



**Member States Statements at the 24th Meeting of
the Council of Representatives of the South Centre**

Geneva, 18 April 2024

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Statement by H.E. Mr. Thabo Mbeki, Chair of the Board	2
Report by Dr. Carlos Correa, Executive Director	4
Closing Remarks by H.E. Mr. Ajit Kumar, Convenor of the Council	8
General Statements by Representatives	9
Algeria	9
Brazil	10
China.....	12
Colombia	16
Cuba.....	18
Egypt	24
Ghana	26
India.....	28
Indonesia.....	31
Iran	33
Jamaica	35
Malaysia	39
Mozambique	41
Pakistan	45
Philippines	47
South Africa	49
Sri Lanka	52
Tanzania	53
Uganda	55
Venezuela	56
Zimbabwe	60

Introduction

This document includes the statement made by H.E. Mr. Thabo Mbeki, Chairman of the South Centre Board under agenda item 5 of the meeting “Statement by the Chairman of the Board of the South Centre”, the report made by Dr. Carlos Correa, Executive Director of the South Centre under agenda item 4 “Activities and finances of the South Centre: Report by the Executive Director”, the closing remarks made by H.E. Mr. Ajit Kumar, Convenor of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre, and also interventions made by member countries at the meeting under agenda item 8 “General Statements from Representatives”.



**Statement of the Chair of the Board of the South Centre,
Thabo Mbeki at the 24th Meeting of the Council of
Representatives of the South Centre**

Geneva, 18 April 2024

Mr. Convenor;
Your Excellencies, Representatives of the South Centre Member States;
Members of the Board of the South Centre;
Executive Director and Members of the Secretariat:

I am honoured to have the opportunity to address this esteemed Council of the South Centre.

It is indeed encouraging to see the increased participation of developing countries in global GDP, which today reaches 42%, and that South-South trade now accounts for a major part of the global trade. It is also encouraging to see the key role that South-South Cooperation is playing in promoting development. In fact, the South Centre is itself a manifestation of such a cooperation.

As noted in the report submitted by the Secretariat, the Centre has continued to cover in 2023 a wide range of issues that are relevant to address the development needs of developing countries. In some areas, we have seen progress, such as with the adoption of the new treaty for the protection of marine biodiversity and of the UN resolution to start negotiations on a United Nations convention on tax cooperation. But in many areas, such as the reform of the international financial architecture and the fight against illicit financial flows, progress has been elusive.

Moreover, efforts towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals are off-track, with projections, for instance, showing that 6 per cent of the world population will still be living in extreme poverty by 2030. Ironically, estimates suggest that only a fraction of what is spent on defence would be needed to lift these millions out from that situation.

Clearly, the efforts of the developing countries to bring justice and equity at the global level need to be strengthened. The South Centre will continue to support the developing countries with policy-oriented research, advice and capacity building. It will continue to address structural issues that affect our countries, but will also address new emerging issues in response to the demands from our

Member States, such as the matter of digital transformation and the taxation on the digital economy.

To do this, however, the South Centre needs the effective financial support of its Members. I would like to highlight as one of the main points of my intervention to the Council on this occasion, the worrying situation of the funding of the Centre in the short and medium term. Important projects have come to an end. The Swiss government suddenly decided to end the contribution that Switzerland used to give and, finally, the voluntary contributions of the Member States of the South Centre have decreased significantly year on year while the demand for our work has continued to increase.

In this context, the Secretariat has made efforts to keep expenditures to the minimum. The Staff Regulations have been revised to ensure that the Centre can continue to hire and retain excellent professionals from the South taking also into account the long-term sustainability of the Centre. I request that Council approves the revised Staff Regulations as submitted for your consideration at this meeting.

We really need that the Centre be run from the contributions provided by our 55 Members to ensure its sustainability. In this regard, we have started analyses to update the level of voluntary contributions of the Members States taking into account changes in national GDPs and in the exchange value of the USD against the Swiss Franc, the currency in which our expenditures are made. It is our intention to submit to this Council in 2025 a proposal for the review of the assessed contributions for its consideration.

Your Excellencies, distinguished delegates, the South Centre is the only intergovernmental body in Geneva that brings the Southern perspective to the work of multilateral bodies, often dominated by the interests of the developed countries. Financially supporting the Centre is one of the most critical ways of balancing the asymmetrical situation between the North and the South, and of addressing the persistent mismatch between the weight of the South in the global economy and its capacity to frame a fair and inclusive multilateral system.

We count on your cooperation to make the South Centre a stronger and sustainable institution of the Global South.

Thank you very much for your attention.



Report of the Executive Director on South Centre's Activities and Finances in 2023¹

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

It is an honor for me to address this Council. First of all, I would like to thank your Excellencies and the delegations of the Member countries for your participation, as well as the permanent interaction we have had since the last Council was held in April 2023. I have had the privilege of being in frequent contact with most of the distinguished ambassadors present here today. Their guidance on the major challenges and opportunities for developing countries is critical to the Centre's ability to respond to the needs of our Member States.

It is a tangible fact that the COVID-19 pandemic aggravated the deep economic and social inequalities between North and South. Despite creative slogans such as 'building back better', recovery in developing countries has been slow and incomplete. Nor has there been a greater post-pandemic understanding on the part of rich countries of the multiple problems facing the countries of the South. Instead, we have seen more protectionist measures, such as the Border Carbon Adjustment Mechanism and active industrial policies that affect the export opportunities of developing countries, to mention just two examples.

The progress that had been made in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals has suffered a clear setback. It is regrettable that astronomical sums are being spent on armed conflicts in different parts of the planet, precious resources that could be used for the eradication of poverty and the welfare of humanity. When the whole world loses, developing countries lose more.

Detailed information on the activities carried out by the South Centre in 2023 can be found in Council Document XXIV/3. These activities have been guided, among others, by the following objectives:

- Strengthen the capacity of developing countries to participate (as providers and recipients) in South-South and Triangular Cooperation.
- Supporting these countries in dealing with growing external debt, improving financing for development and addressing the overdue reform of the international financial architecture.

¹ This is an unofficial translation of the Report in Spanish made by the Executive Director at the 24th Meeting of the Council of Representatives on 18 April 2024.

- Addressing the challenges posed by climate change including access to finance.
- Improve the capacity of developing countries to generate revenue through the tax system, especially in the digital economy, and to prevent illicit financial flows.
- Support developing countries in the complex negotiations on international trade, as well as promote discussions on the challenges posed in this area, such as new disciplines on trade and the environment and the proposed reform of the World Trade Organization, including the review of decision-making by consensus.
- To achieve effective implementation and adopt a new international instrument on the right to development.
- Mitigate the impact and promote the lifting of unilateral coercive measures contrary to the United Nations Charter and international law.
- Promote a global public health agenda in the World Health Organization, particularly in the context of the negotiation of a binding treaty against future pandemics that includes mechanisms to ensure equity in access to vaccines and medicines as global public goods.
- Promote, under the concept of “One Health”, awareness and actions by governments and civil society to fight against antimicrobial resistance.
- Support governments in the use of the flexibilities available under the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights.
- Promote an international framework for the protection of biodiversity, traditional knowledge and genetic resources, and an equitable benefit sharing, including with respect to marine genetic resources beyond national jurisdictions.
- Reform the investment protection regime, particularly the investor-state dispute settlement system, to avoid opportunistic and abusive claims.
- Advance negotiations on a legally binding instrument on transnational corporations and other business enterprises and human rights.
- To address the challenges and seize the opportunities of digital transformation including in relation to health, education and agriculture, including proposals to introduce key elements from a development perspective into the proposed Global Digital Compact.

As you know, a significant part of these activities is focused on supporting delegations to participate in various ongoing negotiations. This is a particularly important activity, although it is not visible to those who are not directly involved.

The Centre has continued to produce numerous documents. In 2023, 17 Research Papers and 18 Policy Briefs, among others, were published. The Centre's documents received more than 21,000 downloads in that year; two of its books had more than 200,000 downloads. This is the result of intensive internal work and, in accordance with the Centre's constitution, of a model based on cooperation with numerous institutions and academics from the Global South.

On behalf of the Secretariat, I am particularly grateful for the supportive interventions of the Member States that we received during the last Council. However, I would like to emphasize the need for the South Centre to have effective financial support from its Member States, which at this time is insufficient to ensure the continuity of the activities at the current level.

The year 2023 has been a difficult one for the Centre from a financial point of view. Despite eleven member states contributing during 2023, compared to ten members in 2022, total contributions received have been 16% lower than in the previous year, and 59% lower than contributions received in 2021. The impact of this downward trend in member state contributions on the Centre's funding has been compounded by the abrupt withdrawal of Switzerland's annual contribution for the rental of the Centre's offices as of 2023. Due to the termination or reformulation of some projects, project income and associated program support income have also been reduced. Due to the significant weakness of the U.S. dollar against the Swiss franc, the Centre has experienced significant losses in terms of its dollar holdings, the currency in which it receives contributions.

However, interest income has increased considerably thanks to the Centre's active treasury management in the context of high interest rates, thus offsetting the funding shortfall in other budget lines.

Thanks to active management of recurrent expenses (most of which are fixed in nature), the Centre was able to keep the budget for 2023 slightly positive.

As the financial report shows, the Centre receives funding from donors for various activities and continues to seek additional funding. The Secretariat has submitted several project proposals and prepared others for submission in 2024.

We have had no budget deficits in the last 15 years, but if the downward trend in revenues is not reversed, especially by increasing the contributions of the member states, the sustainability of the Centre is at risk and budget deficits may appear. I express our special appreciation to those countries that contribute more than the amount set by this Council.

The South Centre is the only intergovernmental organization in Geneva that advocates a Southern perspective in the negotiations of multilateral organizations, which are often dominated by developed country interests. Supporting the Centre financially is a way of balancing the asymmetrical relations between North and South.

