



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

**Statement by Pakistan
at the
Twenty-Third Meeting of the Council of Representatives of the South Centre
(27 April 2023)**

Geneva, Switzerland

Hon'ble Chairperson, (H. E. Thabo Mvuyelwa MBEKI)
Executive Director, (Dr. Carlos Correa)
Convener of the Council of Representatives, (Ambassador (Retd.) Ajit Kumar)
Distinguished Colleagues,

Allow me to begin by thanking President Thabo Mbeki for his leadership and congratulate Mr. Kumar 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 on the Pandemic Treaty negotiation process at the World Health Organization (WHO).

We believe that the South Centre has a critical role to play in advancing the development agenda.

We also recognize that the current global context is marked by significant economic, social, and environmental challenges.

The cascading impacts of COVID-19 pandemic continue to exact a heavy toll on our economies, our societies, and our people, posing existential threat to some developing countries.

The impacts of climate change are becoming more evident with each passing day, and we are witnessing growing inequalities and injustices that threaten to undermine the gains we have made thus far.

The persistence of exogenous shocks has exacerbated debt burdens of many developing countries, squeezed their fiscal space and shrunk their liquidity, thereby

eroding hard-won development gains and undermining their national capacities to achieve SDGs.

The debt-distressed countries, having braced the pandemic, inflation, energy shortages, now face much reduced fiscal space and confront hard choices when it comes to development and achieving SDGs.

Even as these crises affect every country, it is the developing countries which are disproportionately impacted by them due not only to several exogenous shocks but also because of the limitations imposed by the existing global economic and financial system.

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: The South Centre may build on and amplify its support to the proposals for debt relief, creation of International Debt Authority, Multidimensional Vulnerability Index and an independent Global Credit Rating Agency. This may include supporting SR on foreign debt and similar efforts towards achieving equity in a manner that the work of international financial institutions is underpinned by respect for human rights.

Second, continued advocacy for capacity building and technical assistance to developing countries to ward off risks of claims arising from provisions of International Investment Agreements.

Third, continue to call for a flexible and balanced global intellectual property regime which does not hinder the production and equitable, affordable supply of lifesaving medicines and vaccines to the global South.

Fourth, 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.

Fifth, while we appreciate South Centre advocacy for measures to address Illicit financial flows (IFFs), which have a significant impact on the economies and development prospects of developing countries, we encourage the Centre to continue working towards implementation of the recommendations of FACTI Panel and explore ways of supporting developing countries in retrieval of their stolen assets parked in developed countries.

Sixth, continue to provide policy, legal and technical advice across the range of WTO issues including development issues, services, e-commerce, fisheries agriculture, WTO reform and MC12 Outcome Document. We put on record our appreciation for the Centre for its technical and legislative assistance for promoting effective utilization of TRIPS flexibilities in the Global South, including in Pakistan.

Seventh, continue to advise and guide the developing countries on the technical aspects of negotiations on the Pandemic Treaty.

Eight, intensify its engagement with G77 and NAM and continue to provide inputs on strengthening the provisions of the draft legal instrument on the right to development, investment protection and reform of investor-state dispute resolution system; and mobilizing the support for fulfilment of financing commitments in the Paris Agreement.

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.
