



Special Guest Articles

Leading the Developing Countries (Pakistan's Chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China)

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At the UN, Pakistan has traditionally played an active and constructive role in promoting the development objectives of the developing countries.

Group of 77 and China

2. The Group of 77 and China, with a membership now of 134 developing countries, is the largest intergovernmental group within the United Nations. The Group was formed in 1964 after the first United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to promote the interests of the developing countries and a more equal international economic order. China joined the Group in 1992 during Pakistan's second Chairmanship of the Group. Pakistan last chaired the Group of 77 and China in 2007 and was elected to Chair the Group for the fourth time in January 2022.

Multiple Economic "Shocks"

3. Pakistan assumed the leadership of the Group in extremely challenging circumstances for the developing countries. They were disproportionately impacted by multiple and interlocking financial and economic "shocks" during past 3 years. The Covid pandemic locked down economies and disrupted international and national supply chains. Its effects on the developing countries were exacerbated by the inequity in the distribution and availability of vaccines and the constraints of liquidity and financial space. The Covid "shock" reduced the GDP of many developing countries by up to 10 percent. Disruptions in supply chains fueled a sharp rise in inflation. Then, the Ukraine conflict, and accompanying western financial and trade restrictions, created the triple food, fuel and finance crisis for most developing countries.

4. In parallel, many developing countries were the principal victims of the rising impacts of climate change to which they have contributed very little, as illustrated most dramatically by the massive floods which devastated Pakistan in the summer of 2022.

Setting Priorities

5. Pakistan set out the priorities of its Chairmanship at the outset: One, to respond to the immediate financial and economic crisis facing over a 100 developing countries due to the multiple "shocks"; and second, the adoption of concrete steps to reform the unequal international financial, trade and technology architecture, which structurally disadvantages the developing countries in international economic relations.

The vast scope and challenges of G-77 cooperation and coordination

6. During 2022, the G-77 and China formulated and presented common positions at several key events and discussions including: on Vaccine Equity; the UNSG's Report on "Our Common Agenda", the Ocean Conference, the Stockholm+50 Conference, the ECOSOC's Financing for Development and High Level Political Forums, the LDC-V Conference, the BBNJ Treaty negotiations in the Economic, Social, De-colonization, Budgetary and Legal Committees of the 77th UN General Assembly session, the climate

negotiations at COP.27 and the two G-77 Ministerial Conferences held in September and December 2022.

7. Due to the diverse nature of the Group, Pakistan faced challenges in evolving common positions on a vast array of issues. The Group's membership includes, at one end, the major emerging economies, members of the Group of 20, and at the other, the Least Developed Landlocked and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Their interests and priorities are often difficult to reconcile. It was, therefore, remarkable that Pakistan managed to maintain the unity of the Group on almost all issues and put forward agreed positions in the negotiations with the countries of the global North.

Covid Response

8. Early in 2022, at Pakistan's initiative, the General Assembly President convened a high-level meeting of the Assembly to mobilize a more equitable international response to the Covid-19 pandemic. At the meeting, the Group of 77 demanded equitable access to the Covid-19 vaccines at affordable prices; effective distribution and larger production of the vaccine in developing countries, including through waivers on intellectual property; as well as adequate financial support to help developing countries keep their economies afloat. These demands, which were fully endorsed by the UN Secretary-General and the WHO Director General, helped to mobilize a more generous response from the advanced countries as well as from members of the Group.

Financing for Development (FfD)

9. In April 2022, Pakistan led the Group in negotiating the consensus outcome on Financing for Development. The Group's ambitious proposals for enlarged liquidity, debt relief, SDR re-distribution, and fulfillment of ODA commitments by donor countries were largely reflected in the final document adopted by the UN's Economic and Social Council despite resistance from the developed countries.

Stockholm + 50 Conference

10. At this Conference, held on the 50th Anniversary, of the first Environment Conference in Stockholm, Pakistan presented the Group of 77's proposals and priorities: fulfillment of the developed countries' commitment to provide \$100 billion annually as climate finance; allocation of half of this for adaptation; establishment of a fund to compensate climate vulnerable countries for "loss and damage"; and acceleration in mitigation mainly by the industrialized countries to keep the limit of 1.50 centigrade in global warming "alive".

Lisbon Oceans Conference

11. At the Stockholm Oceans Conference, held from 27 June to 1 July 2022 in Lisbon, Pakistan representing the Group, delivered the plenary statement on its behalf and also participated actively in interactive dialogues on 'Managing, protecting, conserving and

restoring, marine and coastal ecosystems'; 'Making fisheries sustainable'; and 'Increasing scientific knowledge and developing research capacity and transfer of marine technology'.

12. Pakistan also coordinated the Group's position in the negotiations of the political declaration issued by the Oceans Conference. Despite reservations from advanced countries, the Group was able to include references to the fundamental principles of sustainable development and climate change, such as equity and Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the Declaration.

High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) (July)

13. At last July's High-Level Political Forum, convened annually by the ECOSOC with the participation of the entire UN membership, the Group collectively negotiated the Ministerial Declaration which proposed the actions needed for achieving the SDGs in the current difficult "decade of action". These positions on urgent financing and reform of international economic relations were endorsed in the HLPF outcome document by consensus.