Finally, I wish to express our satisfaction with the efforts to revitalize the Group of 77+China and the Non-Aligned Movement under the chairmanship of Uganda,

and reaffirm the South Centre's commitment to cooperate with these organizations.

I cannot end without expressing our solidarity with the Palestinian people and the thousands of innocent victims in the context of an unprecedented humanitarian crisis.

I am grateful for President Mbeki's invaluable guidance and enormous dedication to the Centre's issues, as well as to the Centre's staff who have contributed with special dedication and commitment to achieving the results reflected in the activities report. This has enabled us to continue realizing the Centre's mandate, always guided by the vision of its founders and President Nyerere.

Thank you very much.



Closing remarks by the Convenor, H.E. Mr. Ajit Kumar
at the 24th meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre
18 April 2024

Colleagues, before we close the meeting, I would like to just say a few more words.

I thank you very much for your participation and the comments and suggestions you have made at today's meeting. You all know about the quality of the work of the South Centre. You all appreciate the wide number of subjects that they are working on and the depth of the information and the real knowledge base that they are providing. You recognize their role as backbone for developing countries in assisting you in multilateral negotiations. However, if we look at the financial contributions, there is a disconnect, although the contributions are voluntary. Not many members have paid. I thank those members who have made their contributions last year, especially those who pay regularly and in particular, I thank the Governments of China, India and South Africa who have been keeping making their special contributions.

Colleagues, the Centre has done their best to keep the operational costs as low as possible. The staff number is now at a minimum level. The office space has also been reduced to a minimum. This is not the way to keep our centre sustainable. I would like to stress that this Centre is ours. It is a Centre of the South and a Centre of ownership and solidarity. The Centre has been supporting us in advancing our common interests by their intellectual capacity and their dedication and commitment. If we give them some more resources, they will be able to multiply that commitment to the benefit of us all.

I thank you once again, colleagues, for coming today and the meeting is hereby closed.

24th Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre

Statement by Algeria

Chair of the Board of the South Centre, His Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki, former President of the Republic of South Africa,

Mr. Carlos Correa, Executive Director of the South Centre,

His Excellency, Mr. Kumar, former Permanent Representative of India,

Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me at the outset to voice my very warm congratulations to His Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki for his re-election as Chair of the Board of the South Centre for a new mandate. This decision is a clear sign of the success of the work of the Centre. My congratulations also go to the new member of the South Centre Board, Mr. Mohamed Edrees, as well as those who have been re-elected for a new mandate, the members from India, Tanzania and Brazil. I am firmly convinced that under the leadership of Mr. Mbeki, the Centre will continue to focus its laudable efforts on bolstering our capacity to learn and analyze the development issues in all aspects and to bolster cooperation and consultation among developing countries in order to enable us to achieve the SDGs and to overcome the socioeconomic challenges that our countries aspire to. The key role of the Centre today is more vital than ever when it comes to strengthening the capacity of developing countries to face new issues and to overcome challenges that require shared, concerted action from the 55 Member States of the Centre, but also all developing countries in a world where governance is a result of the policies of power that fundamentally ignore our priorities and take no account of our concerns. This is the case of financing for development, the reform of the international financial institutions, fragmentation of the multinational system, the dysfunctional trade system, the health crisis, pandemics and disastrous consequences of climate change. Against such a backdrop, the South Centre is the ideal framework to coordinate and to pull our joint efforts to enable us to truly bring our efforts to fruition, efforts to overcome these very many crises and to provide the necessary relevant and pragmatic responses to them, responses which take into account our countries' priorities. I would also like to share our satisfaction with the support provided by the South Centre to our country, particularly in terms of technical assistance and capacity building, which we believe are vital tools to assist and support development efforts in our countries. We reiterate our gratitude to the members and the management of the South Centre who have discharged their mandates with devotion and tireless resolution, and I can assure you of the support of Algeria to this honorable institution.

I thank you.

24th Meeting of the Council of the Representatives of the South Centre

Statement by Brazil

Thank you very much, Mr. Convenor. Brazil, as well, would like to express its full support for another extension of President Mbeki as Chair of the Board. I think his presence honors and brings a high profile to the South Centre and is much needed and appreciated by Brazil. I would also like to express our full support to the Executive Director, Carlos Correa, representative from a country in my region who has demonstrated at every turn his qualifications and capabilities for leading the centre's multiple programs in support of the South in several different negotiations. I would also like to welcome the new member of the Board, Mr. Mohammed Edrees of Egypt, and congratulate the three other members who have been extended for another three-year term from India, Tanzania and Brazil. Brazil in particular would like to recognize the presence and the honor to have on the Board a public figure of such renown as Cristovam Burque who has been Senator, Minister, Governor and Dean of a University. He has fulfilled almost every political and academic office at the highest levels serving his country, so we are very honored to have him for another three-year term.

I would like to thank the Executive Director for presenting us with a detailed annual report with comprehensive coverage of work performed by the South Centre, which is always under difficult circumstances. I know you have to work with limited resources and a challenging budget, but I must say that the South Centre team does extraordinary work. So we recognize, especially being a Geneva-based mission, the presence, the very effective presence of the South Centre supporting Delegates in many different negotiating processes of high relevance to us all and at the different agencies that are based in Geneva. At the WHO with the pandemic treaty, several Delegates have mentioned this. At WIPO, we now have a Diplomatic Conference on disclosure of origin mandatory requirement for patents on inventions that were derived from access to genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge pertaining to indigenous or traditional communities ahead of us. This is a very important negotiating process in May. I must say that my own name is nominated, as indicated by my country, for Chair of this Conference. I hope, if confirmed, that I can also count on the support of South Centre and South Centre members who are around, who are present during this session. Also, there is very important work by South Centre on trade, IP and finance. I think the South Centre is a force to be reckoned with in the context of WTO negotiations. We were all present, recently, in Abu Dhabi for the 13th Ministerial Conference of the organization. Conditions there are difficult and challenging, as is the case for several other UN agencies, but the South Centre always provides a view on all issues with a very independent and technically sound perspective from the South. I think this is essential because I do not see any other organization that can do so with the same quality and the same level of neutrality.

We support the South Centre's actions on the very pressing issues of the day. Sustainable development, in general, including its social, environmental and inclusion

components and the digital agenda, which I think is coming up very strongly. It is a transversal cross-cutting agenda that will impact the agenda of all different negotiating processes alongside artificial intelligence. I think tech transfer-related issues—not purely IP, but they are extremely important—are also very challenging today as the landscape is changing and tech transfer is becoming in a way the victim of geopolitical rivalry and considerations. Even more sensitive and more important for Developing Countries is tax cooperation. I think the South Centre made a huge impact to obtain a mandate at the UN for a multilateral process on this—more successful activity there. I think, as the Ambassador of Iran mentioned, the balance in the way you provide support is always essential. I also add that the technical support you provide should always seek to find a middle ground, not a north-south middle ground, but a middle ground among Developing Countries that can make Developing Countries more united and more converging because we are often the subject of divisive forces and that weakens the group to its own detriment. We are dealing with all of these issues in an increasingly fragmented world. We are facing a very concerning decline of multilateralism as a mean of generating new substantive agreements. We find in every single organization that it is becoming more and more difficult to get meaningful normative binding, even more so, binding agreements. So, I think we have more work to do. Of course, there are also things to be celebrated, such as the rise of many members of the South as new economic powerhouses with lots of potential today and for the future. I also think these are new actors who are, in and of themselves, becoming sources of political leadership and power. I think that is something that we should celebrate.

Finally, I think we have some important events coming up. We have the celebration of the 60 years of UNCTAD, as was mentioned. We had a celebration for 60 years of the G77. We have the summit of the future. We have a G20 under Brazil's presidency. It is an interesting process because there are four members of the South presiding over G20 during a four-year period. It started with Indonesia. Then it went to India, now Brazil, and the following one will be South Africa. That is a very important series of leadership countries dealing with such an important agenda. We have BRICS. We have COP processes. So, there are a lot of important events that the South could have an impact on and contribute to, and I wish the South Centre every success. I think we need to do more work on the more pedestrian issues of its budget and limited resources. I think we should perhaps think of some sort of a task force or concerted effort to gather ideas on things that we could perhaps do, or some outreach or special activities to see if we can either evolve in terms of the statutory restrictions of the South Centre. I mentioned to the Executive Director and to President Thabo Mbeki, yesterday during an event, that the fact that contributions are not mandatory is certainly not helpful. Some countries require contributions to be mandatory so that they can and will be adopted and approved at the appropriate level. That is one aspect that we have to get together and revise—the scale of assessments. As throughout the years, the differences in growth of members are quite marked and accentuated. So, perhaps it is time to reconsider this. I know all of this is very sensitive. In my own country, I would require confirming any step taken in this direction with my own authorities in Brasilia. But, in any case, I think the situation is critical enough that we should do something perhaps beyond just the regular opportunities we have to discuss this at every semester. So that is my take, and I wish every success to all of the South Centre, the members of the Secretariat and the Executive Board.

Statement by

His Excellency Mr. SHEN Jian

Ambassador of Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China
to the United Nations Office at Geneva and Other International
Organizations in Switzerland

**at the Twenty-fourth Meeting of the Council of Representatives of
the South Centre**

18 April, 2024

Chairperson of the Board, (H.E. Thabo M. Mbeki)

Convenor of the Council of Representatives, (H.E. Ajit Kumar)

Executive Director, (Dr. Carlos Correa)

Excellencies and Colleagues,

Good morning. I would take this opportunity to thank President Thabo Mbeki and H.E. Ambassador Ajit Kumar for their leadership, and thank Dr. Carlos Correa, the Executive Director for presenting the report of the South Centre.

China highly appreciates the positive contribution of the South Centre in promoting the sustainable development of developing Countries and supporting them to participate in the global governance. The Secretariat under the leadership of Dr. Carlos Correa, has continued to conduct substantial works on research, capacity building programs and training

activities for developing countries. The analytical and research outcome on many key issues such as South-South Cooperation, right to development, finance for development, international tax, global health and international trade are very valuable.

