers.

26. The PRs were requested to continue their consultations on the subject, taking into account the comments raised by the Ministers, and to submit their final report to the 22nd Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Jakarta, Indonesia.

III. Establishment of a Human Resources Training Programme in G-15 Member Countries

27. The Co-Chairman recalled that at the retreat of the Foreign Ministers in the course of the X Summit in Cairo on 19 June 2000, it was agreed to encourage the establishment of a Human Resources Training Programme among G-15 countries. He informed the Meeting that after the consideration of the proposal by Mexico on the subject, The PRs recommended that Ministers should encourage the establishment of the Programme among G-15 countries. To this end, the Co-Chairman proposed that the Committee on Investment, Trade and Technology (CITT), with the assistance of the Technical Support Facility (TSF), should work out the modalities for the implementation of the Human Resources Training Programme among G-15 countries. The Ministers endorsed the Co-Chairman's proposal.

IV. Administration and Financial Matters

a) Management of G-15 Funds: Sensitivity Analysis Report

28. The Ministers took note of the Sensitivity Analysis Report submitted by the TSF, analyzing the overall financial situation of the G-15 and containing a recommendation to use part of the funds accumulated as interests on the fixed deposits of the Group to cover part of the annual budget.

b) Proposed Budget of the Group of Fifteen for the year 2001

29. The Ministers considered and approved the proposed Budget for the year 2001, as recommended by the PRs.

V. Report of the Chairman of the Group (Indonesia) on preparations for the XI Summit of the G-15

30. In his update on the arrangements for the XI Summit, the Co-Chairman, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia referred to the dates earlier proposed and communicated by Indonesia. He remarked that as a result of difficulties expressed by some member countries to meet the date of 14-15 May 2001 initially proposed by Indonesia, he then proposed a new date of 25-26 May 2001 for the XI Summit. Some Ministers accepted the new date while others remarked that they would convey the information to their Heads of State and Government for consideration. However, two member countries informed that the new date coincided with important national events in their respective country. The Co-Chairman informed that the Summit will be preceded by the Meetings of the PRs, Ministers of Trade and Ministers of Foreign Affairs and that Indonesia was flexible on the date for the CITT meeting. He confirmed that the meetings of the BIF and FCCIS as well as a

retreat of Foreign Ministers will be held as usual.

31. The Indonesian Co-Chairman confirmed that the Jakarta Convention Centre remains the venue for all the meetings and that the Summit Retreat would take place at the Presidential Palace, Bogor. There will also be the G-15 Trade expo and the G-15 InfoComTech Expo. He stated that the theme for the XI Summit, "Towards E-Development: Closing the Digital Gap" was proposed by Indonesia because it is a crucial aspect of the great divide between the poor and the rich. He noted with appreciation that the Ministers supported the proposed theme, and upon the suggestion of some of the Ministers, the theme would be broadened. The Indonesian Co-Chairman urged all member countries to participate in all activities of the Summit, including the participation of the private sector in the G-15 Trade Expo and the G-15 InfoComTech Expo.

VI. Other issues

32. The Meeting adopted by consensus, the Statement of the 21st Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of Fifteen.

33. Before adjourning the Meeting, the Co-Chairpersons expressed their appreciation to the Ministers for their presence, constructive contributions and cooperation which ensured the success of the Meeting. They underscored that their Meeting in Mexico City has broken new grounds in the efforts of the Group to revitalize itself in the attainment of its objectives.

34. The Ministers expressed their appreciation to the Government of Mexico for the warm hospitality extended to them and for the excellent arrangements for their Meeting.



GROUP OF FIFTEEN
The Summit Level Group of Developing Countries

G-15/00/FM21/Corr.1
Date issued: 6 February 2001

Distribution: GENERAL

TWENTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE GROUP OF FIFTEEN
Mexico City, 30-31 October 2000

REPORT OF THE CO-CHAIRMEN

Corrigendum 1

Page 11, paragraph 21, second sentence: The word “bi-annual” at the end of line 5 should read “biennial”.