



**Presentation by Ambassador Rajiv K. Chander, Permanent Representative of India under Item 3: South-South Cooperation and Development Finance, 06<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at the Third Session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Financing for Development**

**[1015 hours to 1300 hours, Room XXVI, Palais des Nations, Geneva]**

H.E. Ms. GothamiSilva, Fellow Panellists, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

1. At the outset, I would like to thank the UNCTAD Secretariat for this opportunity to participate in this panel discussion.
2. This Inter-Governmental Group of Experts has been a significant platform for focussed discussions on the important issue of ‘Financing for Development’. As we move towards the next Ministerial Conference of UNCTAD in 2020, it is time for us to reflect on the trajectory charted since the last Ministerial Conference in Nairobi.
3. Our vision following the Addis Ababa Agenda must focus not only on ‘financing for development’ but on actually ‘making development happen’. Our enhanced ambition on development finance must be coupled with a genuine effort at creating a global system conducive to development itself. The success of the implementation of SDGs hinges on the mobilization of adequate resources, a fact recognised in SDG17.

4. India's development cooperation is rooted in our social ethos and the philosophy of Sarvodaya, meaning 'development and progress of all'. Our working with fellow developing countries translates this philosophy into reality. India, with its developmental experience of over 7 decades, has a deep understanding of the challenges faced in other developing countries. It is particularly well placed to share experiences on best practices and governance. India attaches importance to its engagement with developing countries and is forthcoming in sharing its expertise and development experience.
5. India's development partnership efforts over the past seven decades have proceeded in different formats from purely bilateral arrangements to regional such as BIMSTEC in our neighbourhood or the wider India-Africa Forum Summit and the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation. At the UN, these include the innovative IBSA Fund that brings together India, Brazil and South Africa.
6. **India's most recent initiative is the India-UN Development Partnership Fund launched in June 2017.** The objective of the India-UN Development Partnership Fund and its Commonwealth Window is to institutionalize development cooperation at the multilateral-level with the UN Office of South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) as the coordinating partner on behalf of the UN system.
7. India has always believed that South-South Cooperation should be demand driven and not supply driven. India's goal has always been to put the precept of South-South Cooperation into practice innovatively.
8. The India-UN Development Partnership Fund responds directly to the national priorities and development objectives of partner countries, contributing financial resources and technical knowledge to support partner governments in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. It is

a prime example of South-South and triangular cooperation. The fund is supported by the Government of India, managed by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and implemented in collaboration with the United Nations system.

9. The Government of India has committed a total of USD 150 million for this Fund over 10 years including USD 50 million under a separate Commonwealth window. The Fund has already developed a portfolio of 36 development projects in partnership with 37 developing countries. These projects cover an array of thematic areas of prime concern to developing countries including climate resilience, environmental sustainability, gender equality, renewable energy, improving women's and maternal health, education, employment and livelihoods, disaster recovery and risk management and agricultural development amongst others. Youth related projects are increasing, especially amongst partners from the Caribbean.
10. A feature of projects undertaken under this fund is that the development partner identifies a sectoral need and the implementing partner works with UN system entities through the Resident Coordinator to assist in project formulation, in accordance with the needs of the development partner. The projects, as approved by the development partner, are then implemented by a UN entity (*or in some case a national entity*). This reduces the burden on the development partners to provide detailed technical projects. The effort is to provide end to end support.
11. We deeply value our partnership with the UN, which affords a reliable and globally recognized brand with universal presence of the UN system, as well as cost-effective implementation and a wealth of normative and programmatic experience.
12. The Fund adheres to the guiding principles of South-South cooperation by placing a priority on national ownership and leadership, development of local capacity and equality, mutual benefit and sustainability, supporting

developing countries based on their specific needs with no conditionalities attached.

13. The strength of our implementation partners is matched by the trust of our development partners, who value the non-prescriptive nature of the funding provided.
14. There are some 21 projects under implementation with some nearing completion. The *very first project under this Fund* was a multi-country project to enhance climate resilience capacities in seven **Pacific Island states**. Due to the constraints of location and size, making this a multi-country project with similar modules in each of the countries, not only made this more efficient but brought in a regional perspective to addressing the trans-boundary challenges posed by Climate Change.
15. In **Uruguay**, the Fund contributed to an existing ongoing project on digital governance, helping bridge a certain funding gap in that project. The *Fund is not about mere visibility or taking credit. It is all about helping development partners in areas of their choice. Early response is a feature* of the Fund. In cases of natural disasters, the Fund is able to make commitments of resources, even before projects are finalized. Among the first few projects under the Fund were those relating to disaster recovery in some Caribbean and Pacific Islands.
16. The *Fund is also working with sub-regional and regional initiatives that can have demonstration effects*. For example we are funding the **Solar Head of State initiative** of the **Pacific Islands Development Forum** (a regional entity) which aims to use solar power for the residences of Heads of States of its members and its own Headquarters. The aim is to have a demonstration effect.

17. The *Fund now also has a special Commonwealth window* for projects requested by Commonwealth members. Its governance model includes a peer review aspect by including one Director from a Commonwealth country. This is a unique feature *that adds to the transparency*. The Fund is also open to assisting partner countries who are traditionally not looked at as developing countries but may have unique requirements to meet SDGs. This again is a new and flexible and non-prescriptive feature.
18. We are emphasising the aspect of speedy implementation of projects under this Fund with the UN agencies, since we have tried to cut down the processing time significantly for decision making and providing the funding upfront.
19. Our objective is to work in unison with others. We see leverage as an important expression of added value ascribed to our partnership. Several project initiatives are being leveraged for broader goals of our development partners. 9 projects have leveraged funding that added 70% more resources to those we contributed.
20. On our part also, India is adding value by committing additional bilateral funding, as in the case of a new project in the Federated States of Micronesia.
21. **At the BAPA+40 conference in March this year, the India-UN Fund launched new projects with the governments of The Gambia and Togo for which the implementing partner, for the first time, will be UNESCO.**
22. The initiative Using Drones and Early Warning Systems for Pre- and Post-Floods Disaster Management in The **Gambia** establishes an end-to-end flood warning system by introducing state of the art technology and building national networks and capacities to rapidly identify risks and

damages. This will have an impact on the lives of 1,500 rural entrepreneurs.

23. The project "Sustainable Development through Biodiversity-friendly Livelihoods - Supporting Rural Communities in the Vicinity of Fazao-Malfakassa National Park" **in Togo**, stimulates and diversifies the local economy by supporting youth and women entrepreneurship in biodiversity related livelihoods, such as beekeeping, snail rearing, mushroom farming or eco-tourism.
24. This signing ceremony at BAPA+40 signifies India's much broader and continued response to the development cooperation requests driven by our partner countries.
25. For India, cooperation with and support to fellow developing countries and sharing our developmental experience as an expression of solidarity with them is an article of faith. The India-UN Development Fund is to take forward our South-South engagement even further.
26. India's efforts in promoting sustainable development will be an important contribution to our collective success. The world can count on India and we also look forward to the support of the international community for assisting the endeavours of India and other developing countries.

Thank You.