To support developing countries to address the challenges of digital technologies and harness the opportunities of digitalization, we suggest the South Centre to strengthen its research on the new issues including digital economy, artificial intelligence, and global supply chain, according to the practical needs of developing countries.

We note the financial situation of the South Centre. In the recent years, China continues to providing contribution to the South Centre despite the domestic financial constraint. We urge other Member Countries make payments for their contribution on time, in order to help the South Centre overcome the current financial difficulties.

China is a natural member of the Global South, and will always be part of the developing world. China stands ready to sharing development opportunities and outcomes with other developing countries through the platform of the South Centre, supporting them to advance economic and social development, and play a greater role in international affairs.

In 2023, the South Centre signed a cooperation MOU with Beijing Club, a Chinese think tank, marking a new progress on practical cooperation. China wishes both sides explore how to further cooperation in the aspect of policy analysis and research, for example, the feasibility of conducting joint research for sharing the development experience of Chinese Modernization with other developing countries.

Mr. Convenor,

China always supports the vast developing countries to advance sustainable development, and is dedicated to build a community with a shared future for mankind. In 2021, President Xi Jinping put forward the Global Development Initiative at the 76th Session of the UN General Assembly, for the purpose of revitalizing the 2030 sustainable development agenda of United Nations. Over the past two years, more than 100 countries and international organizations have shown support to GDI, and more than 80 countries have joined in GDI Friends Group. Over 200 cooperation programs related to GDI are implemented. Meanwhile, four billion US\$ “Global Development and South-South Cooperation Fund” comes into operation. GDI is pushing the global development into a more balanced, coordinated and inclusive phase, as it serves as an international public goods that China contributes to the world. In this background, we wish to expand cooperation with the South Centre in terms of implementing GDI together.

Given the series of major issues and challenges facing the world today, China calls for an equal and orderly multipolar world and a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization. An equal and orderly multipolar world is one in which all countries, regardless of size, are treated as equals, hegemonism and power politics are rejected, and democracy is truly promoted in international relations. A universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization is one that meets the common needs of all countries, especially the developing countries, and properly addresses the development imbalances between and within countries resulting from the global allocation of resources.

China continuously promotes high-level opening up to the outside world,

and advance trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, which bring more development opportunities to the world, particularly to developing countries. In November this year, China will host the 7th Session of China International Import Expo (CIIE) at Shanghai City, and provide the international public goods and services to the world. We welcome the delegates present actively participate in CIIE and share the development opportunities together.

I wish this Meeting a success. Thank you all.

24th Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre

Statement by Colombia

I am much obliged to thank you, Ambassador, first of all, for convening this meeting of the Council today. Our thanks also go to the Chairman of the Board, President Thabo Mbeki and the Executive Director, Dr. Carlos Correa, for the reports they have shared with us today. We thank all members of the Board and the Secretariat for the arduous and important work they have carried out over the last year, the fruits of which we have seen. We would also like to congratulate President Thabo Mbeki on his reelection to Chairman of the Board and similar congratulations to Dr. Carlos Correa and his fellow board members on their reelection. We also congratulate the Ambassador of Egypt as a new member of the Board.

As we get closer to 2030, we need to ramp up efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. In that understanding, the work of the South Centre that is intended to strengthen mutual understanding and cooperation at the South-South level is more vital than ever. At a time in which the impact of climate change and the tragedy of war and conflict is confronting the multilateral system and challenging it, then organizations such as the South Centre are vital to promoting mutual understanding and consensus between the countries of the Global South so we can speak with one voice. I would like to highlight the work of the South Centre in particular pertaining to the current WHO negotiations intended to culminate in a binding treaty to respond to pandemics and to prevent some when possible. We hope that we will end up with an instrument based on equity and solidarity as principles, one that recognizes common but differentiated responsibilities as a core principle of said treaty and that puts front and center respect for human rights. Guaranteeing access to medicines is vital so that persons can enjoy their right to health. In that understanding, I would like to refer to the Acapulco Declaration which brought Colombia, Cuba and Mexico together to establish a regulatory board for medicines and medical devices for Latin America and the Caribbean. The experience, the technical support and the financial support of the South Centre for this new regional body was extremely important in enabling us to achieve our objectives and to make sure we can provide sufficient forward planning on health issues.

It would be remiss of me not to take this opportunity to voice our unwavering solidarity with Palestine in light of the fallout of the Israeli military operations. In line with what has been said by our president, Colombia will continue to use all tools available to it under international law to support the Palestinian cause fully. It is for that reason that we have decided to support all legal actions pursued, in particular, by South Africa before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) against Israel, using the instrument provided in Article 63 of the Rome statute of the ICJ. Columbia has used that same Article to submit our own case alongside or to second the South African case. We are strong proponents of the provisions of the genocide conventions which we think are being run roughshod over by Israel in its operations in Gaza. That is abundantly clear. We call upon all fellows in the South Centre who are members or parties to the 1948

Convention on Genocide to join us in this action, including in this action in the ICJ. We were strongly involved in the advisory opinion issued by the ICJ on the potential legal fallout of the practices of the Israeli occupying power in the occupied Palestinian territory including East Jerusalem and such legal actions need to continue to be pursued firmly. We believe that the occupation of Palestinian territory by Israel is illegal and a clear violation of international law. That is a finding that we stand firmly behind.

Finally, to comment and share with you all, Colombia is working hard, and we are working with our Foreign Ministry to make sure that we can provide the necessary contribution to the South Centre and that our dues are fully met. To reassure you, that is our final point. Thank you very much.



MISIÓN PERMANENTE DE LA REPÚBLICA DE CUBA
ANTE LA OFICINA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS EN GINEBRA
Y LOS ORGANISMOS INTERNACIONALES EN SUIZA

Intervención del Embajador de Cuba, Juan Antonio Quintanilla Román, en la Vigésima cuarta reunión del Consejo de Representantes del Centro Sur. Ginebra, 18 de abril de 2024.

Estimado Sr. Carlos Correa,
Sr. Presidente de la Junta, S.E. Thabo Mbeki,
Sr. Convocante, S.E. Ajit Kumar,
Distinguidos colegas,

En primer lugar, quisiera saludar al Presidente de la Junta el Sr. Thabo Mbeki, ex Presidente de la hermana República de Sudáfrica y al Sr. Carlos Correa, Director Ejecutivo.

Valoramos la detallada información ofrecida en el Informe anual sobre las actividades del Centro y sobre la situación financiera del Centro del 2023. La documentación puesta a nuestra disposición refleja el apoyo permanente del Centro a los intereses del mundo en desarrollo.

Consideramos muy valiosa la labor desarrollada en la elaboración de estudios, documentos de investigación y en



MISIÓN PERMANENTE DE LA REPÚBLICA DE CUBA
ANTE LA OFICINA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS EN GINEBRA
Y LOS ORGANISMOS INTERNACIONALES EN SUIZA

la divulgación de literatura con análisis que son de alta utilidad para países como el nuestro. Los análisis que ponen a la disposición de los Miembros aportan a sus políticas nacionales de desarrollo y contribuyen a una posición cohesionada en los diversos foros de esta sede.

Cuba aprecia sinceramente el espacio regular de intercambio y reflexión que ofrece el Centro en temas de la OMC, la UNCTAD, la OMS, la OMPI y otras organizaciones y agencias de las Naciones Unidas.

Presidente,

De manera particular, Cuba agradece la presencia del Centro, y en particular la de su Director Ejecutivo, durante la Presidencia de Cuba del Grupo de los 77 más China en el 2023. Su aporte fue relevante en varios momentos durante la Presidencia cubana.



MISIÓN PERMANENTE DE LA REPÚBLICA DE CUBA
ANTE LA OFICINA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS EN GINEBRA
Y LOS ORGANISMOS INTERNACIONALES EN SUIZA

De igual manera otorgamos gran valor al tradicional apoyo del Centro en nuestra batalla contra el bloqueo económico, comercial y financiero impuesto por los EE.UU., que viola los principios fundamentales del Derecho Internacional y de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas, incluyendo las reglas del Sistema Multilateral de Comercio y cuyos efectos se extienden de manera creciente a otros países.

El bloqueo es un acto deliberado de guerra económica con el propósito de impedir los ingresos financieros al país, destruir la capacidad del gobierno para atender las necesidades de la población, hacer colapsar la economía y crear una situación de ingobernabilidad.

Antes de finalizar, Cuba reafirma una vez más, que aún en las tensas condiciones de su economía, mantenemos el compromiso de continuar realizando esfuerzos para honrar nuestra contribución financiera al presupuesto regular.

Muchas gracias



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA
AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN SWITZERLAND

**Intervention by the Ambassador of Cuba, Juan Antonio Quintanilla Román,
at the Twenty-fourth meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South
Centre, Geneva, April 18, 2024.**

Dear Mr. Carlos Correa,
Mr. Chairman of the Board, H.E. Thabo Mbeki,
Mr. Convener, H.E. Ajit Kumar,
Distinguished colleagues,

First of all, I would like to greet the Chairman of the Board
Mr. Thabo Mbeki, former President of the sister Republic of
South Africa and Mr. Carlos Correa, Executive Director.

We appreciate the detailed information provided in the
Annual Report on the activities of the Centre and on the
financial situation of the Centre for 2023. The
documentation made available to us reflects the Centre's
ongoing support for the interests of the developing world.

We consider the work carried out in the preparation of
studies, research documents and the dissemination of



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA
AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN SWITZERLAND

literature with analyses that are highly useful for countries like ours to be very valuable. The analyses made available to the Members contribute to their national development policies and contribute to a cohesive position in the various fora.

Cuba sincerely appreciates the regular space for exchange and reflection that the Centre offers on issues of the WTO, UNCTAD, WHO, WIPO and other United Nations organizations and agencies.

