



Statement by His Excellency Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations and Chairman of the Group of 77, at the Global Forum on Building Science, Technology and Innovation Capacity for Sustainable Growth and Poverty Reduction World Bank, Washington D.C, 13 February 2007

**Madame Vice-President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Participants,**

It is my pleasure and great personal privilege to represent the Group of 77 and China, the largest coalition of countries at the UN representing the developing countries, at this Global Forum.

2. I would like to thank and congratulate the sponsors, particularly the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, UNESCO and UNCTAD, for organizing this important event.

3. This is a topical and timely discussion. Effective policies and strategies for building Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) capacity in developing countries are vital for poverty alleviation, balanced socio-economic growth and equitable integration into the global knowledge-based economy. Industrialization is the key to high GDP growth and employment generation. It cannot be achieved without knowledge and innovation. A country cannot compete in the globalized economy without the acquisition, development and application of science and technology.

4. There are encouraging recent examples of success in the developing world. However, for the majority of the poor, the developmental promise of science and technology remains un-fulfilled. The rich are getting richer, and the poor, poorer. Technology, instead of bridging the gap has often become a greater divider. The growing North-South global technological gulf must be bridged. Creating links between knowledge generation and development is one of the greatest challenges facing the developing countries and their development partners.

5. There is thus a strong case for the international community to evolve a concrete plan of action to promote the application of science and technology for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other internationally agreed development goals. Such a plan should consist of clear national and international actions.

6. **At the national level**, developing countries should adopt strategies for technological learning. These strategies should involve continuous interaction between government, industry, academia, and civil society. Science and technology and innovation should also be mainstreamed into national development strategies.

7. Developing countries should also act to improve the infrastructure for technological development. This could include the establishment of business and technology incubators; export processing zones and production networks.

8. Similarly, developing countries should structure their investment and trade policies in ways designed to acquire technological capabilities. In this

context, incentives for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) could place a premium on technology transfer and diffusion.

9. Moreover, strengthening educational institutions and research and development (R&D) organizations in the developing countries, and their effective linkages with the industry, is vital.

10. Developing countries and the institutions of the South should also make a concerted effort to preserve the traditions of their people as well as indigenous and local traditional knowledge, practices and technology which can, often in combination with modern techniques, offer answers for the realization of sustainable economic growth and development.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Participants:**

11. At the international level, there are several actions that can be taken to advance the contribution of science and technology to development.

- **First**, the renewed commitment of the international community, especially financial institutions, is essential to support national efforts of developing countries for capacity-building. We need invigorated international cooperation for development in Science and Technology. Bilateral and multilateral donors must increase their official development assistance for science and technology initiatives and programmes in the developing countries.
- **Second**, a global campaign should be initiated for human resource training for MDGs achievement. The developed countries and advanced institutions can provide scholarships to developing countries. Similarly, world class Centers of Excellence in areas relevant to agriculture and industry should be established in the developing countries through external cooperation. Similarly, high quality “virtual universities” and virtual means of research could

be created to spread knowledge, innovation and technological application.

- **Third**, international rule making and standard setting activities should respond to the concerns of developing countries and not discriminate against them. To this end, the developing countries should be enabled to participate fully in standard setting bodies. The application of new standards should take into account their impact on the developing countries.
- **Fourth**, the agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS), and other intellectual property laws, should be reviewed and, where necessary, revised to enhance their contribution to development. This should be pursued both in the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO).
- **Fifth**, a more direct endeavour should be made to utilize global scientific and R&D capabilities for development. We should identify the research and developmental needs and priorities of developing countries and possible niche opportunities for specific countries and regions. Modalities could be explored to secure funding for such research needs. For example a Global Research and Development Fund could be created to guarantee minimum returns to enterprises and institutions in industrial and developing countries to undertake research in areas and issues of interest to the developing countries e.g. tropical diseases, agriculture, etc.
- **Sixth**, an international organization should be entrusted to compile a list of credible Science and Technology Institutions and programmes in the developing countries, in the public and private sectors, to which financial support could be committed by development partners.
- **Seventh**, appropriate institutional mechanisms should be devised to exchange best practices and experiences both in terms of success and failures in advancing the acquisition and use of science and technology.

12. Mindful of the important contribution that science and technology can make in promoting sustained economic growth and development in the South, the G-77 and China has traditionally collaborated closely with a number of institutions to achieve our common goals and objectives. Let me outline a few such initiatives today:

- **One**, the Group fully support the strategies being pursued by the International Scientific Institutions of the Trieste System in Italy, especially the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World (TWAS) and the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) to enhance the capabilities of scientific organizations and promote scientific capacity building in developing countries, as well as North-South partnerships.
- **Two**, the Second South Summit of the Group of 77 in Doha, Qatar, in 2005 decided to support the efforts of the Trieste System, to establish the G-77 Consortium on Science, Technology, and Innovation (COSTIS). The Consortium was launched in Angra dos Reis, Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, in September 2006 by G-77 Ministers of Science and Technology. The main objectives of the Consortium are to promote science-driven economic development in developing countries, and South-South and North-South cooperation in the development and application of science and technology in the South. I understand that a presentation by COSTIS is also scheduled during the deliberations of this Forum.
- **Three**, the Group of 77 has also established the G-77 Award for Science, Technology and Innovation in 2000 to recognize and honor individual scientists and innovators from developing countries.

13. Let me conclude by appealing to all institutions and other development partners attending this important meeting to provide generous support to COSTIS and assist the Consortium in building science, technology and innovation capacity for development through partnership programmes.

I thank you.