LATIN AMERICAN/CARIBBEAN SUBREGIONAL GROUPS

ANDEAN GROUP: AG — founded 1969. 5 Members: Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela.

CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY: CARICOM — founded 1973. 14 Members: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.


LATIN AMERICAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM: SELA — founded 1975. 27 members: Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

LATIN AMERICAN INTEGRATION ASSOCIATION: LAIA — founded 1980. 12 Members: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela.

AFRICAN SUBREGIONAL GROUPS

ARAB MAGHREB UNION: UMA — founded 1989. 5 Members: Algeria, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia.


MANO RIVER UNION: MRU — founded 1973. 3 Members: Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone.


ASIAN SUBREGIONAL GROUPS

ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS: ASEAN — founded 1967. 10 Members: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam.

BANGKOK AGREEMENT: founded 1975. 6 Members: Bangladesh, China (joined 2001), India, Laos, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka.

ECONOMIC COOPERATION ORGANIZATION: ECO — founded 1992. 10 Members: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan.

GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL: GCC — founded 1981. 6 Members: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates.


The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations, the UN Development Programme or of governments.

The designations employed and material presented do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the legal status of any country or territory.
THE GLOBAL SOUTH

T
he use of the term “South” to refer to developing countries collectively has been part of the shorthand of international relations since the 1970s. It rests on the fact that all of the world’s industrialized countries (with the exception of Australia and New Zealand) lie to the north of its developing countries. The term does not imply that all developing countries are similar and can be lumped together in one category. What it does highlight is that although developing countries range across the spectrum in every economic, social and political attribute, they all share a set of vulnerabilities and challenges. The listings below (continued on the inside back cover) show some of the major groupings that constitute the global south.

AFRICA

Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cote d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe

North Africa: Algeria, Egypt, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia.

ASIA

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Democratic Peoples’ Republic of Korea, Republic of Korea, Lao Peoples’ Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor Leste, Viet Nam

Central Asia: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

West Asia: Bahrain, Cyprus, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen

Pacific Islands: Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

LATIN AMERICA/Caribbean

Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela

Caribbean: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago

GROUPS DEFINED BY ECONOMIC STATUS

Major Petroleum Exporters (20): Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Brunei Darussalam, Congo, Gabon, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nigeria, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela, Yemen

Major Exporters of Manufactures (12): Brazil, China, China (Taiwan Province), India, Malaysia, Mexico, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey.

Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (42): Angola, Benin, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cote d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Kenya, Lao Peoples’ Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Niger, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia


SOURCE OF COUNTRY CATEGORIES: UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics 2002

UNDP is the UN’s global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life.

Cooperation South

Cooperation South is the twice-yearly journal of the Special Unit that goes to key policy-makers in the South, United Nations research libraries and multi-lateral development organizations. It is a strategic tool for the dissemination of information and analyses on development issues and to mobilize support for South-South cooperation. Issues of the journal have highlighted a wide range of South-South policy options and promising areas for collaboration in 2001-2002. Cooperation South explored policies buttressing the use of information and communications technology as a development tool. It also covered such topics as globalization, its impact on social policies and approaches to building intellectual property rights regimes that are capable of rewarding creativity and securing the access of the poor to the benefits of modern science, such as essential HIV/AIDS drugs.

Cooperation South is available in English, French and Spanish and is accessible electronically through the Web of Information for Development (WIDE) at http://tcdd.undp.org.

continued on inside back cover
n 2003 the UN General Assembly changed the name of UNDP’s Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC), to reflect a new reality in international affairs. The new name — Special Unit for South-South Cooperation — covers a far broader range of activities the Unit undertakes than was possible when it was created nearly three decades ago to coordinate preparations for the 1978 Conference on TCDC in Buenos Aires.

It is fitting that the United Nations acknowledge this change, for it has provided the framework for strategic planning and coordination of South-South cooperation from the very beginning. Countries facing similar challenges of economic and social development have shared experiences and learned from one another in UN forums and through UN sponsored projects and programmes. They have pooled their resources, addressed common weaknesses, and sought to build a better world.

The importance of such cooperation cannot be overemphasized in a period of rapid globalization. The affluence of the North is built on strong and interactive webs of cooperation, and it is imperative that the “global South” follow suit if the gross imbalance between developed and developing countries is to be remedied. The Millennium Development Goals set out by the General Assembly in 2000 will be much easier to attain if South-South cooperation is a fundamental element of governmental policy and practice.

It is heartening to see how much progress has been made since the Buenos Aires Conference; at the same time, it is sobering to see how much more has to be done. This booklet was first issued for the 25th anniversary since the Buenos Aires Plan of Action on TCDC was endorsed by the General Assembly. It is now reissued in updated form for the first observation of the International Day for South-South Cooperation, as not only, a marker of progress but an introduction to the challenges that still face us all.