President,

In particular, Cuba appreciates the presence of the Centre, and in particular that of its Executive Director, during Cuba's Presidency of the Group of 77 + China in 2023. His contribution was very timely at various junctures throughout the Cuban presidency.



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA
AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN SWITZERLAND

We also attach great value to the traditional support of the Centre in our battle against the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States, which violates the fundamental principles of International Law and the Charter of the United Nations, including the rules of the Multilateral Trading System and whose effects are increasingly extending to other countries.

The blockade is a deliberate act of economic warfare with the purpose of preventing financial income to the country, destroying the government's capacity to meet the needs of the population, causing the economy to collapse and creating a situation of ungovernability.

Before concluding, Cuba reaffirms once again that even in the tense conditions of its economy, we maintain committed to continue making efforts to honor our financial contribution to the regular budget.

Thank you so much.

24th Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre

Statement by Egypt

H.E. Thabo Mvuyelwa MBEKI, Chairman of the South Centre Board,
Ambassador Ajit KUMAR, Convenor of the Meeting,
Dr. Carlos M. CORREA, Executive Director of South Centre,
Distinguished members of the Board and Ambassadors,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, let me recognize and pay tribute to the Honorable Thabo MBEKI, former President of South Africa and Chairman of the Center. We are indeed honored by such a prominent African leader, whose guidance, wisdom and leadership are acknowledged and respected worldwide. We fully support the continuation of his leadership as Chairperson of the Center.

I would like also to express my appreciation for the work done by the South Centre over the last year to support developing countries in the various international organizations. This excellent work is led of course by the leadership of Dr. Correa and his able team, as well as the guidance of a wise and refined members of the board, to whom I express my deep gratitude. Despite the financial challenges the Centre faces, under the leadership and guidance of the Honorable Thabo MBEKI, Members of the board and the Executive Director managed to advance the work of the Centre, in order to deliver and continue its support to developing countries.

Egypt attaches great importance to the work of the South Centre and was among the first countries to sign the 1994 agreement establishing the Centre. The South Centre plays an important role in providing developing countries with the necessary analytical tools, advice and capacity building to assist them in their struggle to defend their positions and interests in multilateral negotiations and international meetings.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The world is facing unprecedented global challenges. In addition to the financial, economic and developmental challenges that we are facing since 1990, developing countries are particularly hit hard by new multidimensional challenges, such as pandemics, climate change, high levels of debt, food insecurity, increased cost of finance, lack of policy and fiscal space, digital and technological transformation, as well as high inflation and interest rates.

Amidst all this, developing countries lack the ability to participate effectively in the international agenda setting. They are struggling to cope with a changing world and to advance their own interests and priorities in multilateral negotiations.

In this regard, the South Centre has a crucial role to play, not only in providing institutional memory, advice and capacity building to developing countries, but also in exploring new ways and strategies to overcome the current systemic failure of the international architecture and to bridge the reality of multilateral action sometime being conducted in silos.

The South Centre is well placed to assist developing countries in designing coherent and consistent positions across different international organizations, not only in Geneva, but also in New York, Nairobi and Vienna. It assists developing countries in finding new ideas and solutions to address the new multidimensional challenges, to deal with the current deficiencies in the international financial institutions and multilateral organizations and to address new challenges and opportunities.

In conclusion, a stronger and more active role of the South Center is needed today more than ever. Therefore, there is a need to find new alternatives to address the financial needs of the Centre, including by continuing the fund-raising efforts. Egypt from its part is fully committed to support the Center in its activities and programs and to help ensuring the sustainability and continuation of its vital role.

In closing, I would like to express my appreciation for the support of the Member States and the Board members to the election of Ambassador Mohamed Idris as a new member to the board. I'm confident that he will be a valuable addition to the board and the South Centre, in light of his extensive experience in diplomacy and global affairs and he will spare no effort to contribute positively to the work of the South Center.

I thank you

**STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
GHANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA AT THE TWENTY-FOURTH MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SOUTH CENTRE**

Mr. Chair,

It is an honour to make this statement at this twenty-fourth meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre.

The South Centre has been pivotal in facilitating cooperation among developing countries by organizing regular meetings, conferences, and workshops where representatives from our countries come together to discuss common issues, share experiences, and develop joint strategies for our benefit. The Centre has also provided a platform for networking and information exchange among developing countries.

The South Centre has consistently demonstrated its relevance in promoting development policies across its mandate and supporting the Global South in its engagements across diverse multilateral fora.

We recognise the South Centre's support provided in negotiations in several meetings in many of the International Organizations. The South Centre's inputs have also been critical in enhancing South-South cooperation and working towards making such systems more equitable and fit for purpose.

Mr. Chair,

I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the Centre's Trade programme's contributions at the WTO MC13 as well as their role in helping Members in the AfCFTA Digital Trade Protocol negotiations.

The support provided during these negotiations helped African countries, in particular, to advance their interests in various areas. The first among these that I would like to touch on is the South Centre's assistance during the WTO Fisheries Subsidies negotiations. In Ghana, for

instance, small-scale fishing is an integral part of our culture. It plays a vital role in supporting livelihoods and providing nutrition throughout the country's coastal regions. It is estimated that over 90 percent of marine fishers in Ghana are employed within the small-scale fisheries sector, highlighting its importance to the national economy and its communities.

The second significant assistance that I would like to highlight is the Centre's promotion of an industrial development agenda in the WTO to complement Africa's continental objectives of implementing the AfCFTA, whose headquarters is situated in Accra, Ghana. The AfCFTA is currently the largest trade agreement in the world, after the World Trade Organisation, and brings together members of the African Union. Considering the importance of the AfCFTA in improving trade among African countries, the assistance of the South Centre in the negotiations mentioned earlier cannot be overemphasized.

Finally, the South Centre's role in advocating for the necessary policy space in the development of the domestic digital industry both in the WTO through the Work Programme on E-commerce, and the AfCFTA Digital Trade negotiations is commendable. The relevant information provided on key issues has enhanced our countries' efforts to leverage digital technologies for promoting economic growth and development.

Ghana, as other members and beneficiaries of the work of the South Centre, deeply values the contributions of the Centre in providing support for developing countries in navigating the complexities of multilateralism and global development challenges, and we look forward to more engagements and cooperation with the Centre.

I would like to conclude by expressing my hope for fruitful discussions at this meeting.

Thank you.



Statement by India at the 24th Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre delivered by Ambassador Arindam Bagchi, Permanent Representative of India to the UN & other International Organisations

Geneva, 18 April 2024, 10:00-13:00 hours at the Palais des Nations, Room VII

Under agenda item 8, General Statements from representatives

Thank you Chair for giving the floor.

2. Your Excellency President Thabo Mbeki, Chairperson of the Board, Amb. Ajit Kumar, Convener of the Council, Members of the Board, Professor Carlos Correa, Executive Director, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Members of the Secretariat,

3. I would also like to convey my appreciation to His Excellency Thabo Mbeki, Chairperson for his leadership of the Board and to the Convener, Ambassador Ajit Kumar, for his efficient steering of the work of the Council of Representatives. Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate President Mbeki on his reappointment as Chairman of South Centre Board; Board members from India, Tanzania and Brazil on renewal of mandate and to Ambassador Mohamed Edrees for his appointment as a board member.

Excellencies & distinguished colleagues,

4. As a founding member and key financial contributor, India has always been a strong supporter of South Centre. Since its foundation in 1994, the research and advocacy support by South Centre in the areas of climate change, south-south cooperation, global health, intellectual property rights, international trade, international taxation issues, matters related to the right to development, sustainable development & financing and e-commerce have been highly appreciated by countries of the global South.

5. South Centre's engagement with UN and other International Organisations like UNCTAD, WTO, WIPO, WHO, UNCITRAL etc. have also helped in highlighting the concerns and interests of developing countries and safeguarding our collective interest. Their invaluable research papers and conferences have also been instrumental in advocacy of key interests of Global South and also increased global awareness of the adverse fallout of the iniquitous nature of financial and development relations between the North and the South.

Excellencies & distinguished colleagues,

6. India has long believed that the global south is eminently capable of coming up with its own answers to the global challenges that is faced today. In order to achieve this, we also need to work towards self-reliance to mitigate our vulnerabilities vis-à-vis economic concentrations and reform the multilateral order, that is structurally not able to accommodate interests of global south in its entirety and to its satisfaction. Where any of us are successful in any domain, we must ensure exchange of best practices and also of scaling up. The work of South Centre can play a critical role in all these areas.

7. India's firm belief in the voice of Global south was amply heard during India's G20 presidency where we ensured that the New Delhi Leaders' Declaration put forth solutions on a range of domains such as digital public infrastructure, climate action, reforming international financial institutions, women-led development, education, Artificial Intelligence, to name a few.

8. A special initiative by India last year was the convening of the two virtual voice of Global South Summits, bringing together 125 countries of the Global South. Their perspectives and voice were articulated in the G20 platform, and we also shared with them the positive outcomes from the perspective of the developing world in the G20 New Delhi declaration.

9. We have also reaffirmed our commitment to the Global South through an extensive range of development projects in 78 countries. The development projects by India are demand driven, outcome oriented, transparent and sustainable. As India embraces digital delivery, advances in Artificial Intelligence, develops digital public infrastructure, promotes green growth and ensures affordable health access, it will always have the global south at the centre of its international partnerships. We look forward to sharing our success stories with fellow members of Global South.

10. In a spirit of constructive engagement, let me bring out three key points at this distinguished gathering that we believe South Centre could possibly do in future:

11. First, with 30 years since the inception of the Centre, the world has witnessed profound changes in global economic and financial landscape. These changes have also been accompanied by rapid advancement in technologies, changes in the global geopolitical alignments and redrawing of power balances across the world. The priorities of the South Centre should continue to reflect shifting priorities of the developing countries and should be in lock and step with the demands of global south.

