

Posted on November 28, 2018

Global South-South Development Expo 2018

Remarks at the High-Level Opening Ceremony of the Global South-South Development Expo 2018



South-South cooperation is playing a growing role, whereby countries of the South work collaboratively, sharing innovation, knowledge, expertise, technologies and financial resources. Credit: UNDP.

As prepared for delivery

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Colleagues

I am very honored to join you for the opening of the 2018 Global South-South Development Expo and would like to thank the team of the UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), which UNDP has proudly hosted since 1974, for convening this very important forum.

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, we have witnessed an unprecedented level of political commitment and leadership to address complex and intractable development challenges, including persistent poverty and inequalities, climate change, rapid urbanization, and lack of inclusive growth.

Addressing these challenges and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires a fundamental shift in the way we articulate and manage our international cooperation framework. We need to evolve our instruments, from traditional grant aid to broad-based partnerships – as recognized in Goal 17. In this context, South-South cooperation is playing a growing role, whereby countries of the South work collaboratively, sharing innovation, knowledge, expertise, technologies and financial resources.

Developing countries have proven, time and again, their abilities to catalyze support among countries that share similar development contexts, challenges, and offer cost-effective solutions. These efforts need to be harnessed and scaled-up, in a complementary manner to North-South Cooperation, so that they can spur transformational change.

In the coming days we will all have an opportunity to take stock of some of the experiences to illustrate examples of how “Southern” solutions are leveraged to leave no one behind.

This Expo is also a particularly timely opportunity to refine our collective thinking on the transformational potential of South-South Cooperation before the upcoming fortieth anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA+40 Conference, in March 2019).

We at UNDP look to “BAPA+40” as instrumental to explicitly and increasingly connect South-South Cooperation to Agenda 2030. UNDP has long been at the forefront of these efforts at the country level, strengthening exchanges of knowledge, technology innovation and development solutions.

The ongoing reforms of the UN development system have given UNDP an unprecedented opportunity to transform itself for a “new age of development”, serving as the support platform of the UN development system and providing an integrator function to countries in support of their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda.

South-South Cooperation is a cornerstone element of our contemporary approach to development. Our expanding global network of collaborating Country Offices, programmes and policy centers enables us to look at development as a systemic and complex response to multiple factors. As an integrator, we place this network at the service of governments and the UN development system at large to translate global and regional knowledge of solutions that can be rapidly expanded and made available – very much in the spirit of South-South Cooperation.

For example, I am pleased to announce that by the end of 2019 we will have rolled out a network of up to 60 country-based accelerator labs to utilize new methods and approaches to scaling up SDG implementation and enhance countries' capacities to achieve them.

In conclusion, let us reiterate, as proud hosts of the UN Office for South-South Cooperation, our unreserved commitment to furthering the South-South Cooperation agenda, to continuing to host the UN Office for South-South Cooperation, and to the BAPA+40 process: we are convinced of the intrinsic and instrumental value of the 2019 Conference for UNDP, and for the rest of the UN System.

We count on the many representatives of the Global South here today to seize this unique opportunity to capture and infuse knowledge where knowledge is needed to make a difference.

Thank you.

Filed under: Speeches Administrator Agenda 2030 South-South cooperation