Yiping Zhou
Director
UNDP Special Unit for South-South Cooperation
We share one planet and a common humanity. If the developing countries live under the yoke of poverty and deprivation, if they are unable to improve their lot by having a fair share in the new world of international trade and investment, the cause of development will suffer. And if development suffers, so will international peace, security and the environment. Many developed countries are very aware of the facts and have accordingly given strong support to South-South cooperation over the years. During the Cold War, peace and security tended to be defined simply in terms of military might or the balance of terror. Today, we know that lasting peace requires a broader vision, encompassing education and literacy, health and nutrition, human rights and fundamental freedoms. We know we cannot be secure amidst starvation. We cannot build peace without alleviating poverty. We cannot build freedom on foundations of injustice.

In today’s interdependent world, the profit motive and the development motive must go hand in hand. They must be seen as two sides of the same coin. With greater cooperation, I believe our new partnerships among the countries of the South supported by the North can help unlock the economic potential of an underdeveloped world, for the world community as a whole.

Secretary-General Kofi Annan
Interview in Cooperation South, 1998

A New Concept

The concept of international cooperation for development is relatively new. It came to life with the United Nations Charter, which promises to “promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom” and to “employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social progress of all peoples.”

The creation of international organizations in the 1940s and 1950s was a major step in this direction. In 1947, for example, the International Civil Aviation Organization was established to promote the development of safe and orderly international air navigation. In 1948, the World Health Organization was created to promote international cooperation in the field of public health.

These examples of cooperation among developing countries would have seemed unlikely when the United Nations began its first technical assistance programme in 1949, but they are so common now that most of those involved are quite unaware that they are implementing policies recommended by a United Nations Conference. The Conference was on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC), and it was held in Buenos Aires (Argentina) in 1978. This booklet looks at the legacy of that Conference and considers its impact and potential as the world swirls into a period of rapid globalization that holds great promise as well as numerous risks for developing countries.

When the General Assembly (in its resolution 200 of 4 December 1948) called for international cooperation for development, it was clear that a new concept was emerging. This concept, which came to life with the United Nations Charter, promises to “promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom” and to “employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social progress of all peoples.”
national teams of experts to advise “underdeveloped” countries on remedying their technological “backwardness”, the assumption was that visiting experts from industrially developed countries could transfer the skills necessary for development to countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. After a number of years, when it became evident that progress could not be effectively spread in that manner, developing countries — their numbers in the UN swelling rapidly because of decolonization — pressed for change. They wanted two things. One was to increase the institutional capacity of the UN System to respond to their economic and social needs, which happened relatively quickly (see inside back cover), and the other was to change the international economic system that had been shaped during the colonial period, which proved far more difficult.

The Buenos Aires Conference was convened four years after the UN General Assembly in New York called for a “New International Economic Order” (NIEO). Most of the delegates who participated in it

social advancement of all peoples”. Governments made that unprecedented commitment because they had witnessed during the preceding decades the dire consequences of a lack of international cooperation. It was in this context that international markets collapsed in the Great Depression of the 1930s, which created the social and political conditions for the rise to power of undemocratic regimes and set in motion the train of events that led to the Second World War. International cooperation to advance the interests of all people had come to be seen as being in the highest self-interest of all countries.

The idea received global attention in President Harry Truman’s 1949 inaugural speech and by August of that year, the Economic and Social Council decided to establish the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance, the precursor of the UN Development Programme.

Is South-South Cooperation Still Relevant?

When the Buenos Aires Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries was held, most developing countries believed in the efficacy of command economies. How relevant is South-South cooperation in an age dominated by belief in free markets?

The answer is yes. Not only is South-South cooperation still relevant, the market-driven approach to development has made it more important than ever. Without agreements on rules and regulations, standards and quality, without payment arrangements, dispute settlement mechanisms and enforcement machinery, developing countries could not develop strong regional markets. Developing countries must have the capacity to cooperate on the basis of their shared interests and economic and social needs if they are to benefit from global markets based on multiple levels of coordination and cooperation among the major players.

— Mark Malloch Brown, Administrator United Nations Development Programme

“‘Building bridges across the South’ was the old motto for South-South cooperation. Today, we need to think more in terms of placing the South on the 21st century’s global super highways.”
had been through several years of inconclusive negotiations on how to bring about a new economic order. They came to the Conference convinced that cooperation among developing countries and their collective self-reliance were essential supplements to their cooperation with developed countries.

### Buenos Aires Plan of Action

The Plan of Action adopted by the Buenos Aires Conference was put together by an extensive process of expert and political consultations around the world. By the time the Conference met, the detailed findings of the preparatory period had been distilled into a set of broadly indicative recommendations. Though 38 in number and oriented to national, regional and global constituencies, the recommendations can be summed up generically as follows:

➤ Developing countries should take stock of their available capabilities, skills and experience and share information about them.

➤ They should establish and strengthen the expertise, institutions, arrangements,
information flows, and transport and communications links necessary to pool their resources for the common good.

They should identify and make effective use of existing opportunities for cooperation, paying special attention to the needs of the least developed, the landlocked and island developing countries.