12. Secondly, there are more than 125 countries in the global south. While we have been successful in establishing South Centre as the premium think tank for the global south with a current membership of 55 states, we need to look at more ways to engage other countries. This may also help address the pressing issue of financial situation of the Centre.

13. And lastly, there is a lot of good work that the Centre has done in the past. There is a need to find out ways to showcase its success stories in advocacy and research so that we are able to encourage increased participation and cooperation by member countries.

14. Let me reiterate that South Centre's past success and contribution is thanks to the unique nature of the Centre and the vision of its founding fathers as a member driven organisation that would be owned, in heart and soul, by the member states of the Global South. In the current global situation, the focus should be on how to bring development and technology to the doorstep of every home and every family. A transformation is happening in the way emerging technologies and climate change are re-shaping our notions on governance, development and other qualifiers. I am happy to note that the Centre has already started working in some of these areas. However there is a need to put more effort in this direction.

15. We also seek continued support of South Centre in the negotiations currently underway in WHO and WIPO on treaties/ regulations which will have a profound impact in future; on matters related to various proposals being considered by WTO and expect the Centre to continue its advocacy work related to the reforms of International Taxation landscape and the discussions on UN tax Convention.

16. Before I conclude, I would also like to thank Dr. Correa and his team for presenting various reports of activities and finances of the South Centre. I take this opportunity to also assure continued and constructive support by the Indian Mission in Geneva to the South Centre.

I thank you.

24th Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre

Statement by Indonesia

Excellencies and colleagues, first of all, I would like to thank the Executive Director and Secretariat for organizing this meeting and preparing all related documents. I would also like to congratulate Dr. Carlos Correa on his reelection as the Executive Director, His Excellency Thabo Mbeki on his reelection as the Chair of the South Centre Board and the extension of three board members. This meeting is timely, as this year the G77 celebrates its 60th anniversary, underscoring the importance of developing countries working together, including with the support from the South Centre. Thus, I commend the great work of the South Centre in providing capacity development, policy recommendation, policy-oriented research, supporting Delegation to participate in ongoing negotiations in different international for a and negotiations on a wide range of issues. The South Centre has contributed substantively not only for its members but also for developing countries in general. And with regard to the grave destruction and brutality by the occupying power to the peoples of Palestine and their land, the contribution of the works of the South Centre and solidarity of the Global South is increasingly needed. Therefore, on the work of South Centre, I would like to share some points.

First, on the work of the South Centre and Indonesia. Indonesia has always valued the contributions of the South Centre at heart, especially in advancing the interests and concerns of developing countries. Since the Centre's inception, there has been growing development of the relationship between Indonesia and the Centre. Last year one of Indonesia's ministers visited the South Centre, highlighting the importance of South-South Cooperation and the importance of the Centre's recommendation. We also work closely with the Centre in various fora and programs.

Second, on the Centre's budget, we note with concern the financial situation of the Centre that has been worsened due to the elimination of the host country contribution, foreign exchange losses and volatile contributions on both the membership as well as donor side. We appreciate the great work of the Centre. It has the ability to perform its mandate with the most efficient use of members' contributions as well as ensuring its long-term sustainability. Let us ensure you that Indonesia will continue contributing financially to the Centre to operationalize the program and mandate. We encourage the Centre also to find innovative ways to source its financing.

Third, on the work of the Centre, we have witnessed that 2024 continues to present immense challenges to developing countries. A multilateral system is still the key to tackling the problem facing developing countries. Some of the important multilateral issues include ongoing negotiations on the pandemic instrument, the conference on Intellectual Property, a variety of issues under the WTO, the Pact for the Future and the Global Digital Compact. It underscores the importance of technical capacity for developing countries to deal with complex issue. Thus, we support the South Centre in advising developing countries' parties on these pertinent issues

and in strengthening countries' capacity and contributing to South-wide collaboration in promoting common interests of developing countries in international forums.

Excellencies and colleagues, last but not least, Indonesia is reaffirming its commitment to supporting the work of the South Centre in assisting the developing countries to achieve the future we want and leave no one behind.

Thank you very much.

24th Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre

Statement by the Islamic Republic of Iran

Your Excellency, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, Chairman of the Board,
Ambassador Mr. Ajit Kumar, Convenor,
Distinguished Dr. Carlos Correa, Executive Director,
Distinguished Members of the Board,
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates.

It is with utmost pleasure and honor I address this esteemed gathering of the 24th meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre. I extend my deepest appreciation for the unwavering commitment and impactful initiatives undertaken by the South Centre. The Centre's steadfast support for developing countries in amplifying their voices across various international fora and advocating for their rightful concerns is truly commendable. Before proceeding further, I wish to offer my heartfelt congratulations on the appointment of His Excellency Thabo Mbeki and Dr. Carlos Correa as the Chairman of the Board and the Executive Director of the Centre for another three years' term. Under their esteemed leadership, I am confident that the Centre will continue to excel in fulfilling its critical mission, especially amid the challenges confronting Developing Countries.

Additionally, I extend my warm congratulations to our Egyptian colleague, Mr. Mohamed Edrees, on his appointment as a new member of the Board, and I wish him great success in his future endeavors.

I express my sincere gratitude for the comprehensive report provided by the Secretariat on the South Centre's activities for the period of January to December 2023. The report comprehensively outlines various aspects of the Centre's activities reflecting its dedication and diligence. Furthermore, I commend the South Centre for its commendable briefing sessions covering critical topics such as tax cooperation, climate change, WIPO, and global health. However, I stress the importance of maintaining a balanced approach, particularly in areas such as international trade and finance. High quality sessions in these domains are imperative, especially in anticipation of significant events like the Summit of the Future, Global Digital Compact, and the 60th anniversary of UNCTAD. Significant downloads of the Centre's publications underscore the crucial importance of its work. It is imperative that the Centre's efforts continue and expand to encompass a wide area of areas of interest, including finance and trade, in a well-balanced manner.

The climate crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic and escalating conflicts worldwide pose immense challenges and jeopardize the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, particularly for developing countries. In such complex times, the role of the South Centre is more critical than ever. As part of the ongoing discussions in various international fora, I strongly advocate for the integration of the South Centre's capacities into the negotiation

process. This integration will empower developing countries to negotiate crucial issues effectively and amplify their visibility in consensus building and facilitation of unified positions.

In conclusion, regarding staff issues, I wish to reiterate that we have already conveyed our recommendations to the Centre. These recommendations underscore the significance of equality, merit-based approaches, clarity on leave policies, and the prioritization of expertise. I am confident that the recommendations presented will strengthen the Staff Regulations and enhance the overall effectiveness of the South Centre's operations.

Once again, I extend my sincere appreciation to the South Centre for its exceptional efforts and programs. I wish the Council every success in its deliberations, and I fervently hope that the outcomes of this meeting will further advance the South Centre's goals and objectives. I firmly believe that our collective strength and solidarity will enable us to surmount the challenges ahead and build a brighter future for all.

I thank you.

Statement by Jamaica
24th Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre
Room VII, Palais des Nations, 18th April 2024

Agenda Item 8: General Statement from Representatives

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

As this is my first meeting of the Council of Representatives in my capacity as Permanent Representative of Jamaica, I wish to extend my commendations to the Executive Director, Dr. Carlos Correa, for his leadership of the South Centre. Based on the Annual Report 2023 and your presentation this afternoon, it is clear that the South Centre continues to deliver on its mandate, and there is steadfast commitment to supporting developing countries. My delegation would like to place on record our appreciation to the Convenor for his opening remarks and President Thabo Mbeki, the Chairman of the Board for his report, and also welcome our newest member and the renewal of the terms of the outgoing members of the Board.

As reflected by the studies and policy briefs prepared by the South Centre and other international organizations such as UNCTAD, the global economy continues to reel from the impacts of multiple crises ranging from geopolitical tensions to climate change. Furthermore, we are clearly off track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 and international development support remains inadequate for the task at hand. It is, therefore, critical that the multilateral system is oriented towards addressing the myriad global challenges that negatively impact developing countries and that the concerns and perspectives of developing countries are fully articulated in the various multilateral fora.

The support of the South Centre has been invaluable, in this regard, through policy-oriented research, policy advice, and capacity building tailored to developing countries. In collaboration with other international partners, the South Centre has continued its

strong advocacy on issues affecting the Global South. In this connection, my delegation wishes to particularly highlight the Centre's participation in the plenary of the United Nations High-level Forum on Financing for Development (FfD) held last September in New York.

At the 23rd Session of the Council of Representatives, Jamaica highlighted the rapid evolution of the digital landscape, which poses increased risks for developing countries, and requested that the Center focus some of its effort on this issue. We are delighted that our request was considered favourably and welcomed the briefings and policy briefs prepared on the Global Digital Compact, the Summit of the Future, and other digital-related thematic areas.

The Centre's support in helping developing countries to understand and actively participate in the negotiations for the Global Digital Compact is an immediate priority. Likewise, briefing material and other resources from the Centre will be critical as we move closer to the WIPO Diplomatic Conference to Conclude an International Legal Instrument Relating to Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge Associated with Genetic Resources, which will be held from 13 to 24 May.

Jamaica further recognizes the continued work of the Center in other areas which are of keen interest, such as health, including the ongoing negotiations at the WHO, intellectual property, climate change, taxation and development finance. As it relates to taxation, Jamaica appreciated being invited to participate in the two-day international conference for developing countries, focused on South-South Cooperation in International Tax Matters, which was organized jointly with the Global Alliance for Tax Justice in November 2023.

Mr Chairman,

While the South Centre has and continues to deliver value to the Global South, more work remains to be done. At the recently concluded 13th WTO Ministerial Conference, it was evident that divergences persist, and developing countries will have to redouble efforts and strategize more effectively to find consensus on key issues such as fisheries and agriculture on which there were no outcomes. The need for further analysis, research and training for technical experts from Missions in Geneva will be useful for reengagement in both processes and to assist in devising an outcome-oriented approach and plan of action for the next Ministerial Conference.

