



PRESS RELEASE

Member States Discuss How to Scale Up South-South Successes

NEW YORK: 28 October 2011 - The South's strong economic performance has enabled Southern countries to make significant progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and during the ongoing economic downturn that plagues much of the world's economy, emerging economies are paying an important role in driving global economic growth.

It is now widely recognized that the countries of the South can make significant contributions, particularly to themselves, said Ambassador Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya to the U.N. and President of the General Assembly High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, during his welcome remarks at Thursday's Biannual Member States Meeting on South-South and Triangular Cooperation, hosted by the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation/UNDP.

The meeting was convened in order to open a discussion among Member States focusing on how they could work together to further strengthen the work of the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation in its important role as advocator and promoter of South-South and triangular cooperation. Over 30 Member States participated in Thursday's discussion.

Delegates discussions focused on: How to broaden cooperation and maximize its benefits, through increased South-South collaborations and further engagement of Northern and multilateral partners through triangular cooperation; How the South could strengthen its voice within the U.N. system to ensure South-South cooperation and Southern concerns are mainstreamed and that the system is responsive; How to operationalize the Nairobi Outcome Document; and, How to mobilize meaningful resources for the Special Unit.

A key challenge posed by Kamau to the gathered delegations was how they could work together as well as with U.N. system agencies, especially UN/UNDP country teams, to increase the sharing, transfer and scaling up of successful Southern solutions to shared development challenges.

"This discussion is very relevant in the context of the current development landscape - within which development actors are becoming increasingly aware that knowledge and technical expertise that originate from countries in the South, are often most suitable to meeting the development challenges faced by the South," said Rebeca Grynspan, UNDP Associate Administrator, who co-chaired the meeting with Kamau.

The delegate of Costa Rica requested that the Special Unit put together a presentation of the different possibilities for a country to share information about specific solutions to specific problems.

In February, Grynspan challenged the Special Unit to move beyond promoting information-sharing, and to instead create a transactional web-enabled environment that would empower and engage Member States, multilateral institutions, and all other critical development partners to exchange knowledge and solutions to scale up their development impact.

The Unit has taken the challenge to heart and has developed an online enabling environment that is poised to provide a new and powerful space for critical interaction. It includes, for example, a Directors-General space that enables DGs and heads of development agencies from all countries to discuss and exchange ideas and innovations.

The Biannual Member States Meeting on South-South and Triangular Cooperation will continue to be held regularly. However, once the Special Unit's new interactive global and multilateral South-South and Triangular Cooperation Support Architecture website is unveiled in November Member States will be placed in constant contact, and enabled to communicate with each other in real time on issues pertaining to South-South cooperation.

"South-South cooperation is happening. It is transformative," Kamau stressed. "We must be careful not to be left behind."