Focus Areas
Without “implying an indication of priority”, the Conference noted a number of areas in which its recommendations should be implemented. These were: “employment and development of human resources, fisheries, food and agriculture, health, industrialization, information, integration of women in development, monetary and financial cooperation, raw materials, science and technology, technical cooperation and consultancy services, telecommunications, tourism, trade, and transport and communications”. According to the Conference participants, the recommendations “should also facilitate the formulation of programmes of cooperation in other sectors”.

Ongoing Support
While acknowledging that developing countries should be primarily responsible for financing TCDC, the Conference urged broad support from developed countries, asking them to increase development aid “on a predictable, assured and continuous basis”. The “entire United Nations development system must be permeated by the spirit of TCDC, and all its organizations should play a prominent role as promoters and catalysts of cooperation for development”. 

A Special Programme on Food Security
The Special Programme for Food Security of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has sent over 2,600 agricultural experts and technicians from 20 advanced developing countries to work directly with farmers in rural communities in other developing countries. They work on all aspects of food security, including irrigation, plant nutrition and soil fertility, marketing, cooperatives, rural credit and finance, seed production, agricultural engineering, and animal and crop production. The countries sending the experts meet their salary and other home-based entitlements; the host government meets local costs, including travel, accommodation and medical insurance; and FAO provides for international travel and a small subsistence allowance. (http://www.fao.org/spfs/southsouth_en.stm)

Disease Surveillance Networks
South-South cooperation is a key element of the ground-breaking work that the World Health Organization does in collecting and analysing information and in its campaigns directed against specific diseases. The global disease surveillance network that WHO maintains pools the resources and capacities
of laboratories, vital registration systems, service systems and sentinel sites. Its regional offices support a range of networks that both generate and use information. These regional networks have also helped to spread the influence of the agency’s normative work, supporting 70 countries in creating full national health accounts.

**Broad Partnership Fights AIDS**

The International Partnership against AIDS in Africa is the world’s largest example of intensified South-South cooperation focused on a single urgent issue. It is a coalition under the leadership of African governments that brings together donors, community activists, businesses and the UN System. UNAIDS sees this South-South coalition as exemplifying “preeminently a 21st century strategy” because it reflects the empowering reality of shared knowledge: “Nowhere is this demonstrated more clearly than the emerging influence of South to South contact as a strategy to drive down the price of AIDS drugs.”

**Monitoring Progress**

To monitor implementation of the Plan of Action, the UN General Assembly created a High Level Committee (HLC) of all States participating in the UN Development Programme. After its first two meetings in 1980 and 1981, the HLC has convened every two years to consider reports submitted by the UNDP Special Unit for TCDC. The reports reflect input from TCDC focal points at the national level and in all agencies of the UN development system. Although the reporting by focal points is far from comprehensive, the information collected over the years points to the following conclusions:

1. South-South cooperation has become a mainstream modality in all regions and most sectors. Attitudinal problems left over from the colonial period, which had been seen as an obstacle to TCDC at the Buenos Aires Conference, have largely disappeared. Every UN agency uses experts and institutions from developing countries to work on projects in other developing countries. In many cases, such use is preferred, not for reasons of policy...
LatinPharma Aims at Strategic Change

Latin American countries import many pharmaceuticals from foreign transnationals that not only could be but are being produced within the region by small and medium-sized companies. A 2001 study found that Central American countries were importing 76 per cent of their essential drugs while 200 or so local companies capable of producing them were working at between 10 and 50 per cent of capacity. Under the strong South-South programme of the Geneva-based International Trade Centre (ITC), Latin American governments, corporations, academics and scientists are engaged in an ongoing effort to change such situations. By bringing buyers and sellers together, by addressing the factors that prevent use of local potential, ITC’s “LatinPharma” project is seeking to bring about strategic change in the region’s pharmaceutical market.

Organic Agriculture

AGRECOL, an NGO with a membership of farmers and their representatives from over 20 countries, has led the way in popularizing organic farming. It has mobilized organic farmers in developing countries to press for national and regional organic standards and the restructuring of the International Basic Standards and Codex Alimentarius for organically produced food. The Codex Alimentarius was established by FAO and WHO in 1962 to set safety standards in the food trade. Many developing countries have not fully participated in overseeing and implementing it because of the costs involved. Their participation is essential in a period when the food trade crosses all borders.

Regional Links Boom in Asia

Trade between India and China has grown rapidly in the last decade, from $264.8 million in 1991 to $10

but because of cost-effectiveness. The rapid economic growth of a number of developing countries and increased technical ability in many more have contributed to this success. In this sense, the implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) is on the right track.

2. Developed countries have provided substantial and increasing support for South-South cooperation, but there is a wide perception among developing countries that more needs to be done. Japan appears to have given high priority to TCDC in terms of policy and project activity.

3. Lack of resources and information about developing countries is widely perceived to be an obstacle to South-South cooperation. Effective mechanisms and institutions to coordinate and manage South-South cooperation have not been sufficiently developed. More Governments need to create national databases of experts and capabilities in the South.