There should also be a dedicated focus on the Work Programme on electronic commerce and the moratorium on electronic transmissions since both are set to expire at MC14. We should, therefore, use the remaining time wisely to make advancements in our understanding of the digital trade issues, develop supportive policies and strategies as well as build consensus on the future of e-commerce, given its critical role and importance for the survival of MSMEs in the current global trading environment. Dispute settlement reform, WTO reform and development are also critical topics for targeted research and analysis and should not be ignored.

As we continue to witness unprecedented shifts within our societies due to the disruptions caused by emerging and frontier challenges and climate change, it would be remiss of me not to highlight the important issues of labour and migration, given that the disruption brought about by technological changes and climate change will undoubtedly impact human mobility and migration patterns. In fact, based on the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2023, employers have estimated that 44% of workers' skills will be disrupted within the next five years. Developing countries from the Global South could, therefore, benefit from further research in these areas to guide the formulation of transformative national skills development strategies to effectively retool and upskill their citizens.

In Concluding, I wish to reiterate our previous request for stronger engagement by the Centre with capital-based officials to increase their awareness and understanding of the issues being discussed in international Geneva and elsewhere. Jamaica fully recognizes that the multilateral agenda is extensive and continues to expand. Therefore, if developing countries are to be adequately supported to shape multilateral discourses, the South Centre must continue its collaboration with other international organizations and partners, not only to allow for the cross-fertilization of ideas, but also to better leverage existing resources and expertise, bearing in mind the existing financial and human resource constraints.

Jamaica, therefore, thanks the South Centre and its team for the demonstrable commitment to bolstering the technical capacity of developing countries through the provision of thought leadership and in assisting developing countries to safeguard our interests in the various multilateral discussions in which we are engaged.

I thank you.



STATEMENT BY MALAYSIA

THE 24TH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SOUTH CENTRE

18 APRIL 2024

His Excellency Mr Thabo Mbeki, Chairperson of the Board,

His Excellency Mr Ajit Kumar, Convenor of the Council of Representatives,

Executive Director, Dr Carlos Correa,

Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates

First of all, I would like to extend my congratulations to His Excellency Mr Thabo Mbeki on his reappointment as Chairman of the Board of the South Centre. Malaysia extends its appreciation to the South Centre for convening today's important meeting and for the comprehensive documentation provided for this meeting.

2 We commend the Chairperson, Board Members, Executive Director and the entire staff of the South Centre for their tireless efforts and dedication in advancing the objectives of the organisation. The commitment shown in supporting member states of the South Centre is commendable, and Malaysia recognises the pivotal role it plays in promoting the interests of developing countries and addressing our common developmental challenges.

3. As evidenced by the reports presented, Malaysia is encouraged by the sustained focus of the South Centre on promoting South-South Cooperation, particularly in critical areas such as finance for development, global health, intellectual property, human rights, climate change and tax cooperation. The work produced by the South Centre, has not only benefited Malaysia, but fellow member states of the centre, substantially.

Mr Chair

4. Malaysia remains concerned with the financial stability of the South Centre. As mentioned by the Executive Director earlier, the Centre's total income in 2023 had decreased compared to 2022, largely due to the cessation of the host country contribution and depleting project donor contributions. While Malaysia remains committed to making our timely annual contribution, we encourage others to do the same to ensure the Centre's continued ability to effectively serve the needs and interests of the Global South.

5. Since the signing of an MOU on International Taxation in May 2023, Malaysia and the South Centre have been cooperating closely through various training and capacity building workshops organised in the interests of developing countries. Last month, Malaysia participated in a workshop organised by the South Centre for the Maldives Inland Revenue Authority to share our experience and best practise on the OECD Two Pillar Solution and Alternatives.

6. In concluding, Malaysia remains confident with the South Centre's ability to fulfil its mandate effectively and assist developing countries amidst the ongoing global crises. We also stand ready to collaborate with other member states to further enhance the role of the South Centre.

Thank you.



**REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
MOZAMBIQUE-GENEVA**

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF MOZAMBIQUE ON
THE OCCASION OF THE 24th MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SOUTH CENTRE**

MRS.LAURINDA BANZE, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES ADD INTERIM

AGENDA ITEM 8

GENEVA, APRIL 18, 2024

Mr Convenor of the Council of Representatives,

**H.E Thabo Mbeki, Former President of South Africa and
Chairman of the South Centre,**

Executive Director, Dr. Carlos Correa,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At outset, Mozambique thanks the Executive Director and Secretariat of the South Centre for convening this meeting of the Council of Representatives.

We also thank **H.E Dr. Thabo Mbeki**, Chairman of the Board of the South Centre and to the Executive Director, Dr. Carlos Correa, for their comprehensive report.

Mozambique commends **H.E. Dr Thabo Mbeki** for his leadership of the South Centre which plays an important role in policy research on key development issues and supports developing countries to participate effectively in international negotiation processes relevant to achieving the SDGs.

My delegation also appreciates the work of all members of the Board of the South Centre and congratulates the Egypt for their nomination as the new member of the Board.

Mr Convenor,

Mozambique takes note of the report on the activities and finances of the South Centre for the year 2023, presented by Dr Carlos Correa, Executive Director.

We appreciate the fact that Mozambique is among the 11 Member States that contribute regularly to the regular budget income of the South Centre, jointly with **Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, South Africa and Sri Lanka**, and we encourage other member States to follow the same example.

Mr. Convenor,

We underscore that during 2023, the South Centre provided technical support to countries to enhance their capacity to participate in discussions and negotiations on important and challenging issues on the international agenda, such as **development, agriculture and food security, fisheries, TRIPS** and others.

We are also pointing to the important documents prepared by the South Centre, and here we highlight those for the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference, held in February in Abu Dhabi.

Mr. Convenor,

My delegation should commend the South Centre for its continuous work, despite the challenges of a time when **slowing economic growth, rising inflation**, the pressing challenges of **trade disruptions, climate change, underinvestment and inequalities** are growing more serious.

We call on the South Centre to provide continued support to our countries so that they can truly participate on an equal standing in multilateral processes and negotiations.

Before we conclude our statement, we would like to reaffirm the commitment of the Government of Mozambique with the objectives of the South Centre.

Thank You, Mr Convenor for your attention!



**Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN
Geneva**

**Statement by Pakistan
at the
Twenty-Fourth Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre
(18 April 2024)
Geneva, Switzerland**

**Hon'ble Chairperson,
Executive Director,
Convener of the Council of Representatives,
Distinguished Colleagues,**

Allow me to begin by thanking President Thabo Mbeki for his leadership and congratulate him on his re-election. I also wish to recognize Executive Director, Dr. Carlos Correa, under whose guidance the South Centre continues to promote the common interests of developing countries.

The South Centre provides a valuable platform for us to exchange ideas, coordinate our positions, and advocate for policies that support our development objectives. Through its technical and policy advice, research, and analysis, the South Centre has helped us to deepen our understanding of the complex issues that we face and to develop effective strategies to address them.

We commend the South Centre for its commitment to promoting multilateralism and for its efforts to strengthen South-South cooperation including the ongoing technical support to developing countries.

We wish to specifically appreciate South Centre's work on discussions at the WTO. We believe that the South Centre has a critical role to play in advancing the development agenda.

Mr. Convener,

We also note with appreciation Dr Correa's presentation and report on the activities undertaken by the South Centre in the past year including on South-South Cooperation & finance for development, Global Health, Intellectual Property and Biodiversity, Sustainable Development and Climate Change, Trade and Development as well as Tax Cooperation.

Mr. Convener,

The Global South has several common interests and priorities, the advancement of which however demands greater coordination, collaboration and cooperation among our countries.

As representatives of the South Centre, we have a unique responsibility to champion the interests of developing countries and to ensure that our voices are heard on the global stage.

I would like to highlight some issues that South Center may consider prioritizing in its program for the next year.

First, enhanced awareness raising and advocacy towards reform of International Economic and Financial Architecture.

Second, South Centre has been doing an excellent job advocating for tax reforms that promote social justice and sustainable development in developing countries. The Centre should continue to provide developing countries policy proposals, guidance and expert opinion in the on-going reforms of the international tax system.

Third, continue to provide policy, legal and technical advice across the range of WTO issues including development issues, services, e-commerce, fisheries agriculture and WTO reform.

Finally, we encourage South Centre to expand its collaboration with other institutions and scholars of the South.

Mr. Convener,

We encourage the South Centre to continue its vital work in supporting the development aspirations of its member states and in advancing a more equitable and sustainable global order. We reaffirm our commitment to working in partnership with the South Centre and with each other to address the common challenges facing our countries and our peoples.

Thank you.



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA



24th Meeting of the Council of Representatives
to the South Centre
18 April 2024

Delivered by Ambassador Kristine Leilani R. Salle
Deputy Permanent Representative



Good morning, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates.

I would like to begin by expressing our appreciation to the esteemed Convenor and Executive Director for the updates provided by the South Centre on matters pertaining to its work. It is important that Member Countries are apprised of these latest developments and how the organization operationalizes the objective of helping developing countries in key development issues and in promoting our common interests. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate President Mbeki and his re-appointment as Chairman of the Board of the South Centre, as well as the extension of three board members and the election of a new board member. Please remain assured of our support to your leadership.

PAGE 1/2



DEPARTMENT OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
PHILIPPINES





24th Meeting of the Council of Representatives to the South Centre

18 April 2024

I reiterate the Philippines' support to the Centre, especially in its work in helping achieve Sustainable Development Goals and supporting countries and institutions in the South by providing policy and technical advice and capacity building, among others. The Philippines recognizes the important work and contribution of the South Centre, especially on specific thematic issues such as policies on tax cooperation and on curbing illicit financial flows. We value this information and ensure that it is cascaded to the implementing agencies of the Philippine government. We thank the South Centre for its valuable work and we assure the Centre of our continued support.

Thank you very much.

