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G-77 CHAIRMAN WARNS OF WIDENING GAP BETWEEN RICH AND POOR NATIONS

WASHINGTON DC, April (G77/IPS) -- Addressing a meeting of G-24 ministers, Ambassador Mohamed Bennouna, Chairman of the Group of 77 and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco, expressed serious concern over the widening gap between developed and developing nations.

The world today is being characterised by increased poverty, economic vulnerability and political instability, he warned.

Speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, Ambassador Bennouna said that the fight against poverty has not made many inroads.

"Its eradication is still far from the objective set out in the Millennium Declaration. The economic situation of developing countries did not significantly improve. Trade barriers continue to exist, debt and financial volatility and instability continue to affect their economies," he said.

Moreover, political factors are adding additional unknown elements to an economic situation already difficult, which make the rich even richer and the poor even poorer.

"We are witnessing today the widening gap between the

developed and developing countries and the continued uncertain prospects of global economic recovery and its consequences for developing countries," he said.

As a result, there is an urgent need for a concerted multilateral action to achieve the objectives of the United Nations Charter in solving economic and social problems and in "promoting international peace and security".

In this context, the Group of 77 calls for a renewal of political will and for the creation of an enabling international economic environment in order to support developing countries' efforts to achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development, he said.

"Today developing countries continue to make strenuous efforts to mobilize domestic resources for development. The Group, however, underscores that such efforts need to be supplemented by external resources, which should be provided without any condition, in order to effectively address their development requirements," the G-77 Chairman said.

The Group also expresses its concern at the erosion of

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EDITORIAL



During the current year, the primary theme of the Group of 77 and China has been the implementation of commitments and pledges made over the years.

We think it is time to focus on the concrete results of major conferences and summits — convened under the auspices of the United Nations — held

since 1990.

The aim of these summits was to respond to the crying needs of hundreds of millions of human beings whose very existence depended on the fulfillment of pledges made at these UN conferences.

It was with great satisfaction that we welcomed on 23 June 2003 the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 57/270B which called for the "Integrated and Coordinated implementation of, and follow-up to, the outcomes of the major United Nations Conferences and Summits in the economic and social fields."

The resolution was the climax of the discussions held over several months within a working group. We are glad that we made a significant contribution to its ultimate success.

Currently, the issue of development is being well maintained as part of the political momentum of the international community. A summit on development will now take place in 2005 — five years after the Millennium Summit.

We recognize the necessity for an assessment — on a regular basis — of the progress achieved in the implementation of the objectives of the Millennium Declaration.

In this respect, indicators will be elaborated mainly within the Statistics Commission in order to be used as appropriate measurement units.

Finally, follow-up mechanisms are established within the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the General Assembly in order to ensure a regular evaluation and, if needed, necessary adjustments.

International trade is one of the indispensable components of any integrated approach to development. The Trade and Development Board of UNCTAD should report to ECOSOC regularly.

Thus, the international community has acquired appropriate mechanisms to evaluate the efforts required from States as well as from international and regional organisations for the achievements of development goals.

We hope that this first outline of mechanisms of integrated follow-up and implementation of UN summits will be strengthened in the future so that international economic justice is taken into account and the credibility of the United Nations is enhanced.

MOHAMED BENNOUNA

**Ambassador, Permanent Representative
of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations
Chairman of the Group of 77**

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development cooperation and underlines the need to reinvigorate it in order to address the new development requirements of developing countries.

Additionally, he said, the Group of 77 also expresses its concern regarding the marginalization of a large number of developing countries, which are thus being denied the benefits of these processes, particularly in Africa.

"We do believe that most developing countries continue to face problems of access to markets, capital and technology and many grappled with the structural transformation necessary for their integration into the world economy".

The Group of 77, he said, believes that globalization, and the increasing interdependence that it engenders, requires an effective governance that focuses primarily on three key elements: firstly, the democratization of international economic decision-making; secondly, the integrated consideration of trade, finance and developmental issues by international institutions; thirdly, the reform of the international financial architecture and the establishment of a strong mechanism for surveillance and regulation.

The financial crisis of the last decade has exposed weaknesses in the international financial system. The Group of 77 expresses its concern about the lack of surveillance and

regulation of international currency trading, as well as the volatility of the international financial system, which have a detrimental impact on global financial and economic stability.

The ambassador also said that despite several initiatives undertaken over the past decade by the international community, the debt crisis persists as one of the main constraints for the development of developing countries, including middle-income countries.

"I would like also to express on behalf of the Group of 77 our deep concern for the erosion of development cooperation in terms of Official Development Assistance (ODA), and to make an appeal for the need to reinvigorate it in order to address the new development requirements of developing countries."

The chairman said that the developed countries still have a long way to go to implement their commitments agreed by major UN Conferences and Summits.

"Building an international cooperation for development requires strengthening cooperation among us. The Group of 77 reiterates its firm commitment to further strengthening South-South cooperation. This modality of cooperation is increasingly important, both as a strategy in support of development and as a means of ensuring the effective participation of developing countries in the emerging global economic order."

The financial crisis of the last decade has exposed weaknesses in the international financial system.

DEVELOPING NATIONS MAKE LESS PROGRESS ON TRADE, ODA & DEBT

UNITED NATIONS, June (G77/IPS) -- Although developing countries have been working hard to improve their macroeconomic policies at the national level, they continue to make little or no progress at the international level-- particularly on issues relating to trade, official development assistance (ODA), and external debt, Fathallah Oulalou, Minister of Finance and Privatization of Morocco, said during a high-level dialogue with the Bretton Woods institutions (BWIs) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

"It is time to strengthen the coordination between the UN and international financial institutions and the WTO," he said. These organisations should integrate fully in their policies the development objectives agreed to by the United Nations-- taking into account the economic policies and strategies decided by developing countries at the national level.

The minister was speaking at the special high level meeting of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) with the BWIs and the WTO, held at UN headquarters held on 16 April 2003.

The meeting took the form of a free-flowing dialogue

between finance ministers and high level officials of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the WTO

The suggested theme at the meeting was: "Increased coherence, coordination and cooperation for the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus at all levels, a year after Monterrey."