4. Much has changed in the 25 years since the Buenos Aires Conference, and so have the policies governing TCDC activities.
In looking at the evolution of South-South policy, we need to consider three dimensions: what actually happened in the decades after the Buenos Aires Conference; the response of the developing countries; and the framework of UN development policy.

The History

The two decades that followed the Buenos Aires Conference were very difficult for most developing countries. Rampant inflation combined with a major recession in the biggest developed countries closed off expectations that the 1970s boom in energy prices could be spread to other commodity exports of developing countries. On the contrary, the prices of commodities on which Southern countries were heavily dependent for export income went into a steep decline. Caught in a squeeze between the crashing prices of their exports and high inflation in the prices of their imports, many developing countries found it impossible to repay the substantial debts they had assumed.

The 1990s brought little relief. Although the Cold War ended, the expected “peace dividend” did not materialize. Instead, development assistance went into a steep, decade-long decline. By 2000, the debt service payments of developing countries accounted for 6.3 per cent of their GDP. Net foreign direct investment then was 2.5 per cent and aid amounted to 0.5 per cent (Source: HDR 2002). Developing countries as a group had
become net exporters of capital. Many African countries during this period were additionally plagued by the AIDS pandemic and by a proliferation of armed conflicts. Instead of focusing entirely on development, technical cooperation and financial aid were diverted to humanitarian relief and post-conflict recovery.

Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates). In 1983, GCC members abolished all customs duties on trade in agricultural, animal, industrial and natural resources of indigenous origin. In 1988, they decided to aim for a common band of tariffs for imports from nonmember countries, and in 2001, a unified customs tariff was agreed upon (for implementation in 2003). A common patent office has been established, there is free movement of professionals among GCC countries, and professional qualifications in one member State are accepted in all others. Plans call for the adoption of a common currency in 2010.

MERCOSUR: Success and Challenges

The progress of MERCOSUR, the five-member Common Market of the South (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and, since July 2004, Venezuela) exemplifies the rocky road of South-South cooperation. By the end of 1994, MERCOSUR member States, with a population base of over 200 million and combined GDP of over a trillion dollars, had eliminated tariffs on 90 per cent of regional trade. In 1995, they agreed on a common tariff structure covering some 85 per cent of imports from outside the region, and the following year, established a secretariat in Montevideo and a development bank to finance regional projects. The same year, MERCOSUR signed free trade agreements with its two associate members, Bolivia and Chile. At the end of the 1990s, however, a number of severe problems developed because of economic crises in Argentina and Brazil. According to the Inter-American Development Bank, intra-MERCOSUR trade, which had grown at an average of 16 per cent for a decade, fell by 46 per cent in 2001 and a further 37 per cent in 2002. As a percentage of its total trade, intra-MERCOSUR exchanges fell from 20 per cent in 2000 to 11 per cent in 2002. Despite these setbacks, MERCOSUR and the Andean Community (see page 10) have vigorously pursued a joint free trade area. An agreement on that was signed on April 5 and formally adopted at a July 1 a MERCOSUR-CAN summit in Quito.
implemented, the history of G-77 recommendations is worth noting:

**Caracas (1981):** A High-level Conference on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries urged negotiations on a Global System of Trade Preferences (GSTP) among developing countries, joint initiatives in marketing and technology transfers, an expert study of the proposal for a “solidarity fund” and a bank for developing countries.

**Cairo (1986):** The Ministerial meeting of the G-77 introduced three new elements to the agenda of the South. It called for a “sector by sector scale of priorities”; encouraged the “participation of non-government entities” in South-South cooperation; and “underlined the interrelationship between peace, security, development and economic cooperation among developing countries”. It “stressed the importance of settling all disputes among developing countries by peaceful means”.

**San Jose (1997):** Meeting 17 years after the adoption of the Caracas Programme of Action, G-77 ministers took stock of a world that had been transformed by the end of the Cold War, the swift onset of the digital age, and the rapidly accelerating processes of globalization. The meeting said it “would be desirable to develop and strengthen a partnership” among the public and private sectors, entrepreneurs, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and civil society.

To help the landlocked and small island developing countries, the meeting called for bilateral and regional agreements on transport operations, joint ventures on transit transport, and the strengthening of institutions and
Decentralized Cooperation

Every developing country is part of a regional cooperation or integration effort; most are members of several such groupings. Because of a number of constraints, few efforts at regional cooperation have succeeded. In recent years, different formulae to sidestep many of those problems have emerged, including special economic zones that span borders and joint management of common resources. The most prominent example of micro-regionalism is the UNDP-supported Tumen River Area Development Project, which covers an economically depressed area lying along the natural border of China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation. With Mongolia and the Republic of Korea also participating, the project has the potential not only for economic growth but also for political confidence-building. Other examples of decentralized cooperation involve the development of the Mekong delta and protection of the Caspian and Black Sea environments.