PAGE 2/2



DEPARTMENT OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
PHILIPPINES

Statement by South Africa

Twenty-fourth Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre

18 April 2024, the Palais des Nations, Room VII

H.E President Thabo Mbeki Chairperson Board Chair South Centre

Board Members of the South Centre

The Executive Director South Centre

The Convenor

Your Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

South Africa welcomes and commend the board for the sterling work that the South Centre continues to carry out since its inception 30 years ago.

In this regard, welcome the various reports presented to this esteemed Twenty Fourth Meeting of the Council of Representatives

South Africa welcomes the re-appointment of H.E President Thabo Mbeki as board Chair and other Board Members respectively.

Your Excellencies

The South Centre has continuously demonstrated commitment to reflecting the perspectives and needs of the Global South.

The efforts of the South Centre to enhance the intellectual and policy capabilities of developing nations have not gone unnoticed, and as such we appreciate these initiatives.

The South Centre has played an indispensable role in advocating for development policies and providing essential support to the Global South in various multilateral settings.

Your Excellencies

We acknowledge the invaluable assistance provided during the negotiations at major international forums such as the UN, WIPO,

UNCTAD, WHO, WTO and regional and continental initiatives like the AfCFTA, which have been critical in encouraging South-South cooperation and striving for more equitable Global system.

In this regard, we particularly welcome the South Centre assistance with the ongoing negotiations particularly in preparation of the WIPO Diplomatic Conference meant to adopt a legally binding instrument to protect Traditional Knowledge and Genetic Resource.

We remain indebted to South Centre's unwavering support and assistance towards the Summit of the Future, a once in generation opportunity to contribute towards the attainment of the SDGs.

The Global South is currently seized with World Health Organisation negotiations on the Intergovernmental Negotiations Body, and these will have been challenging without the valuable insights and support from the South Centre.

We commend the contribution of the Centre 's Trade and development programme during the MC13 in supporting Member States during this critical time.

We also note the South Centre role in the AfCTA Digital Trade Protocol negotiations. The support has been crucial for African countries, aiding them in advancing their strategic interests effectively, as well as the recent successes of having the term "digital industrialisation" recognized by Trade Ministers at the WTO MC13.

Additionally, the South Centre's support has been significant in promoting industrial development through trade policies and trade rules which are consistent and aligned with the broader continental development trajectory including Agenda 2063 and the AfCFTA.

As challenges increases, and as we look to the future, we reaffirm our support for the South Centre and its Mission. We commit to redouble our collaboration, contribution to the Centre's initiatives.

We also call upon other members States to strengthen their engagement with the South Centre, including our financial obligations, and urge other to do so to ensure the viability and financial sustainability of the South Centre.

Let us recommit ourselves to support the South Centre, to ensure that it remains a powerful advocate for the interest and aspirations of the developing Global South. Together, we can address the complexities of the global economic system, tackle environmental challenges, and promote a fairer and more equitable international order.

I thank you.

Intervention by Sri Lanka's PRUN at the 24th Council of Representatives of the South Centre held on 18 April 2024

President Thabo Mbeki, Chairman of the Board

Distinguished Members of the Board

Representatives of the Council

Excellencies

Mr Convenor,

Sri Lanka wishes to add its voice to congratulating President Mbeki for his appointment for a fresh term. We also welcome the newly appointed members of the Board. Let me also thank the Executive Director of the South Centre Dr Carlos Correa and the Secretariat for their tireless work and welcome the appointment of Dr Correa for another term.

Sri Lanka joins others in acknowledging and appreciating the very important work being carried out by the South Centre, in supporting developing countries in a wide range of subject areas and matters of importance to our countries.

The expert briefings, research and policy papers contributed by the South Centre particularly on important negotiations taking place here in Geneva is highly appreciated. My delegation has found these to be extremely useful and insightful.

Sri Lanka has also benefitted from the South Centre's capacity building, most recently on taxation of the digitalised economy for senior Government officials and private sector, in 2023.

Sri Lanka has continued financial contribution to the Centre despite its own economic challenges, in recognition of the important work carried out by the South Centre for our collective benefit.

I thank you.



REMARK OF DR. ABDALLAH SALEH POSSI, AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICES AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION IN GENEVA, DURING THE TWENTY FOURTH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SOUTH CENTRE, 18 APRIL 2024 GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

Distinguished Delegates,

Good afternoon,

It is indeed an honour to be here today for the Twenty Fourth meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre.

Tanzania commends the Chairman and the Board of the South Centre for the exemplary work, even under difficult circumstances. The commitment of the Executive Director and the staff has been manifested in the overwhelming support provided by the South Centre to our Missions.

The United Republic of Tanzania takes seriously her historical and moral connections to the South Centre, especially by taking into account the role of our first President, Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere, for the establishment of the Centre.

In my first appearance in this Meeting—as the Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, it gives me great pleasure to see the Former President of South Africa, H. E. Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki, the current Chairperson of the Board of the South Centre. This is such a wonderful coincidence that reminds me of the deep connections between our countries – and the true Comradeship of the late Julius Nyerere and Nelson Mandela – what a battle they had fought!

As I part from the sentimental attachments, please allow me to reiterate that Tanzania appreciates and commends the commitment of the South Centre, which has continued to support the developing nations to consolidate their efforts and expertise to promote common interests in the international arena.

We appreciate the Chairman presentation on the overall position and work of the South Centre, and have taken note of the Executive Director`s report on major developments in the areas covered by the Work Program and activities of the South Centre; together with the Centre`s achievements and challenges.

Distinguished Delegates,

It is my sincere belief that our mutual support is even more crucial now, or perhaps than ever before, as we are passing through worrying times when some countries have worrisome opposing interests to our issues of serious concern; and when geo-political tensions are leading to a rise in the adoption of unilateral measures to the suffering of multilateral processes. These are also times when developing countries are facing high levels of external debt and rising interest rates, which make access to international capital markets difficult, risking further global inequalities. This underlines the importance of our collective action in the international fora, and we welcome new members to the Centre.

In the spirit of promoting common interests of the members, the United Republic of Tanzania is committed to continuing working with the South Centre and cooperating with all its members for the better future.

I thank you.

24th Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre

Statement by Uganda

The Chairperson of the Board, His Excellency Thabo Mbeki, former President of South Africa,
The Convener of this council, Ambassador Kumar,
The Executive Director of the Centre, Dr. Carlos Correa,
Distinguished representatives, ladies and gentlemen,

I wish to begin by thanking the Executive Director, Dr. Correa and the Secretariat for its work and organizing this 24th session of the Council. We congratulate His Excellency Thabo Mbeki for his election and his leadership of the Board and we are honored to have a distinguished person like him at the helm of our organization. Uganda extends sincere appreciation to all the Board members of the Centre and congratulates all those who have been appointed. We commend the Centre for fulfilling its mandate and role in providing valuable support to its members. We appreciate the efforts that have been made by the Secretariat to make greater outreach to encourage further membership and we urge the Secretariat to continue with these efforts.

As the Chair rightly stated, the world is facing a polycrisis. The challenges of COVID -19 and its impact on developing countries were plain to see for many of us. Collective action of developing countries in international fora is therefore imperative. There is a need to exercise this full potential, this collective influence on the global scene by working more effectively and closely together. The South Centre has facilitated and informed the critical work that has been done and we encourage that this should continue. We are fully cognizant that the international agenda is busy and broad and indeed the Centre cannot do everything. Nonetheless, we have seen the valuable support that has been extended, as many speakers before me have said in many important intergovernmental processes such as the ended ministerial conference, the 13th ministerial conference under the WTO, and now the work that is being done on the global digital compact, the agreement on the Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge under WIPO, the Pandemic Treaty under WHO and the Pact for the Future. We commend the work of the Centre, especially its direct and indirect support that has continued to give the Group of 77 and China and the Non-Aligned Movement, which Uganda currently chairs. We share the concern that has been expressed regarding the financial situation of the Centre and believe it will require creative and innovative ideas on how this can be addressed.

Finally, I wish to reiterate Uganda's commitment to strengthening the collaboration with the Centre and its continued support of the Centre as well.

I thank you, Chair.



**MENSAJE DEL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE LA REPUBLICA BOLIVARIANA
DE VENEZUELA,
S.E. EMBAJADOR ALEXANDER YÁNEZ DELEUZE,
ANTE LA VIGESIMO CUARTA REUNION DEL CONSEJO DE REPRESENTANTES DEL
CENTRO SUR**

JUEVES, 18 DE ABRIL DE 2024

Excelentísimo Señor Thabo Mbeki, Presidente de la Junta del Centro Sur, Embajador Ajit Kumar, Convocante del Consejo de Representantes, Profesor Carlos Correa, Director Ejecutivo del Centro Sur, Distinguidos Miembros de la Junta Directiva, Embajadores y Colegas,

Es un placer dirigirme por primera vez al Consejo de Representantes del Centro Sur, tras mi presentación de credenciales como Representante Permanente, el pasado miércoles 27 de marzo de 2024.

Inicio mi intervención felicitando a Su Excelencia Thabo Mbeki por su reelección al frente de la Junta del Centro Sur, al tiempo que damos la bienvenida al Embajador Mohammed Idris de Egipto como nuevo miembro de la Junta y felicitamos la reelección de los miembros de India, Tanzania y Brasil.

Excelencias,

La Republica Bolivariana de Venezuela reconoce y valora la estratégica labor del Centro Sur y reitera su firme compromiso con la institución y con los objetivos que motivaron su creación, los cuales adquieren un renovado sentido de urgencia frente a la gravedad de los problemas mundiales, los efectos de la degradación ambiental y la profundización de las desigualdades sociales. El Centro Sur es, hoy, un importante aliado estratégico para la causa del sur global.