Last year's meeting at Monterrey was on financing for development.

The minister said that the Monterrey Consensus effectively established the partnership between developing and developed countries.

However, if developing countries have the first responsibility in the field of economic and social development, the developed countries have an obligation to provide a favourable international economic environment for the North-South partnership to succeed.

These should be translated through coherent and compatible national economic policies in different fields in order to achieve the objectives agreed to at the international level, he argued.

G-77 HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE TO ADDRESS SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION IN MARRAKECH

UNITED NATIONS – June (G77/IPS) - The Government of the Kingdom of Morocco will host a High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation in Marrakech from 16 to 19 December 2003, Ambassador Mohamed Bennouna, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco and Chairman of the Group of 77 in New York announced here.

The convening of the High level Conference on South-South Cooperation was decided at the South Summit in Havana (10 – 14 April 2000), with the objective of formulating global strategies and clear policies within the South for enhancing cooperation among developing countries and also to combat problems and face the challenges plaguing the developing regions in the 21st century, the most significant being the challenge of globalization.

The four-day Conference will bring together policy makers from member countries of the Group of 77, as well as representatives from relevant U.N. organizations, private sector, business sector and other stakeholder groups. Other developed countries will be invited also to attend the Conference as special guests.

To facilitate this objective, the Conference will be preceded by a Regional Preparatory Meetings in each region (Africa, Asia and Latin American and the Caribbean regions) for the preparations of this Conference. The Regional Preparatory Meeting cooperation took place in Caracas from the 16 –17 of June 2003 sponsored by SELA (Latin American Economic System) and the government of Venezuela.

“The High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation presents a good opportunity to take stock of the Havana Summit outcome in the field of South-South cooperation.” This conference will provide the opportunity of assessing the achievements reached so far in implementing the actions contained in the Havana Programme of Action and pertaining to South-South cooperation,” said the Chairman of the Group of 77 before the Prepcom.

“Drawing from the Havana Summit decisions, the High-level Conference will focus on the implementation of the identified priorities and extract from existing plans and programmes of action a limited number of concrete elements that are ripe for implementation. The Conference has to review the progress made so far in implementing ECDC and TCDC activities formulated in several programmes and plans of action, by assessing successes and shortcomings, and drawing the appropriate conclusions for the implementation process” he added.

“The High-level Conference will place particular em-

phasis on South-South trade and investment, South-South cooperation in the field of food and agriculture, as well as cooperation among developing countries in the area of health care and education, and information and communication technology,” he concluded.

Addressing the High-level Committee on TCDC recently, the Chairman of the Group of 77 stressed that “the High-level Conference will also consider ways and means of further promoting and bridging subregional and regional groupings as a pivotal dynamic for enhancing South-South cooperation.”

The Preparatory Committee of the Conference met in New York to discuss the preparations of the conference at the expert level under the chairmanship of Mr. Hassan Aboutahir, Minister Plenipotentiary at the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Morocco and Coordinator of the Prepcom at the expert level.

Speaking at the regional preparatory meeting in Caracas on June 16, Ambassador Bennouna said that countries of the Latin-American region-- along with its intra-regional groupings and institutions-- have always played a pivotal role and undertaken multiplied efforts towards enhancing South-South cooperation in the various economic, technical and social fields.

During the last three months, the Group has identified some areas for action to be addressed during

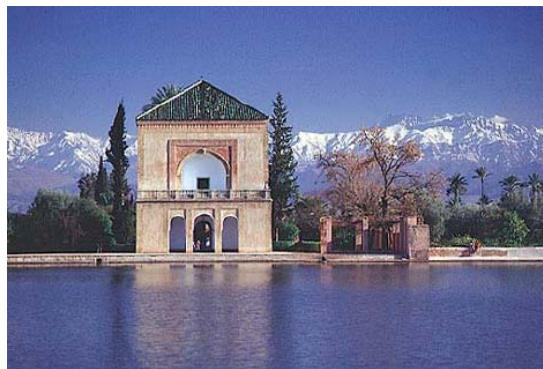
the High-level Conference in Marrakech.

Among them are: intra-regional cooperation, including regional and subregional groupings as well as the importance of several issues relating to developing nations, including trade and investment; food and agriculture; health and education; and information and communication technologies.

“There is a considerable potential for sharing resources, expertise and experiences among developing countries in these crucial fields”, the Chairman said, adding that “there are also many possibilities to explore within South-South cooperation towards overcoming intrinsic and institutional barriers to trade, finance, knowledge, information and technology”.

He said the focus is also to be placed on triangular cooperation arrangements as an innovative mode of cooperation which could play an increasingly catalytical role in South-South cooperation by bringing together both developing countries and donors in specific cooperation programmes.

“This new approach would promote a better association with our partners in developed countries through concrete, attractive and result-based programmes,” he concluded.



Marrakech, venue of the G-77 High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation.

G-77 SEES RENEWED VISION FOR SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

UNITED NATIONS, Jun 2 (G77/IPS) -- Addressing the 13th session of the High-level Committee on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC), Ambassador Mohamed Bennouna of Morocco stressed the importance of South-South cooperation for the developing world. The process of globalisation, which poses increased challenges to developing countries, would require renewed emphasis on South-South Cooperation as an essential element in forging a new agenda for the South and a new vision for technical cooperation, he added. Speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, Ambassador Bennouna warned that inadequate financial resources allocated in support of South-South cooperation programmes continue to constitute a serious obstacle to their promotion and effectiveness.

This year's meeting, held at UN Headquarters, coincided with the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) on South-South cooperation. "I would like to place on record our Group's profound appreciation for the significant and outstanding contribution made by the Special Unit for TCDC for the promotion of South-South cooperation under the able leadership of Mme. Safiatou Ba-N'Daw," the G-77 Chairman said. This meeting takes place, he continued, at an important historical juncture as a unique opportunity for developing countries to create a new vision for the future.