South Asia

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) was established in 1985 with a narrow technical focus, but it has extended its reach into the environmental, social and security areas. Its 11 technical committees exchange information, formulate programmes and prepare projects on: agriculture, communications, education, culture and sports, environment and meteorology, health and population activities, prevention of drug trafficking and abuse, rural development, science and technology, tourism, transport and women’s development. One of the results of cooperation is a SAARC Food Security Reserve, maintained at a minimum level of 200,000 metric tons of food grains. Five SAARC Regional Centres focus on agricultural information (Bangladesh), tuberculosis prevention (Nepal), meteorological research...
developing countries over the years had not been “commensurate with the comprehensive nature” of the commitments they had made. To overcome “whatever factors have limited this cooperation”, it proposed a set of institutional measures unprecedented in specificity and scope. The Summit recommended that the G-77 Chairman’s office in New York be upgraded to a “compact executive secretariat” and that all G-77 members contribute $5,000 (or more) annually to support it. An additional $10-million fund was proposed to help implement the other decisions of the Summit, which included a review of all existing South-South cooperation programmes with a view to identifying complementarities; coordination of the networking of research institutions in the South to improve the analytical ability available to the Group; and the publication of an annual report on South-South cooperation in collaboration with the UNDP Special Unit for TCDC.

Other recommendations were to convene groups of experts (acting in their individual capacities) to review the agendas of major multilateral conferences and guide developing countries regarding their desirable outcome; to develop a “vulnerability index” focusing attention on the risks of globalization for mainly agrarian developing countries; and to create a mechanism for “monitoring, analysis, identification, management and follow-up” to ensure the effectiveness of South-South cooperation. Finally, the Summit recommended that G-77 Heads of State and Government meet again in 2005.

Tehran (2001): The tenth session of the Intergovernmental Follow-Up and Coordina-

**UNDP: Leader in TCDC**

When the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was created in 1965 by combining earlier UN programmes, it oversaw the deployment of experts and funds to a multiplicity of projects in developing countries. As each government receiving technical assistance could undertake whichever project it wanted, there was little coherence in UNDP activities. Today the situation is far different. UNDP has focused its activities on a number of practice areas within a global cooperation framework (GCF) that reflects the overarching policy objectives of reducing poverty and social iniquity and promoting human development. The GCF strengthens the capacity of developing countries to learn from and use the accumulated store of experience and knowledge on four critical dimensions of development: globalization, participation, growth and crises.

The GCF allows UNDP global programmes and policy support to be integrated in three key ways that promote South-South cooperation:

- closer vertical integration, linking country, regional and global programmes to reinforce major policy shifts;

**continued on next page**

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**Cooperation Timeline**

- Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries meets in Buenos Aires.
- UN General Assembly meets in Special Session on Disarmament.
- General Assembly adopts Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women.
tion Committee on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries called for a consolidation of the “South Platform” to bridge the gap between agreed aims and performance. It urged that the G-77 Secretariat in New York be strengthened and that a “South Report” be launched on cooperation among developing countries.

Dubai (2002): A Conference on Science and Technology (attended by some 150 scientists as well as officials from over 70 countries) reaffirmed the need to establish a network of research institutions of the South and called for a study of the funding and institutional support that would be necessary. The scientists called on G-77 governments to increase funding for science and technology by 2.5% of the gross national product (GNP) by the year 2010.

UN Framework
In the last 25 years, the conceptualization of development at the United Nations has changed dramatically. Where once it was seen as a simple process of training people in science and technology and building the industrial productive capacity necessary to raise the GNP, it is now envisaged as an enriching economic and social transformation centred on human well-being. The unsustainable use of the natural environment has been replaced by a core concern for the environmental sustainability of human activity. Questions of social equity, gender discrimination and quality of governance that were never thought relevant are now issues inseparable from development. In addition to philosophical change, there have been the political trans-
formations brought on by the end of the Cold War and the reconfiguration of space and time by new information and communications technologies. The impact of all this on South-South cooperation has been framed by the imperative process of rapid globalization.

Taking stock of the changes described above, the General Assembly in 1995 adopted a resolution calling for “new directions” in TCDC. It urged “a more strategic orientation” for TCDC focused “on priority issues...which are likely to have a major development impact on a large number of developing countries”. The priorities noted were trade and investment, debt, the environment, poverty alleviation, production and employment, macroeconomic policy coordination, education, health, the transfer of technology and rural development.

To increase resources for TCDC, the General Assembly endorsed “triangular cooperation” (finance from developed countries supportive of TCDC) and private-sector funding. All specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the UN System were asked to provide analytical and empirical material to the Special Unit for the preparation of biennial progress reports to the HLC on South-South cooperation.

Key Support Role
The Unit is the secretariat of the General Assembly’s High Level Committee on South-South Cooperation and prepares all substantive reports submitted to intergovernmental bodies for consideration by delegates. It coordinates the promotion of South-South cooperation within the UN System, and is the contact point of UNDP with the Group of 77. In that capacity it works with other UNDP bureaus to provide substantive support for G-77 delegations when requested.