Hemos escuchado con atención el informe presentado por el Director Ejecutivo sobre las actividades del Centro y su situación financiera. Conocemos, agradecemos y valoramos su trabajo de análisis, investigación y fomento de consenso, en temas relevantes de la agenda multilateral. En este contexto, estimamos importante resaltar el impacto positivo del Centro Sur en la articulación de posiciones en el ámbito del comercio internacional, la propiedad intelectual, la salud, el desarrollo sostenible, la financiación para el desarrollo, la cooperación fiscal, los derechos humanos, la inversión, la gobernanza de Internet y la cooperación Sur-Sur.

En el caso de Venezuela, especial mención merece el apoyo recibido en la divulgación de los efectos de las medidas coercitivas unilaterales. Estimamos importante que el Centro Sur continúe su labor de visibilizar y concientizar, desde una perspectiva académica, sobre los efectos de las criminales medidas coercitivas unilaterales, no solo para los países que las sufren, sino también para la agenda de desarrollo en general. Como todos bien conocen, la utilización de medidas coercitivas unilaterales se ha convertido en una de las armas más utilizadas por los países desarrollados para enmarcar las relaciones internacionales de acuerdo a sus intereses estratégicos. Los MCU, ilegales según el derecho internacional y la Carta de la ONU, impactan severamente a los países en desarrollo, afectando no solo sus economías sino también limitando su capacidad para proteger y promover las necesidades básicas y los derechos fundamentales de su población.

Venezuela también quiere agradecer el acompañamiento recibido durante la coordinación del Grupo Latinoamericano y del Caribe en la OMPI, que fue asumida por Venezuela en el segundo semestre de 2023, así como al apoyo brindado durante los preparativos y durante la propia XIII Conferencia Ministerial de la OMC.

Un trabajo en curso que también merece ser destacado, es el relativo al proceso de negociación intergubernamental para redactar y negociar un convenio, acuerdo u otro instrumento internacional de la OMS sobre prevención, preparación y respuesta frente a pandemias. En la actual coyuntura previa a la fecha tope de la 77 Asamblea Mundial de la Salud, los análisis sobre acceso a medicamentos, patentes farmacéuticas y resistencia a los antimicrobianos adquieren un renovado sentido de prioridad.

Hoy, la labor del Centro Sur de seguir articulando posiciones es aún más necesaria para identificar el común denominador que une a sus miembros, en cada uno de los temas prioritarios de la agenda internacional. La Agenda del 2024 nos presenta como reto la Cumbre del Futuro de la ONU, el Pacto Digital Global., la negociación de un instrumento post pandemia en la OMS y la culminación de un Instrumento Jurídico Internacional relativo a la Propiedad Intelectual, los Recursos Genéticos y los Conocimientos Tradicionales Asociados a los Recursos Genéticos, en el marco de la OMPI.

Ante estos retos, quisiera culminar con un mensaje de esperanza, expresando mi convicción de que juntos seremos capaces de responder a los impostergables desafíos que los países en desarrollo debemos enfrentar y construir “el otro mundo posible”, para decirlo en los propios términos del Comandante Hugo Chávez Frías.

Muchas gracias.



**MESSAGE FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOLIVARIAN
REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA,
H.E. AMBASSADOR ALEXANDER YÁNEZ DELEUZE,
TO THE TWENTY-FOURTH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
THE SOUTH CENTRE**

THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 2024

His Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki, Chairman of the South Centre Board, Ambassador Ajit Kumar, Convener of the Council of Representatives, Professor Carlos Correa, Executive Director of the South Centre, Distinguished Members of the Board of Directors, Ambassadors and Colleagues,

It is a pleasure to address the Council of Representatives of the South Centre for the first time, after my presentation of credentials as Permanent Representative, last Wednesday, March 27, 2024.

I begin my speech by congratulating His Excellency Thabo Mbeki on his re-election as Chairman of the South Centre Board, while welcoming Ambassador Mohamed Edrees of Egypt as a new member of the Board and congratulate the re-election of the members from India, Tanzania and Brazil.

Excellencies,

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela recognizes and values the strategic work of the South Centre and reiterates its firm commitment to the institution and to the objectives that motivated its creation, which acquire a renewed sense of urgency in the face of the seriousness of global problems, the effects of environmental degradation and the deepening of social inequalities. The South Centre is, today, an important strategic ally for the cause of the global South.

We have listened carefully to the report presented by the Executive Director on the activities of the Centre and its financial situation. We are aware of, appreciate and value your work of analysis, research and consensus-building on relevant issues of the multilateral agenda. In this context, we consider it important to highlight the positive impact of the South Centre in the articulation of positions in the areas of international trade, intellectual property, health, sustainable development, financing for development, fiscal cooperation, human rights, investment, Internet governance and South-South cooperation.

In the case of Venezuela, special mention should be made of the support received in the dissemination of the effects of unilateral coercive measures. We consider it important that the South Centre continues its work to make visible and raise awareness, from an academic perspective, of the effects of criminal unilateral coercive measures, not only for the countries that suffer them, but also for the development agenda in general. As everyone is well aware, the use of unilateral coercive measures has become one of the most widely used weapons by developed countries to frame international relations according to their strategic interests. The use of unilateral coercive measures is unlawful under international law and the UN Charter. It severely impacts developing countries and affects not only their economies but also limits their ability to protect and promote the basic needs and fundamental rights of their populations.

Venezuela would also like to thank the support received during the coordination of the Latin American and Caribbean Group at the WIPO, which was assumed by Venezuela in the second

half of 2023, as well as the support provided during the preparations and during the WTO XIII Ministerial Conference.

An ongoing work that also deserves to be highlighted is related to the intergovernmental negotiation process to draft and negotiate a WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on prevention, preparedness and response to pandemics. At the current juncture in the run-up to the 77th World Health Assembly, analyses on access to medicines, pharmaceutical patents and antimicrobial resistance take a renewed sense of priority.

Today, the work of the South Centre to continue articulating positions is even more necessary to identify the common denominator that unites its members in each of the priority issues of the international agenda. The 2024 Agenda presents us with the challenge of the UN Future Summit, the Global Digital Pact, the negotiation of a post-pandemic instrument in the WHO and the culmination of an International Legal Instrument related to Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge Associated with Genetic Resources within the framework of WIPO.

In view of these challenges, I would like to conclude with a message of hope, expressing my conviction that together we will be able to respond to the urgent challenges that developing countries must face and build "the other possible world," to put it in the words of Commander Hugo Chávez Frías.

Thank you very much.

**STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY MR NESBERT SAMASUWO,
CHARGE D’AFFAIRES A.I. AT THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE IN
GENEVA AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AT
THE 24TH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
THE SOUTH CENTRE: 18 APRIL 2024**

**Chairperson of the South Centre Board, H.E. Mr Thabo Mbeki, former
President of the Republic of South Africa**

**Convener of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre, H.E.
Ambassador Ajit Kumar**

Distinguished Board Members

Executive Director

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Allow me to extend sincere appreciation to you all for convening this 24th Meeting of the Council of Representative of the South Centre.

We extend our profound thanks to the Executive Director for his comprehensive Annual Report for the year 2023 – a year which we had hoped would signal recovery and revival, but which proved instead, to be one of the most challenging years ever for developing and least developed countries: as we struggled on an increasingly uneven and inequitable playing field, to breathe new life into our economies and to build resilience after the devastating COVID-19 pandemic.

The multilateral system which we have so painstakingly constructed over the past decades has come under increasing strain – the consequences of intensifying geopolitical tensions, the politicisation of literally every issue and the resultant polarisation between and among nations, all of which

have militated against the kind of collective and collaborative cooperation required if, as developing countries, we are to regain traction and to recover ground lost, in particular with the full realisation that only 15% of the Sustainable Development Goals are on track.

Throughout this period, and as the Annual Report clearly reflects, the South Centre has proved to be a consistent companion – informing, guiding and advising our countries on a wide range of critical topics; providing detailed analysis, research-based data and proffering well-argued policy options on pressing issues. These include climate change, health and trade in all its forms and the symbiotic relationship between trade and development, the issues of food security, intellectual property, debt, development finance, burgeoning migration specifically labour migration and of great concern to my country as well as a growing number of countries, the issue of unilateral coercive measures (UCMs). These illegal sanctions or so-called targeted measures continue to inflict widespread damage to lives and livelihoods of millions of ordinary citizens in our countries.

We particularly appreciated the meeting organized by the South Centre with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Negative Impact of the Unilateral Coercive Measures on the Enjoyment of Human Rights, Professor Alena Douhan in November 2023. The meeting proposed very useful insights on measures that should be adopted to mitigate the impact of and increasing resort to the use of UCMs.

We encourage the South Centre to continue to focus on this issue and hope that, through tight academic research and further scientific analysis, it will contribute to the growing body of empirical evidence proving their far-reaching and draconian impact on vulnerable economies.

In short Chair, we express our deep appreciation and continued support for the manner and consistency with which the South Centre has stayed the course in fulfilling its mission as a think-tank and advisor to the Global South.

As we look ahead, prospects for the Global South continue to be encumbered by the multiple crises and challenges I enumerated earlier which are being compounded by the resurgence of unilateralism and protectionism and as already mentioned, an unravelling of our multilateral system.

These challenges have of course been exacerbated by the outbreak of conflict in various regions- with disruptive impacts on the supply and cost of food, agricultural inputs and energy and the drag-effect all of these factors have on our efforts to recover.

Against this background and as we step up our efforts in different fora, it is clear that the role of the South Centre and its contribution, in terms of guiding and enriching our developmental efforts, are more important than ever. We continue to rely on the South Centre's work and support to unpack and fully understand technically complex issues and to assist our delegations in formulating and consolidating positions within the on-going multilateral engagements.

Indeed, for the South Centre to continue and even increase its invaluable work and, in response to the report on the current financial situation, it is clear that more needs to be done to ensure that the South Centre is adequately resourced. This includes inter alia, the need for all members to meet their financial obligations. As I conclude, let me reiterate Zimbabwe's strong commitment to and support for the South Centre, and our determination to honour our dues and financial obligations.

I thank you