Since the 12th session of the High-level Committee, there have been quite a number of positive and encouraging developments towards the achievement of the objectives set out in the BAPA. South-South cooperation, he noted, has the potential to become a mainstream modality in all regions and most sectors. The economic growth of a number of developing countries and the increased technical ability and expertise in the developing world has contributed to these positive trends. New stakeholders and players at the national, regional and international levels are becoming more interested in TCDC and new modalities have been developed for various situations and different areas of TCDC.

The Havana Declaration and the Programme of Action adopted by the South Summit in 2000 paid particular attention to South-South cooperation as an effective instrument for optimizing the potentials to promote development through, among others, mobilizing and sharing of existing resources and expertise, as well as complementing cooperation with developed countries. Economic and technical cooperation among developing countries was considered to become an integral part of the mutual relations between States of the South and an important means of promoting the exchange of ideas, experiences, knowledge, technical advances, skills and expertise across

a broad range of sectors.

Secretary-General Kofi Annan said the spirit of South-South cooperation has been a major factor in the social and economic progress achieved by members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and has been a strong bond uniting member countries of MERCOSUR, the Andean Group, the Rio Group and other sub-regional groupings in Latin America and the Caribbean. More recently, the African Union launched a promising vision of South-South cooperation in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

In her keynote address, Princess Basma Bint Talal of Jordan said the South has an abundance of one of the world's most important resource: 4.9 billion people. "The critical challenge is to unlock the creative potential of each and every individual in the South and to marshal a dynamic force for personal and socio-economic progress throughout the developing world." She said that several technological hubs have emerged in the developing world to challenge Silicon Valley and other such centres in Europe and Japan. And according to UNDP's Human Development Report, these technological hubs in the South include Bangalore in India, Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia, Campinas in Brazil, Gauteng in South Africa and El Ghazala in Tunisia.

Addressing the formal ceremony commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA), the Deputy Permanent Representative of Morocco Ambassador Mohammed Loulichki, said: "The adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action marked the beginning of a new phase of South-South cooperation, providing as it did, a blueprint with a well-defined mechanism for implementation and a follow-up. The major thrust of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action remains of vital importance and is even more relevant today as a result of the aftermath of globalization and liberalization."

Following the conclusion of the 13th session of the Committee, Mr. Hassan Aboutahir, Minister Plenipotentiary of the Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Morocco to the UN and Chief Negotiator on TCDC, addressing the Committee on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said "Allow me to express our deep satisfaction on seeing this 13th Session of the High-level Committee concluding successfully its deliberations. We are convinced that the new vision of South-South cooperation could also stimulate more concrete and more substantial responses to the specific needs of development of developing countries. In this context, we note with deep appreciation the continued commitment and dedication of the Administrator of the UNDP, Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, to support South-South cooperation" he concluded.

BRIDGING DIGITAL DIVIDE VITAL FOR DEVELOPING NATIONS

NEW YORK, April (G77/IPS) - Despite the far reaching advances in new information technologies, the Group of 77 remains committed to preserving and consolidating traditional means of communication-- such as radio and broadcasting-- which have an undeniable impact in remote areas of the developing world, the Chairman of the G-77 Ambassador Mohamed Bennouna, told the UN Committee on Information.

The Ambassador said that the question of bridging the digital divide and the dissemination of new information technologies will be the focus of deliberations at the upcoming World Information Summit (WIS) scheduled to take place in Geneva in December this year.

"The new challenges ahead of the United Nations and its members are constantly provoking thought on the ways and means of enhancing this Organization's efficacy as well as on the necessary action that would enable it to adapt its structure and functions to the new international environment," he said.

In this process of revitalization and adaptation, the Department of Public Information is one of the key units that will play a significant and evolving role. It is indeed this Department which assumes the important task of projecting the image of the United Nations to the public, of explaining its role and showing the impact of its action on international relations and, most importantly, on the lives of peoples.

"We therefore need an enhanced, reactivated and restructured Department of Public Information that has the capacity to elaborate coherent communication strategies and to benefit from the new communication technologies," the Chairman said.

Yet, the Secretary-General noted in his report A/57/387, on the reform of the Organization, that the Department of Public Information has suffered from a fragmentation of its efforts as a result of too many mandates and missions.

The restructuring process necessitated by this situation should be followed closely and consolidated under the supervision of the Committee on Information, which should be regularly informed of the results and implications of this process.

Ambassador Bennouna also pointed out that the

process of restructuring the Department should not be conducted at the expense of the programmes related to the priority developmental issues such as conflict prevention, poverty eradication, HIV/AIDS, dialogue among civilizations and cultures, sustainable development and the needs of Africa.

"Concerning the restructuring of the United Nations information centers, we would like to stress their importance for the developing countries, especially the least developed countries (LDCs), as valuable sources of information and means of communication and interaction with the host countries," he noted.

The preservation of these centers is imperative especially to LDCs, all the more important because they suffer from an acute shortage of the necessary infrastructure and human resources to reap the benefits of the new information and communication technologies.

In addition, the envisaged restructuring should be reviewed on a case by case basis in consultation with the concerned countries.

While expressing its satisfaction for the progress achieved since the creation the United Nations website, he said, the Group of 77 and China would like to reiterate the need for a strict observance of multilingualism, which reflects the richness and diversity of the international community and

strengthens the values of tolerance and mutual respect.

"We truly acknowledge the complex, difficult and important nature of the tasks entrusted to the Department of Public Information of the United Nations. These tasks are consistent with the role this organization should play, namely, in regulating the inter-State relations and acting as a catalyst of international cooperation".

"We are likewise convinced that the on-going reform of the United Nations implies a continuous improvement of the UN policy in the field of information," he added.

The Group of 77 and China stands ready to work together with other regional groups in a constructive spirit in order to achieve results that would impact positively on the quality of information provided by the United Nations, he concluded.

The Group of 77 stresses the importance of the Information Centres for the developing countries, especially the least developed countries (LDCs), as valuable sources of information and means of communication and interaction with the host countries.

G-77 URGES IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

UNITED NATIONS, April (G77/IPS) --The Group of 77 remains convinced that it is only through an effective and accountable process of implementation of specific goals and time-bound targets that the objectives of sustainable development can be translated from abstract concepts to reality, Mohammed El Yazghi, Minister of Territory, Development, Water and Environment of Morocco told the 11th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD).