Significant Programmes
The Unit supports activities in key strategic areas including health (promotion of traditional knowledge), private sector development, the environment and information and communication technology. One of the latest achievements resulting from the Unit’s activities is the development by an international research network supported by Japan, of a new variety of rice, called New...
Rice for Africa (NERICA), which is suited to African growing conditions. The Special Unit supported the creation of the NERICA Consortium for Food Security in sub-Saharan Africa to implement the African Rice Initiative (ARI), which aims to increase the dissemination of NERICA varieties in Africa. ARI has been recognized by the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) as one of the most promising initiatives for the improvement of food security in Africa. The dissemination of additional NERICA varieties, including rain-fed lowland types, has the potential to increase African rice production to over 744,000 tons, which would replace imports costing some $88 million yearly by 2006.

Other initiatives have promoted policy dialogue among developing countries on such critical development issues as urban environmental management to build an eco-society, and management of water demand. An initiative for policy dialogue to develop institutional capacities for management of water demand in the Middle East and North Africa region covers wastewater reuse, water valuation, privatization and decentralization. A series of forums since 2002 has brought together experts and practitioners, resulting in a network that supports the implementation of best practices in the management of water demand in participating countries. Canada’s International Development Research Centre and the Canadian International Development Agency have played a key role in this project.

The Sharing of Information

Knowledge-sharing is an essential component of cooperation for development, so promoting it is at the heart of the work of the Special Unit. A large share of this work includes the documentation of development practices and the creation of a platform for the dissemination of information on expertise in developing countries.

The publication of the series Sharing Innovative Experiences facilitates the identification and documentation of successful development.

Central and Eastern Europe, Malta and Turkey; in Latin America and the Caribbean, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago. These “pivotal countries” account for the bulk of the world’s population, include its fastest-growing economies, and have huge potential for trade and other forms of interaction among themselves.

Since the adoption of the “new directions” resolution, there has been energized cooperation among the pivotal countries in every region, and major world conferences have noted the importance of South-South cooperation. The 2001 Brussels Conference on Least Developed Countries said that South-South cooperation had an important role in LDC development and set out priority areas. The 2002 Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development emphasized South-South and triangular-cooperation approaches to capacity-building in developing countries. It called for enhanced South-South cooperation in building financial infrastructure and improving human resources as well as financial regulation and supervision, public administration, formulation of gender-sensitive budget policies attuned to social needs, debt management, early warning and crisis prevention.

A quarter century after the Buenos Aires Conference, cooperation among developing countries has a proven track record and acknowledged value. But the Plan of Action has not been fully implemented, and collective self-reliance and increased capacity to integrate into the world economy remain distant goals for most developing countries.
The various transformations of the world in the last few decades have not changed the basic concerns of developing countries. Equitable participation in the world economy and building greater capacity to deal effectively with a range of severe internal problems remain their twin objectives. The lack of evolution in the basic positions of developing countries reflects the fact that the nature of the problems they face — rooted in the gross inequalities between the world’s rich and poor — has not changed. The richest five per cent of the world’s people have 114 times the income of the poorest five per cent. The richest one per cent has as much income as the poorest 57 per cent. While per capita income in most of the world has increased steadily over the last four decades, in Africa it has declined.

The dynamics of cooperation among developing countries have, however, been profoundly affected by the dramatic changes in the world’s ideological and technological map. The end of the Cold War made globalization politically feasible and added urgent new imperatives to South-South cooperation. The new information and communications technologies have opened up opportunities for such cooperation that are unprecedented in scope and potential. The induction of business, civil society and non-governmental organizations into the South-South process has energized it and broadened the predominantly economic and

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### Expanding Inter-regional Links

Several initiatives of the Special Unit involve strengthening capacity in African countries with help from partners in other regions. The aim is to build local-level institutions for poverty alleviation. With support from Japan, the Special Unit began preparatory work in November 2002 on a programme for African capacity development in local governance and economic development. The aim is to facilitate the growth of two local governance networks in Africa and Asia that will help the Member countries to collaborate and draw on one another’s experience for country-level

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technological focus of TCDC to include issues of governance, corporate responsibility and human rights.

The following paragraphs highlight some of the multiple challenges facing developing countries. In every case, remedies to existing problems would be facilitated by technical and economic cooperation among countries of the South.

Trade
International trade has entered a new era in which the traditional capacity of governments to set rules and regulations at every national border is being replaced by a rule-based regime under the auspices of by the World Trade Organization in Geneva. However, most developing countries need to enhance their capacity to participate effectively in the WTO rule-making process and to promote their interests better within the existing regulatory framework. South-South cooperation would go a long way to remedy the existing deficits in their capacity to negotiate.

initiatives. This initiative, which is carried out in partnership with the Bureau for Development Policy, is an example of the efforts of the Special Unit to integrate South-South cooperation into UNDP practices, with the specific aim of building governance environments conducive to socio-economic development.

Also with support from Japan, the Special Unit has organized forums for African and Asian businesses to catalyse investment and technology transfer at the enterprise level. Existing arrangements to establish business linkages between African and Asian entrepreneurs are being transformed by the Special Unit, which is working to create an electronic platform that empowers companies participating in the Africa-Asia Business Forum to identify partners in either region over the Internet.

