

**Address from
His Majesty
Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev
King of Nepal
At
The Second South Summit**

**Doha
State of Qatar**

15 June 2005

**Mr Chairman,
Your Highness the Emir of Qatar,
Distinguished Heads of State and Governments,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

- 1. I bring with me the best wishes and warm felicitations of the government and people of Nepal to all the distinguished delegates assembled here for this historic Summit. I would also like to express our gratitude to the Government of the State of Qatar for hosting this important Summit in this beautiful city of Doha. We have been impressed by the warmth of hospitality ever since our arrival and the meticulous arrangements made for the Summit.**
- 2. It is now over sixty years since the Bretton Woods Conference took place against the backdrop of a devastating war that cost millions of lives and caused untold misery and human suffering.**

Endorsing the agreements then, the delegates had hoped that it would help avoid a repetition of the calamities of that period. While the Bretton Woods system must be given credit for its contributions to global economic growth, we must also admit that this growth has, unfortunately, not been equitable. Unlike the developed world, much of the developing world is characterised by low levels of socio-economic advancement and above all is still mired in dire poverty. For most of us, poverty has many different appearances. It is often concealed in splendour and often in extravagance. Yet, we seek to support ourselves by temporary expedients, and every day is lost in contriving for tomorrow. And yet, as we speak, there is a great economic gulf between the advanced industrial states of the North and the vast majority of developing countries in the South. Nations like men can be healthy and happy, though comparatively poor. Wealth is a means to an end,

not the end itself. Having said this, it is also noteworthy that some of us gathered here today have, during the past three decades, achieved some dramatic economic transformation. Notwithstanding the different states of our development, all of us harbour some common objectives.

Excellencies,

- 3. “Out of debt, out of danger” is, like many other proverbs, full of wisdom; but the word ‘danger’ does not sufficiently express all that the warning demands. For a state of debt is a state of positive misery, and the sufferer is as one haunted by an evil spirit, and his heart can know neither rest nor peace till it is cast out. Therefore, it is not illogical that the countries of the South seek and want to reduce their debt burden, as well as an exchange rate that is stable and commodity prices that are constant. It would not be unfair on**

our part also to seek an easier access to credit and investment, markets in the North and a liberal attitude on the question of transfer of technology. This, we believe, will create an enabling economic environment that will help the developing countries achieve sustained growth and integrate more seamlessly into the world economy, putting to rest the concept of Centre and Periphery.

- 4. It is well recognised that the South will emerge as the new hub and spoke for global development in the 21st century. More than 40% of the trade of the developing countries is now bound to each other's market in some form or the other. Even more relevant is the fact that the products needed to support the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) are today manufactured in the South – be it in Argentina, Brazil, China, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Malaysia or South Africa. However, much remains to be done to secure the**

goals for our collective movement at various other levels, which must address with a time-bound, highly focused action plan to help the least developed (LDCs) and land-locked developing (LLDCs) countries of Asia and Africa. Nothing short of the full adoption of the Brussels Programme of Action in favour of the LDCs' will, we believe, suffice to meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. We do so for one very simple reason: namely, from the faith that the capacity for self-reliant development is best generated by learning and applying the experiences drawn from countries with similar cultures and levels of development as they proceed with reforms and modernisation. We feel that this vast store of intellectual and experimental knowledge remains untapped. It can, and should, be tapped in greater depth, volume and speed to maximize efficiency and cost-effectiveness in the delivery of developmental aid. In such a scheme of things,

we are also confident that even the least developed, mountain countries can transfer knowledge to their more developed regional neighbours, based on their comparative and competitive advantages.

Excellencies,

- 5. We perceive that mountain societies provide a vast scope for the contribution of traditional medicines towards securing the Millennium Development Goals' health targets; and this should receive greater attention from all of us assembled here. Nepal appeals to the international community for adequate research and development and science and technology resources for the development of Himalayan resources for medicinal purposes by contributing generously to a Hindu Kush-Himalayas Fund established for this very purpose. This**

commitment will go a long way towards integrated development of mountain habitats.