"We would like to encourage the constructive ongoing dialogue within the General Assembly in order to ensure an effective integrated follow up to and the implementation of major UN conferences and summits since the Millennium Declaration," he said.

Speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the minister said it is regrettable that poverty and hunger still afflict more than a billion of people while climate change is destabilizing many nations.

At the same time, he pointed out, millions of children continue to die due to lack of access to clean drinking water and adequate sanitation while deadly diseases are taking the lives of millions of people the world over.

Meanwhile, the gap between poor and rich continues to widen. The root cause of this widening gap, he said, is the absence of a real willingness on the part of the international community to set up action-oriented strategies together with reliable means of implementation in order to effectively fulfill the jointly agreed sustainable development goals and targets.

"The implementation track that we have chosen in the follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development implies the urgent need for the exploration of effective, durable, reliable and measurable means of implementation of commitments on sustainable development goals and targets while ensuring accountability of global partnership," he added.

"We would like to reiterate that Rio Declaration, Agenda 21, the programme for further implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation which constitute a solid and indivisible repertoire of commitments provide the basic comprehensive framework for the future programme of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development," the minister said.

He also told the Commission that while the primary

focus of implementation remains at the national level, it should be recalled that Johannesburg Declaration and the Plan of Implementation strongly emphasized commitments to multilateralism and the urgent need for a more focused practical approach for the implementation of Agenda 21 through the reinforcement of the international community support and the provision of the required means of implementation.

"It is important to recall in this respect that the Plan of implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development stated clearly that adequate and reliable financing is indispensable for the achievement of sustainable development goals," he pointed out.

While recognising the importance of enhancing partnerships between governmental and non-governmental actors, including major groups, on programmes and activities for the achievement of sustainable development, the Group would like to underline the following:

- Partnerships should be considered as complementary instruments to enhance the process of implementation but not as a substitute for the intergovernmental commitments contained in Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of implementation;
- "Contribution of partnerships to the process of implementation should be balanced, effective, relevant and focused on concrete results, in accordance with the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;
- "Review of the implementation process should be presented in a transparent manner that also include achievements by the different actors involved in partnerships;

• "UN agencies involvement in partnerships should conform to the intergovernmental agreed mandates and not lead to diversion of resources otherwise allocated for intergovernmental agreed priorities;

• "It is necessary to define parameters that will govern and guide partnerships, and in this context, guiding principles for partnerships would require further elaboration in the CSD.

"Therefore, we strongly believe that poverty eradication as well as sustainable consumption and production patterns, with developed countries taking the lead, education, science and technology and health should be addressed in every cycle as part of the consideration of the main themes, where relevant", the Minister concluded.

The Group strongly believes that poverty eradication as well as sustainable consumption and production patterns, with developed countries taking the lead, education, science and technology and health should be addressed in every cycle as part of the consideration of the main themes, where relevant.

G-77 PLACES HIGH PRIORITY ON PROTECTING MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

UNITED NATIONS, June (G77/IPS)— The Group of 77 is placing high priority on the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems. Mr. Karim Medrek, Counsellor to the Permanent Mission of Morocco, told delegates that the Group of 77 and China fully adhere to the provisions of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) which deal with State responsibility for the protection of such vulnerable ecosystems.

He said the serious damage to the world's ecosystem (80 percent stemming from land-based activities) should spur the main actors to increase coordination amongst themselves and to encourage cooperation at the regional and international levels.

Addressing the Fourth Meeting of the UN's Open-Ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, he pointed out that UNCLOS and related agreements have been unanimously recognized as the global legal framework for all activities related to the oceans and the seas.

"More than ever, coordination and cooperation among States remain a prerequisite for the application of all existing norms in a coherent manner," he added.

He also said that the Group of 77 and China considered the themes selected under General Assembly resolution 57/141 of December 2002— particularly the safety of navigation and the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems— as meeting the preoccupation of developing countries and of the Group.

He said that the Group of 77 and China are of the view that the majority of accidents at sea are not the result of inadequate regulations, but rather the consequences of insufficient implementation and enforcement measures.

The Group expressed its concerns over the volume of goods, chemical and other wastes, which transported inappropriately, could pose a grave threat to the marine environment.

While acknowledging that the safety of navigation and the prevention of marine pollution depended on ship routing systems, he said the Group of 77 and China adhered to the International Maritime Organization's general provisions on ship routing and the Solas Convention.

He emphasized that hydrographic coordinates and nautical charts and their dissemination, contributed to safer navigation and protection of marine environment.

In this respect, he said developing countries need specialised assistance, partnership with donor organisations and technical training programmes to help prepare and update nautical charts and documents necessary for safer navigation.

The Group of 77 and China attaches special importance to the work of the Consultative Process as it represents a forum where States can discuss, in a constructive manner, the developments in ocean affairs.

The Consultative Process also provides an opportunity to enhance cooperation among States at all levels on the management of oceans and seas, in order for them to take up the

numerous challenges they are facing nowadays.

Mr. Medrek said that this Process considering in depth the multiple aspects of the different issues related to the oceans — has revived the debate on the oceans and the law of the sea, by making it more focused and more targeted.

Moreover, the Consultative Process enables different partners, in particular States Parties to UNCLOS, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations, to engage in a fruitful and constructive debate, on the basis of the annual report of the Secretary-General, with a particular emphasis on the themes specified.

Expressing its satisfaction at the positive results achieved during the last three years within the framework of the Consultative Process, the Group of 77 and China welcomed the decision to maintain the Consultative Process and to renew its mandate for an additional three years.

"Let me reiterate our full support to the Consultative Process, and express the hope that our work will be a success. The Group of 77 and China has always been in favour of order in oceans affairs, which, while preserving the global balance, must also meet the concerns of all members of the international community, in an equitable way," he concluded.

The Informal Consultative Process was established by the General Assembly in 1999 to facilitate its discussion on issues related to Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea. The Assembly decided to continue the Consultative Process for an additional three years.

The fourth meeting of the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process Oceans and the Law of the Sea, which was held from 2 to 6 June 2003, focused on two main issues identified by the General Assembly: the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems, and the safety of navigation.