Recognizing the role of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in economic development in Africa, a programme was initiated in 2001 to establish a Technonet Africa to replicate Technonet Asia, which has over 30 years of experience in the promotion of Asian SMEs.

Another initiative is designed to develop the capacity of African bankers in development financing, with technical assistance from Asian financial institutions. The programme has taken African bank executives and trainers to Asian financial institutions. Institutions in Malaysia and the Philippines have played a pioneering role in making this possible.

An environmental management initiative of the Special Unit brings together three Asian countries (Bangladesh, Malaysia and Thailand) and 10 African countries (Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cote d’Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo) in efforts to protect endangered coastal and marine resources in the Gulf of Guinea. Cameroon has asked for the expansion of the programme as a confidence-building measure among Cameroonians and Nigerian fishermen living in the previously contested Bakasi area.

Under the Africa-Asia Eco-partnership Programme, the Special Unit has undertaken initiatives in solid waste management, air pollution control and wastewater management in five African cities (Accra, Addis Ababa, Dar es Salaam, Lagos and Nairobi) and six Asian
cities (Bangkok, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Marikina, Phnom Penh and Tokyo). The programme builds public-private partnerships and community participation.

An initiative by the Special Unit to train trainers in science and technology education through an electronic platform has attracted a number of partners from developing countries, including Angola, Brazil, Cameroon, China, Cote d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gambia, India, Kazakhstan, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mozambique, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Pivotal Countries
The countries that have been formally recognized as ‘pivotal’ to South-South cooperation have committed substantial resources and have multifaceted programmes. China has a diverse portfolio of cooperation projects with other developing countries and decided in 2000 that it would reduce or cancel some $1.2 billion in debt owed mostly by African Least Developed Countries. India’s bilateral programme of cooperation with other developing countries has committed some $2 billion since it was established in 1964, and nationals of 154 countries have participated in its variety of scholarship and training programs. Brazil consults annually with Latin American and Caribbean countries before drawing up its cooperation programmes that are funded from national and multilateral sources. Three of the pivotal countries — India, Brazil and South Africa — initiated in 2003 a joint program on poverty alleviation that is to be operated with their funding through UNDP.

It is not just large developing countries that have made significant contributions. Singapore spends millions on its portfolio of South-South projects, much of it dedicated to training programmes that have included over 7,000 nationals from 133 countries. Sri Lanka has trained personnel from its region in areas of indigenous expertise,
including the extraction and use of banana fibre, wind power and crab breeding. Countries have often cooperated on an interregional basis. Cuba has provided medical experts and health-care systems to many countries outside the Latin America and Caribbean region. In Africa, Benin, Seychelles and Uganda have worked through joint commissions with other developing countries to identify TCDC priorities. India has run programmes on farming and entrepreneurship development in Burkina Faso, Namibia and Senegal.

South-South Cooperation has spread to non-traditional areas: in designing its ombudsman system, Peru drew on Guatemala’s experience with its Peace Commission (which helped to bring its long-standing civil war to an end) and on South Africa’s use of a post-apartheid “Truth Commission.” As part of its active S-S programme, Venezuela in recent years has funded capacity-building activities in a number of developing countries. Some TCDC projects are tailored to very specific needs: Malaysia developed a training programme just for diplomats and public servants in Myanmar.

In facing new challenges, developing countries have pooled resources and forged new partnerships among themselves and with non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations. Indonesia has hosted a series of interregional brainstorming sessions on issues relevant to globalization. Working with the South Centre and the Third World Network, governments have articulated joint positions on trade and investment policies and prepared the South agenda for global negotiations. A project funded by the Organization of American States and led by Peru to study the impact of El Niño has involved the cooperation of Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Panama.

Triangular Cooperation

Developed countries have provided vital support for South-South cooperation, particularly in the area of human resource development, research and institutional capacity-building. Aid is being increasingly targeted at groups of countries or

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institutions that address overarching thematic issues. The European Union, for instance, has supported programmes engaging large numbers of countries to expand trade, protect the environment and develop human resources in Africa. The Netherlands has co-financed sectoral programmes in 22 developing countries through multi-donor basket funds, providing support for the use of Southern technical resources for any element of the programme.

In general, donor countries have preferred to facilitate South-South cooperation by supporting centres of excellence and knowledge networks. Sweden is financing three such networks in Asia (on renewable energy technologies, energy research, and environment and climate) and two in Africa (on energy policy and biotechnology). Some donors have also made greater use of experts from the South in their bilateral programmes. Noteworthy cases include Japan’s third-country training arrangements with Kenya, Mexico, Singapore and Thailand; Sweden’s training arrangements based in Singapore and Uruguay; Canada’s arrangements with Singapore; and Australia’s with ASEAN, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Vanuatu.

In research and development, some significant success stories can be attributed to alliances between Southern and Northern institutions. The production of high-yielding new rice varieties in West Africa involved collaboration among African, Asian, European and North American scientists under the auspices of the West Africa Rice Development Association. Technical inputs from Northern institutions complemented the efforts of 17 African member institutions of WARDA, the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture in Nigeria, the International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines, and a similar institute in China.