- 6. South-South cooperation must today focus on new dimensions – namely the fostering of private sector cooperation. Equally so, cooperation between communities living on the borders of two or more nations, as people-to-people interaction grows, ensures a powerful basis for regional peace and security. The post-cold war world demands wider and deeper unity among developing countries. South-South cooperation carries the burden of constructive pressure in the unipolar conditions of the world. Such pressure is conceivable only under unity and cooperation among us. On the other hand, freedom, democracy and human rights have been sublimated by painful experience into international concerns. Democracy is a universal aspiration. So is freedom. So are human rights. A perusal of recent documents in South-South**

cooperation gives the impression that these values can be qualified. In fact that is not the case. We must wisely determine and discriminate that in a political system, there are three levels at which they are handled. The first is the level of values. No establishment, governmental or non-governmental, can be legitimate which denies or contradicts these values. The second is the level of institutions. As institutions have to evolve around men and conditions, they can only be approximations. While they have to be consistent with values, their practises have to be judged in the grey areas of the realm of reality and the pools of idealism. The third level is the level of deliberate and selective use of democracy and human rights for political purposes. Sadly, this is a fault in which both the countries of the South and the developed North are not free from.

- 7. Nepal, as one of the first least developed countries to accede to the WTO after its coming**

into force in 1995, earnestly hopes that the Doha Development Round of the WTO trade talks would come to fruition creating vast opportunities for enhanced global trade, growth and employment, especially in small, fragile and vulnerable countries. Throwing open the markets of the North and promoting greater trade between the North and South will go a long way in achieving such an enabling environment. Yet, one cannot gloss over the fact that, over the years, exports from the developing countries have been steadily declining and their share hovers around just half of one percent.

Excellencies,

- 8. The perpetuation and accentuation of the North-South divide concerns us, not only because it affronts an equitable global economic order, but also because it abets extremist's elements to destroy the fabric of social harmony. It is only the**

enlightened, enhanced and result-oriented North-South cooperation, and sustained and complementary South-South cooperation that can together help bridge this widening gap, erase divisions and render global integration acceptable and beneficial to all.

- 9. There is little doubt that globalisation is the buzzword of the moment, the most talked about and, perhaps, the least understood concept of this new millennium. The micro-electronics revolution has irrevocably changed the essence of human contact on Earth. The process of change is unstoppable. And change, as we all know, is inevitable. Humankind has always had a curiosity about the unknown and a passion to fully explore the world that we inhabit. It is part of what makes us human. Notwithstanding this, gaps between rich and poor are widening, local cultures are being wiped out, biological diversity**

destroyed and the environment is nearing the point of collapse.

Excellencies,

10. Nepal is fortunate to be at the thresholds of two of the fastest growing economies in the world. India and China have seen tremendous economic progress in the last decades, lifting a sizable mass of their population from economic depravation. Both India and China have opened up their economies and trade far and wide. Yet, trade between them is minuscule, as compared to their global trade. In this context, taking advantage of the opportunities of the historic economic dynamism of the Asian continent, we envision a land-locked Nepal as a transit economy between China and India, and are willing to extend all possible assistance to facilitate and further this process. We are confident that this will contribute to realising the

largest potential synergy in Asia. This would benefit not only the trading and transit nations but also, hopefully, transform the region itself into an engine of growth in the days ahead.

- 11. A few months from now, we will be meeting at the United Nations for the Millennium plus Five Summit to review, among others, the progress we have made so far and identify the shortcomings we will have to overcome in the next decade. Should we fail in our endeavour to seriously address and improve the lot of the vast expanse of impoverished humanity, we will be fuelling and laying the foundations of a new generation steeped in disillusionment and discontent.**

Excellencies,

12. My own country is a sad witness and a microcosm of how inequality, social and economic exclusion, poor governance, rampant corruption and non-delivery by various governments in the last decade and a half have been exploited by terrorists to fulfil their own agenda - an agenda already discarded and rejected by the world at large. We in Nepal have been enduring the scourge of terrorism for over a decade now and understand the chaos it creates. Terrorism knows no boundaries. Nor does it respect any human value. While we strongly condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and stand by the international community in its resolve to fight this serious global threat, we strongly urge the international community to resolutely come forward with an effective framework in curbing the financing of

terrorism. At the same time, we submit for the consideration of the leaders of the South that a Special Fund be established to help internally-displaced persons and eventually resettle and rehabilitate them in their own communities, including reconstructing the community infrastructure damaged by terrorists. Countries hit by terrorism need to be considered as countries with ‘special needs’ by the international community and this is not the case at present. Recent efforts in Nepal, intended as they are to safeguard democracy, peace and development, we believe, are yielding encouraging results.

Excellencies,

- 13. The great art of life is to improve the golden moment of opportunity and catch the good that is within reach. Viewed in this spirit, this day opens for us a vista that must result in the fusion to pledge and harness the full potential of South–**

**South cooperation, not only for our own benefit,
but also for the advantage of all humankind. We
wish the Summit every success.**

Thank you!