At this session, the Consultative Process co-chaired by Ambassador Felipe H. Paolillo (Uruguay) and Philip D. Burgess (Australia), reviewed the report of the Secretary-General on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (Document A/58/65).

According to the annotated agenda, two Discussion Panels were established:

Discussion Panel A studied the safety of navigation, especially the capacity-building for the production of nautical charts; and

Discussion Panel B focused on the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems, in particular the key threats to the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems and the global and regional coordination and cooperation to assist States to ensure the protection of the ecosystem.

G-77 SUPPORTS PROPOSED 2005 UN SUMMIT ON DEVELOPMENT

UNITED NATIONS, June (G77/IPS) -- The Group of 77 has expressed strong support to a proposed UN summit on development scheduled to take place in 2005.

Speaking on behalf of the G-77 and China, Abdellah Benmellouk of Morocco said the decision to hold the proposed summit in 2005 is a great achievement of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

"This summit will be an opportunity for Member States and the international community as a whole to take stock of progress made in the implementation of all the commitments, taken under various conferences and summits," he said.

The summit will also provide an opportunity to take corrective and necessary measures to advance the process of implementation.

"I believe that after five and a half months of consultation, we were able to achieve a balanced result, which takes into account all the considerations and all the concerns," he said.

"Everyone is satisfied with this compromise and within my Group this is especially true. I think we were all able to focus our work on the essence of it and not get sidelined in unnecessary details," he added.

Meanwhile, addressing the G-24 Ministerial Meeting in Washington, Ambassador Mohamed Bennouna of Morocco stressed the critical importance of following up on the commitments and recommendations agreed to at some of the major UN conferences and summits held since 1990.

These action programmes should be implemented as soon as possible, he said, pointing out the significant achievements already made by developing countries in honouring their commitments.

"However, we express concern that the efforts of developing countries to fully implement their commitments are hampered by the lack of provision of new and additional financial resources, transfer of technology and capacity building," he concluded.

A CALL FOR INCREASED COOPERATION AMONG G-77 CHAPTERS

GENEVA, June (G77/IPS) -- Addressing the annual meeting of the Chairmen/Coordinators of Group of 77, Ambassador Mohamed Bennouna of Morocco called for increased cooperation and coordination, and a steady flow of information, among all Chapters.

"Under the present pressures of a fast moving world, only close coordination can bring success," the Moroccan Ambassador said.

Ambassador Bennouna called for frequent contacts between Chairmen/Coordinators, especially by regular attendance at annual meetings.

Moreover, all documentation prepared by any Chapter should be distributed to all chapters, he said.

"We in New York are appreciative of all the inputs provided to us during the General Assembly sessions by other chapters. Such inputs have been helpful in obtaining a more rounded approach towards all issues. I hope this assistance will continue in the future," he added.

The current meeting of the Chapters is a traditional meeting that the Group values very much, particularly as it falls on the eve of the ECOSOC meeting.

"It is also particularly relevant this year as this meeting is taking place against a background of the upcoming (December 16-19, 2003) Marrakech High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation.

"This is a new opportunity for the Group of 77 to reaffirm its cohesion and political unity in the challenging international environment and to position itself as one of the

principal actors in the difficult multilateral stage," he said.

"The prospects of achieving the objectives of the Group are closely related to our capacity to maintain and improve coordination of the activities that we undertake in the different centers of the UN system", he added.

The meeting was chaired by Ambassador Mohamed Bennouna Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations and Chairman of the Group of 77, and attended by the Chairmen/Coordinators of the Chapters of G-77 in Geneva (Thailand), Paris (Philippines), Vienna (Brazil), Nairobi (Morocco) and the G-24 (Lebanon). The Chairman of the G-77 Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Boney Katatumba, also attended the meeting.

In their final communique the Chairmen/Coordinators reaffirmed their commitment to the Millennium Declaration and called upon the international community and the United Nations system to fully and speedily implement the provisions set out in that Declaration and at other major United Nations conferences and summits and their respective reviews, in particular those related to development and achieving the goal of poverty eradication.

They also reiterated their firm commitment to further strengthening South-South cooperation. This modality of cooperation is increasingly important, both as a strategy in support of development and as a means of ensuring the effective participation of developing countries in the emerging global economic order.

G-77 SHARES UN CONCERNS OVER DECLINING CONTRIBUTIONS TO BUDGET

UNITED NATIONS, May (G77/IPS) -- Ambassador Mohamed Bennouna of Morocco told the Fifth Committee that the Group of 77 shares the concerns of the Secretariat that less Member States have paid their regular budget contributions in full in 2002 than in 2001.

"We recognize the need of ensuring the financial stability of the Organisation in order to function effectively and be able to fully implement all its mandates and activities," he said.

Ambassador Bennouna said the Group of 77 and China reaffirm the legal obligations of Member States to bear the expenses of the organisation in accordance with the UN Charter.

"While recognizing the need to extend sympathetic understanding to those temporarily unable to meet their financial obligations as a consequence of genuine economic difficulties, the Group urges all other Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions", he said.

The data and estimates given by the Under-Secretary-General for Management demonstrate that the United Nations has moved from the edge of financial difficulties to a better situation which has been translated into three major indicators: cash on hand, the levels of assessments and their payments and the amount of debt owed to Member States.

"In this regard, the Group is pleased to note that the year 2002 could be considered a financially better year since the total receipts of over \$4.0 billion exceeded the total amount assessed by 12 percent. However, in spite of this progress, it seems that there are some uncertainties appearing on the horizon," he added.

- Firstly at \$1.4 billion cash on hand at the end of 2002 was the highest in the last seven years;

- Secondly, although unpaid assessments amounting to \$1.68 billion are still substantial, they were significantly lower at year-end 2002 compared to 2001, which amounted to \$2.11 billion.

- And thirdly, the amounts due to Member States had been reduced to almost \$701 million compared to \$748 million at the end of 2001.

"With regard to peacekeeping cash situation, we note that the year 2002 had ended at \$1,363 million, which is a somewhat higher level than it was at beginning of the year,".