The most important lesson to be drawn from existing examples of triangular cooperation is that when facilities in developing countries have adequate resources they can become centres of excellence.

to resolve. Satellite television broadcasting and mobile phone systems, for instance, have brought rural communities into the information age at a fraction of the cost that would have been necessary with ground-based broadcasting stations and land-linked telephones. The use of these technologies also creates a new imperative for cooperation among developing countries. Satellite “footprints” often cross national borders, and the most cost-effective use of available bandwidth requires cooperation among neighbouring countries.

At the policy level, the new information technologies allow a level and quality of interaction impossible in an earlier era. For instance the Web of Information for Development (WIDE) network of UNDP’s Special Unit on TCDC provides a unique support system for those engaged in South-South cooperation. See inside back cover.

A New Paradigm

As we move into the 21st century, it is clear that a new paradigm for development cooperation has emerged with cooperation among developing countries as its central element. It is based on a new sense of the dynamics of how knowledge is generated, human resources are used, and a recognition of the rich reservoir of knowledge that exists in developing countries. New information and communications technologies allow this knowledge to be widely shared at minimal cost. The aim of TCDC in the years to come will be to ensure that the South rises on its own rich heritage in a world of equals.

Forging a Global South

COOPERATION TIMELINE

2001

Third UN Conference on Least Developed Countries calls for intensified South-South cooperation.

2002

- Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development urges increased South-South cooperation.
- Rio+5 Conference on Environment and Development (Johannesburg).
THE GLOBAL SOUTH

The use of the term “South” to refer to developing countries collectively has been part of the shorthand of international relations since the 1970s. It rests on the fact that all of the world’s industrially developed countries (with the exception of Australia and New Zealand) lie to the north of its developing countries. The term does not imply that all developing countries are similar and can be lumped together in one category. What it does highlight is that although developing countries range across the spectrum in every economic, social and political attribute, they all share a set of vulnerabilities and challenges. The listings below (continued on the inside back cover) show some of the major groupings that constitute the global south.

AFRICA


North Africa: Algeria, Egypt, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia.

ASIA

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Democratic Republics of Korea, Republic of Korea, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor Leste, Viet Nam

Central Asia: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

West Asia: Bahrain, Cyprus, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Arab Republic, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen

Pacific Islands: Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN

Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela

Caribbean: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago

GROUPS DEFINED BY ECONOMIC STATUS

Major Petroleum Exporters (20): Algeria, Angola, Bahrain, Brunei Darussalam, Congo, Gabon, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iraq, Iraq, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nigeria, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela, Yemen

Major Exporters of Manufactures (12): Brazil, China, China (Taiwan Province), India, Malaysia, Mexico, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey.

Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (42): Angola, Benin, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cote d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Kenya, Lao People’s Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Niger, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia


SOURCE OF COUNTRY CATEGORIES: UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics 2002

UNDP is the UN’s global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life.

Cooperation South

Cooperation South is the twice-yearly journal of the Special Unit that goes to key policy-making in the South, United Nations research libraries and multi-lateral development organiza- tions. It is a strategic tool for the dissemination of information and analyses on development issues and to mobilize support for South-South cooperation. Issues of the journal have highlighted a wide range of South-South policy options and promising areas for collaboration. In 2001-2002, Cooperation South explored policies but- tressing the use of information and communications technology as a development tool. It also covered such topics as globalization, its impact on social policies and approaches to building intellectual property rights regimes that are capable of rewarding creativity and securing the access to the poor of the benefits of modern science, such as essential HIV/AIDS drugs.

Cooperation South is available in English, French and Spanish and is accessible electronically through the Web of Information for Development (WIDE) at http://tcdc.undp.org.
LATIN AMERICAN/CARIBBEAN SUBREGIONAL GROUPS

ANDEAN GROUP: AG — founded 1969. 5 Members: Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela.

CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY: CARICOM — founded 1973. 15 Members: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.


LATIN AMERICAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM: SELA — founded 1975. 27 members: Argentina, Barbados, Bolívia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

LATIN AMERICAN INTEGRATION ASSOCIATION: LAIA — founded 1980. 12 Members: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela.


SOUTHERN COMMON MARKET: MERCOSUR — founded 1994. 4 Members: Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Venezuela.

AFRICAN SUBREGIONAL GROUPS

ARAB MAGHREB UNION: UMA — founded 1989. 5 Members: Algeria, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia.


MANO RIVER UNION: MRU — founded 1973. 3 Members: Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone.


ASIAN SUBREGIONAL GROUPS

ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH-EAST ASIAN NATIONS: ASEAN — founded 1967. 10 Members: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam.

BANGKOK AGREEMENT: founded 1975. 6 Members: Bangladesh, China (joined 2001), India, Laos, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka.

ECONOMIC COOPERATION ORGANIZATION: ECO — founded 1992. 10 Members: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan.

GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL: GCC — founded 1981. 6 Members: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates.


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The designations employed and material presented do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the legal status of any country or territory.