

Statement by  
H.E. Ambassador Dr. John W. Ashe  
President of the United Nations High-Level Committee  
on South-South Cooperation  
to the High Level Forum on South-South  
Cooperation for Sustainable Development

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2013, Hong Kong

*Check against delivery.*

Prime Minister Commodore Bainimarama

Excellences,

Colleagues,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A pleasant good morning to you all.

It is indeed my pleasure to be back here in Hong Kong for this High-level Forum on South-South Cooperation for Sustainable Development. This year's theme, "ICT, Innovation, Culture and Sustainable Urbanization," is adequately framed by this extraordinary city that is a wonderful showcase of the role of economic growth, urban planning and revitalization, and the latest technological innovations and standards.

At the outset, I wish to thank the organizers for convening this unique forum, which comes at the most opportune time. And as they say, timing is everything!

Excellences,

We have all witnessed a dramatic global transformation in the past decade, which has brought new, unprecedented and increasingly complex socio-economic and environmental threats, challenges and concerns to the forefront.

Responding to these threats and challenges will require new forms of collaboration, innovation and partnership. What is urgently needed is demonstrated leadership,

strengthened efforts and creative measures and mechanisms that can address the sustainable development needs and transform complex challenges and concerns into sustainable opportunities and options for development.

Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen

In a few short months from now, the United Nations General Assembly will begin to turn its attention to one of its most complex and exciting challenges in its long history: defining and ultimately adopting a post-2015 Development Agenda. There is little doubt in my mind, that South-South and Triangular cooperation are increasingly important vehicles for reaching development goals, and will surely play a significant role in any new framework we create, particularly in identifying partnerships for addressing the new challenges and opportunities we will face and in harnessing our collective and creative energies to address these challenges and opportunities.

This makes this forum rather timely indeed, for it will allow you to explore how enhancing these partnerships - particularly in the fields of technology and innovation – can contribute to that emerging agenda and lead to successful sustainable development outcomes.

Distinguished guests,

The Forum also presents its participants with a unique opportunity to develop ideas that could inform two of the key events of the 68<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly, namely, the high-level event on South-South, Triangular cooperation and ICT for development, and the thematic debate on the role of partnerships. This is an opportunity that should not be missed, since it will provide you with the means in advance to “set the stage” for these events.

With this in mind, I would like to take this opportunity to put forward some questions for consideration in your deliberations.

1. How can international organizations in general, facilitate and leverage more opportunities for South-South cooperation?
2. How can South-South cooperation move beyond the lessons sharing phase into a new phase of implementation and action oriented outcomes?

3. How can South- South cooperation become a vehicle or mechanism that allows countries to tap into new sources of funding to create even more successful partnerships, in particular public-private partnerships?
4. How can South-South cooperation facilitate peer-to-peer learning in order to create successful ventures in fields like ICT and health biotechnology?
5. How can we maximize the comparative strengths of Northern funding and Southern expertise to make triangular cooperation a more appealing option for implementing development goals?
6. How do we better communicate the successes, comparative advantages and quantifiable results achieved thus far?
7. What are the barriers that have prevented triangular cooperation from playing a larger role in the development landscape?
8. How can emergency telecommunications – such as wireless and satellite communication systems, remote sensing systems and satellite imaging - be developed and implemented to support better disaster management?
9. How can ICT help us to accelerate achievement of the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals agenda? To that end, please consider the use of ICT in eradicating poverty, achieving gender equality, ensuring environmental sustainability and combating disease, among others. And
10. How can we enhance cyber-security, and what kind of collaborations, capacity building efforts, and legislation can facilitate that?

Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This Forum has the potential to contribute to some rather important events in 2014. I therefore encourage you to be bold and innovative.

Your inputs and efforts here can and should make a difference and should, ultimately, help us to build on what we know... sharing what we learn... and assisting one another as we look toward a future with one universal sustainable development agenda.

I wish you a productive and creative meeting, and I look forward to the final outcome of this important Forum.

Thank you.