But in spite of higher disbursements, and important reduction of debt to Member States, the balance remained at level higher than the year 2001.

The Group notes the modest reduction in the amounts owed to troop contributing countries at the end of 2002, but expresses its concern at the continuing high levels of amounts payable to troop contributing countries, particularly for contingent-owned equipment reimbursement, the G-77 chairman said.

The Group urges that all outstanding amounts, including those dating back to many years ago owed to developing countries, should be paid to them as a matter of high priority.

As for the International Tribunals, the Group regrets that the year 2002 had ended in a negative cash position of \$1 million against a forecast of a positive \$10 million.

In this regard, the Group notes that at the end of 2002, as many as 133 Member States have not paid their contributions to the Tribunals in full.

"We are especially concerned by the indications that cash levels are slipping each year, which in turn force the Organization to cross-borrow from closed peacekeeping accounts at year-end," he added.

The Group remains concerned with the practice of cross-borrowing since it hampers the ability of the United Nations to pay Member States for troops and contingent-owned equipment.

"We are also concerned with late and irregular reimbursements to these countries, in particular to the develop-

ing ones which, as you know, have limited resources," he added.

The Group believes that this unhealthy practice should not be allowed to continue indefinitely since it has negative effects on the financial capacity of concerned countries and places undue financial stress on them.

"It is time that the Secretariat explores other more equitable and innovative means to finance its cash flow deficits in the International Tribunal budget and to find a durable solution to these problems," the Chairman said.

To this end the Group believes that it is necessary to undertake a comprehensive study in order to explore alternatives to the practice of cross-borrowing.

Concerning the role of the Secretariat, he said, it should make more efficient use of resources in a transparent manner.

For this purpose a greater accountability may be needed from programme managers with the objective of optimizing the use of all available resources to the United Nations in order to implement all its mandates and activities and be able to face all new challenges of the millennium.

While recognizing the need to extend sympathetic understanding to those temporarily unable to meet their financial obligations as a consequence of genuine economic difficulties, the Group urges all other Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions.

G-77 RECOGNISES VITAL ROLE PLAYED BY UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

UNITED NATIONS, May (G77/IPS) -- Addressing the Fifth Committee, Aicha Afifi, Minister Plenipotentiary of the Permanent Mission of Morocco, said the Group of 77 attaches great importance to the significant role played by the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security.

While the number and size of peacekeeping operations are being reduced, she said, the Secretary-General has requested a 15 percent increase in expenditure for the support account.

The Group of 77 and China intend to carefully consider the various proposals submitted since there was a need for the Secretariat to fully justify its budget requirements in the context of expected accomplishments.

The Group has expressed concern over the persistent problems in recruitment and placement in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and other support account posts.

"We stress that the continuous dependency on temporary staff as a result of not filling many of the support account positions is a managerial practice that is neither cost-effective nor performance-efficient," Mrs. Afifi said.

"While we remain concerned about the continuous delays in filling such positions, we are encouraged by the Secretariat's efforts aimed at hiring qualified candidates as soon as possible and hope that such efforts will materialize in the near future," she added.

Concerning gender mainstreaming, she said, the Group attaches importance to a coherent policy for gender mainstreaming in the context of peacekeeping activities and looks forward to receiving further information on how gender mainstreaming is being implemented in the field as well as in Headquarters.

As for the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, the Group notes that the proposed budget for the year 2002-2003 will have an increase of 63 percent.

The Group believes that increasing resources for the logistics base together with the implementation of strategic deployment stocks (SDS) should contribute to improving the overall organization of peacekeeping logistics and creating a basis for effective future operations, she noted.

On death and disability benefits, the Group of 77 and China note that the new methodology for settlement of claims has simplified the process leading to almost all claims being finalized within three months from the date of submission.

"There is however a need for the Organization to continue improving its efforts and simplifying the documentation required for processing these claims as a way of honouring those who put their lives on the line to ensure peace and security for millions around the world," she added.

The Group therefore calls on the Secretariat to continue assisting the Permanent Missions and working closely with the military advisers of the troop contributors, as well as providing them with assistance whenever necessary, to ensure that all claims are properly filed and processed in a timely fashion.

The Group also attaches great importance to the issue of procurement and believes that the following principles should be fully taken into account:

-- There should be clearly defined guidelines for letters of assist, which would provide for, among other things, transparent procedures for selecting the supplier Government, ensuring the competitiveness of goods and services obtained whereby and meeting prerequisites for their use.

- Efforts should be made to increase procurement opportunities for developing countries with a view to encouraging widest possible participation of Member States.

The Group of 77 has also called for the early settlement of unpaid dues to troop contributing countries who are mostly from the developing world.

"The Group notes with concern that substantial amounts of obligations to Member States for reimbursements to troop costs and contingent-owned equipment continue to remain unpaid," Mrs. Afifi told the Fifth Committee.

While liabilities for troop costs were reduced in 2002 compared with 2001, those on account of contingent-owned and self sustainment have shown a marked increase.

Bearing in mind that the largest outstanding dues are to troop contributing developing countries, she said that concerted efforts should be made to remove impediments to the speedy processing and settlement of those dues.

Given the limited financial capacity of developing countries, an early settlement of payments for troop costs and contingent owned equipment will facilitate as well as enhance our continued participation in UN peacekeeping operations, she argued.

The Group 77 and China also welcomed the fact that the financial situation of peacekeeping operations for the period 2001-2002 had improved and that unpaid assessed contributions were at the lowest level in five years.

The presentation given by Under-Secretary-General for Management, Mrs. Catherine Bertini, shows that the year 2002 could be considered a better year.

"This is a positive development which we hope will continue. However, this does not seem to have translated into any significant improvement in the timeliness of payment to troop contributing countries, in particular for contingent owned equipment", Mrs. Afifi concluded.

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THE PATH TO SUSTAINABILITY

The achievement of sustainable development goals and targets remains the real path towards global prosperity, security and stability. It is, however, regrettable to witness nowadays that poverty and hunger still afflict more than a billion of people, climate change is destabilizing many nations, millions of children continue to die due to lack of access to clean drinking water and adequate sanitation and the gap between the poor and the rich continues to widen.

Such degrading situation finds its root cause, inter-alia, in the absence of a real willingness on the part of the international community to set up action-oriented strategies together with reliable means of implementation in order to effectively fulfill the jointly agreed sustainable development goals and targets.

Presently, the international community has at its disposal a solid and comprehensive repertoire of commitments pertaining to sustainable development goals and targets. What is critically needed now is how to turn these commitments into reality in order to put an end to global poverty and hunger and to renew respect for the environment so as to ensure a prosperous and promising world for the future generations.

The focus on implementation implies the exploration of effective, durable, reliable and measurable means of implementation of commitments on sustainable development goals and targets.

In this respect, it should be recalled that:

- **FIRST**, the advancement and strengthening of the pillars of sustainable development (economic development, social development, and environmental protection) is a collective responsibility that should be effectively carried out at the international, regional and national levels. It is on this basis that the international community, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, engaged to make a determined effort to respond positively to the need to produce a practical and visible plan to bring about poverty eradication and human development and to expedite the achievement of time-bound, socio-economic and environmental targets (presently 1.2 billion people live on less than \$ 1 a day).

- **SECOND**, the scope of our future joint action has already been defined. Indeed, *poverty eradication, changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social devel-*

opment, globalization, health, Africa, LDCs, small island developing States as well as regional initiatives were commonly recognized as major issues to be addressed throughout the implementation of sustainable development targets.

The challenge we are facing with respect to these objectives is how to ensure an effective, durable and reliable implementation of the pertinent measures and actions jointly agreed on.

- **THIRD**, it is of paramount importance to explore reliable means and mechanisms of implementation and new financial resources needed to support the global environment agenda in order to make progress sustainable development goals and targets.

In this respects, the Plan of implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development recognizes that adequate and reliable financing is indispensable for the achievement of sustainable development goals. In this regard, the plan emphasizes that:

“The internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration and Agenda 21, as well as in the Plan of action, will require significant increases in the flow of financial resources as elaborated in the Monterrey Consensus, including through new and additional financial resources, in particular to developing countries, to support the implementation of national policies and programs developed by them, improved trade opportunities, access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies, education and awareness-raising, capacity-building and information for decision-making and scientific capabilities within the agreed time frame required to meet these goals and initiatives”.

This issue is also on the agenda of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits. The objective is that the various follow-up mechanisms should focus on the review of progress in implementation of commitments, in particular those related to means of implementation.

- **FOURTH**, reinforcement of the institutional framework for sustainable development at the international, regional and national levels is crucial to the effective implementation of sustainable devel-

Continued on page 13

opment goals and in meeting emerging sustainable development challenges.

At the international level, the strengthening of the institutional framework for sustainable development can be achieved, inter-alia, through the establishment of a real and effective synergy between the UN system activities relating to sustainable development as well as through an active role of the international institutions, including international financial institutions, the World Trade Organization and the Global Environment Facility in order to enhance their cooperative efforts to promote effective implementation of sustainable development goals and targets.

At the regional level, implementation of sustainable development goals should be effectively pursued at the regional and sub-regional levels through the Regional Commissions and other regional and sub-regional institutions and bodies. In this respect, regionally and sub-regionally agreed sustainable development initiatives and programmes (e.g., NEPAD) should be supported, in particular the important infrastructure projects which have to be agreed upon on at the subregional level in different parts of Africa.

At the national level, Governments should continue to promote coherent and coordinated approaches to institutional frameworks for sustainable development and ensure an effective implementation of national strategies for sustainable development.

Finally, we need to agree on common indicators to be able to measure implementation and monitor it by reference to the millennium goals. The United Nations have to play an important role to coordinate between the different international institutions in charge of this task.

- **FIFTH**, the implementation of intergovernmental commitments on sustainable development goals should be enhanced and reinforced through efficient complementary actions on the part of non-governmental actors, including all major groups on programs and activities for the achievement of sustainable development at all levels.

- **SIXTH**, renewing South-South cooperation and partnership through continuous sharing of resources, including expertise, support and technical cooperation is a crucial step towards the attainment of sustainable development goals and targets. Conscious of the particular importance of South-South cooperation, the Kingdom of Morocco, which is going to host the forthcoming High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation in December 2003, is determined to make of this event a new opportunity to further foster another dimension of partnership: South-South cooperation as complementing cooperation programs with developed countries and exploring potential of triangular cooperation.

- **FINALLY**, it is through an effective, responsible and accountable global partnership that we can, together translate sustainable development objectives from abstract concepts to reality and thus, ensuring a more secure, stable and prosperous world. This means a clear consciousness of the interests involved in a long term prospective, far from ideology driven policies, and the necessities to pragmatically harmonize and conciliate these interests while preserving the common heritage of mankind, cultural or natural. In so doing, we will really give some meaning to our very ephemeral passage on this earth as human beings.

SPECIAL MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE OF THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES HELD IN RABAT

UNITED NATIONS, June (G77/IPS) -- At the invitation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Mr. Mohamed Benaissa, the Kingdom of Morocco hosted on 24-25 June 2003 a Special Ministerial Conference of the Least Developed Countries (LDC's) in Rabat.

The Conference addressed the issues of interest to the LCD's, particularly trade, debt, ODA and technical and financial cooperation. The Conference was opened by the Foreign Minister of Morocco, who also read a message to the Conference, from His Majesty the King Mohammed VI.

The Conference adopted the "Rabat Declaration" which

articulated the concerns of LDC's in view of the incoming Ministerial Conference of the WTO, the 58th session of the General Assembly and the High-Level Conference on South-South Cooperation to be held in Marrakech from 16 to 19 December 2003. The Declaration gives mandate to the Chairman of the Group of 77 to convey the concerns of the LDC's to the above mentioned fora.

The Final Declaration was discussed earliest by the senior officials and submitted for adoption to the Ministers. The Conference also adopted a motion of solidarity with the Kingdom of Morocco following the terrorist attacks of 16 May 2003.

STRATEGY FOR WTO MEETING IN MEXICO

CAPE TOWN, May (G77/IPS) - Civil society in Southern Africa will mobilise energetically against the liberalisation of service sectors like electricity, water and transport by their governments.

This was the message from a group of leading unionists, activists and business people from nine countries in Southern Africa who met in Cape Town, South Africa, to plan a negotiating strategy for the next World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ministerial Meeting in Cancun, Mexico in September.

The Cancun meeting is already being called "Seattle by the Sea" because progress in international trade talks have only inched along since the Doha Development round of world trade talks were launched in Nov. 2001. In 1999, the anti-globalisation movement began in Seattle when the WTO failed to launch a global trade round.

The WTO is like a red flag to a bull among civil society and so it was at the meeting where civil society representatives were joined by Geneva-based officials from the trade body to discuss the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and other trade issues. Debate was robust and differences acute, though respectful.

The agreement provides that countries can offer to open up sectors like professional, financial, utility, tourism, environmental and other services to the private sector, usually multinationals. This trade is usually from the north to the south.

It is the most tailor-made and reflective agreement under the WTO because each country can determine what it will or will not do. There are more important questions to be asked like 'is every country in a position to use the agreement?', said WTO head of External Relations Bernard Keiten.

He added that only 22 countries of the WTO's 146 member countries had made offers under the GATS. "What does this mean? That only a few countries are interested in the GATS or does it mean they are still grappling with it?" asked Keiten. "It was a far less politicised area of developing country discourse than the agreement on agriculture at the WTO headquarters in Geneva", he said.

Though Senegal is the only country in Africa which has made an offer at the WTO to open up its

service sector, the agreement is still regarded with extreme caution outside government in Africa where it is decidedly political.

"It's the same old colonial equation", said John Musonda of Union Network International in Zambia. "Our people own nothing, control nothing. Their (the North's) people are developed, now they want to expand trade. Our people are not developed, we can't expand trade".

"There is very little (for developing countries) to request and much that is demanded (of them)", said Dot Keet, a trade researcher at the Alternative Information and Development Centre.

She said that African countries were focusing on issues like market access and the implications for public health of restrictive intellectual property rights agreements, but added that the arrival of multinational service providers on African shores held up several challenges.

These included the affordability of services as well as financial implications for developing countries because of the huge national outflows that accompany the signing of large agreements which could affect their balance of payments.

"What little is left of the African state will be run into the ground if all services are opened", said Sven Schwersensky, a director of the social democratic German

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung which organised the meeting.

Speakers from Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe reported on the decline of state-funded public systems like education, health and social services and feared that things would only get worse if GATS was implemented because elements like cost recovery and profit would limit the developmental role of the state.

"This would add to the impact of structural adjustment programmes implemented to the peril of development in many post-colonial African economies", said Nessie Golakai of Consumers International in Harare, Zimbabwe.

The wide swathe of GATS is worrying. It means the end of domestic regulatory sovereignty and contains undemocratic features. "For example, what room does this leave for policy change? Once you're in, you're in", said Musonda. Once countries make offers under GATS, they become legally binding.

The WTO is like a red flag to a bull among civil society and so it was at the meeting where civil society representatives were joined by Geneva-based officials from the trade body to discuss the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and other trade issues. Debate was robust and differences acute, though respectful.

CALENDAR OF CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

(July – December 2003)

JULY

30 June – 25 July	Geneva	Economic and Social Council, substantive session
28 July – 8 August	Kingston	Ninth session of the International Seabed Authority
29 July – 1 August	New York	Eighteenth Meeting of the Committee of Experts of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund for Economic and Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries

AUGUST

25 Aug. – 5 Sept.	Havana, Cuba	Sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
25 – 27 August	Almaty, Kazakhstan	Prepcom of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation
28 – 29 August	Almaty, Kazakhstan	International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation

SEPTEMBER

4 September	Nairobi	Committee of Permanent Representatives to UN-Habitat
8 – 12 September	New York	Committee on Conferences
8 – 12 September	New York	UNDP/UNFPA, Executive Board, second regular session
9 – 14 September	Cancun, Mexico	Fifth Ministerial Meeting - WTO
16 Sept. – Dec.	New York	Opening of the General Assembly, fifty-eighth session
15 – 19 September	New York	UNICEF, Executive Board, second regular session
17 September	Nairobi	UNEP, Committee of Permanent Representatives, eighty-fourth meeting
22 September	New York	Thirty-fifth Meeting of the Chairmen/Coordinators of the G-77 Chapters
23 – 24 September	New York	Fifteenth Annual Meeting of Senior Officials of the Group of 77
25 September	New York	Twenty-seventh Annual Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the G-77
20 September	Dubai, UAE	Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 24
23 – 24 September	Dubai, UAE	IMF/World Bank, joint annual meetings of the Boards of Governors
29 Sept. – 18 Oct.	Paris	UNESCO, General Conference

OCTOBER

6 – 17 October	Geneva	UNCTAD, Trade and Development Board, fiftieth session
20 – 24 October	Rome	Executive Board of WFP, third regular session
28 Oct – 7 Nov	Rome	FAO, Council
28 – 30 October	New York	General Assembly, high-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership

NOVEMBER

10 – 28 November	Geneva	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, thirty-first session
26 – 28 November	Rome	FAO, Council
29 Nov. – 10 Dec.	Rome	FAO, Conference
November (1 day)	New York	United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities

DECEMBER

1– 2 December	New York	UNICEF, Executive Board, extraordinary budgetary session
1 – 5 December	Vienna	UNIDO, General Conference, tenth session
1 – 5 December	Tokyo	UNU, Council, fiftieth session
1 – 12 December	Milan, Italy	UNFCCC, Conference of the Parties to the Convention, ninth session
3 December	Nairobi	UNEP, Committee of Permanent Representatives, eighty-fifth meeting
5 – 6 December	Rome	IFAD, Executive Board
10 – 12 December	Geneva	ITU, World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) – First Phase
11 December	Nairobi	Committee of Permanent Representatives to UN-Habitat
11 – 12 December	Rome	IFAD, Executive Board
16 – 19 December	Marrakech, Morocco	High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation

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