LDCV Conference

14. Pakistan led the Group in the preparations for the fifth high-level Conference on Support to the least developed countries (LDCs) and in the first part of the Conference held in New York. The Conference, which concluded in Doha in early March 2023, adopted a far-reaching programme of action to support the LDCs in the current challenging global economic environment.

The UNSG's "Common Agenda"

15. Early in 2022, the UN Secretary-General presented an extensive Report entitled "Our Common Agenda" which contained numerous new proposals of relevance to the developing countries. Pakistan negotiated the General Assembly resolution on the modalities for consideration of the SG's Report. Subsequently, it presented the detailed views of the G77 and China on the Report under thematic clusters, covering: (i) Advancing governance for global public goods; (ii) Anticipating sustainable development and climate action beyond 2030; (iii) Digital technology, for the Global Digital Compact; and (iv) an Emergency Platform. The SG's Report and recommendations will constitute the basis for discussions on the Summit of the Future to be held next year. The UNSG has proposed that the Summit adopt: a Declaration on Future Generations and A Pact for the Future, apart from decisions on political and security issues.

Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Treaty

16. The negotiation of an international legally binding instrument on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) was another important agenda item on which the Group was able to adopt common positions, despite differences of interests and priorities within the Group.

17. During 2022, Pakistan coordinated the Group's position during two sessions (namely IGC-4 in March and IGC-5 in August 2022). In preparation for the final IGC-5 session, Pakistan conducted over 60 coordination meetings of the Group of 77 and China. The unity of the Group made significant progress possible on various elements of the draft Treaty. The Treaty was adopted in February 2023 largely due to Pakistan's efforts as Chair. It endorses the principle that the Area beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)'s is the "Common heritage of mankind"; ensures that developing countries will benefit from research activities in the areas beyond national jurisdiction, and will share in the benefits derived from exploitation of resources in the ABNJ.

UN Development System

18. Keeping development at the heart of the UN Agenda remained a priority for Pakistan as the Chair of the G-77. The G77 participated in all meetings of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPs, in the interactive dialogue with the UNDP Administrator, and on the implementation efforts for the repositioning of the UN Development System. While presenting the Group's priorities, Pakistan expressed the concern of developing countries at the major cuts in "core" funding for development, which threatens the long-term viability of the UN Development organizations.

UN General Assembly

19. During the 77th UN General Assembly Session, Pakistan coordinated fifty plus resolutions on behalf of the Group of 77 and China in the Second (Economic), Third (Social), Fourth (Decolonization), Fifth (Budgetary) and Sixth (Legal) Committees of the General Assembly. Most of the Group's proposals were adopted, after intensive negotiations, by consensus in the General Assembly. These resolutions covered issues such as finance, trade, taxation, technology, globalization, implementation of Agenda 2030, racial discrimination, women's rights, the Covid-19 pandemic; disinformation,, decolonization, the UN Budget, the UN's financial situation and the wider application of international law. The ability of Pakistan's representation in steering the Group of 77, maintaining its unity and securing consensus decisions won high praise from within and outside the Group.

Climate Change – COP27 and Loss and Damage

20. The 27th meeting of the States Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was held in Sharm-El Sheikh, Egypt, from 6-20 November 2022.

21. In the aftermath of the devastating floods in Pakistan, the Group of 77 and China pressed hard for the establishment of funding arrangements and a dedicated fund for the "Loss and Damage" caused by the more frequent and more ferocious impacts of global warming and climate change in the most vulnerable developing countries which have contributed next to nothing to climate change. Despite differences in priorities, Pakistan

managed to maintain the unity of the Group in demanding the establishment of the loss and damage funding facility.

22. The first challenge was to secure inclusion of the issue on the COP.27 Agenda. Thereafter, the Group pressed persistently for acceptance of a dedicated fund for loss and damage. Eventually, some members of the European Union, and thereafter the EU as a whole, accepted the demand and, finally, the U.S. too gave up its resistance. Thus, after almost 20 years, agreement was reached that those historically responsible for global warming should contribute to a “loss and damage” funding facility. The allocation of finances for “loss and damage” would enhance financial outlays of major financial mechanisms to help the most vulnerable countries, as defined under the UNFCCC which includes Small Island Developing States and Pakistan.

G-77 Ministerial Conferences

23. Under Pakistan’s Chairmanship, two Ministerial Conferences of the Group of 77 and China were held on September 23, 2022 and on 15-16 December 2022.

24. The Forty-Sixth Annual Ministerial Meeting was convened on 23 September 2022 under Pakistan’s Chairmanship. The Ministerial Meeting held an opening segment, interactive thematic dialogue and general exchange of views among the Ministers. During the opening segment, the Ministerial Meeting also elected Cuba by acclamation as the Chair of the Group in 2023. The meeting concluded with the adoption of Ministerial Declaration, which outlined the Group’s positions on the entire range of economic, financial and development issues.

25. From 14 to 15 December 2022, Pakistan convened an extraordinary Ministerial Conference of the Group, with the theme ‘Achieving the SDGs: Addressing Present Challenges and Building Resilience against Future Crises’. The Conference was aimed at fostering agreement on the immediate and long term actions required to enable developing countries to recover from the current multiple crises and achieve the SDGs in the remainder of the decade of action (2020-2030). The Conference held in-depth discussions on four thematic areas: Mobilizing Financing for Achieving the SDGs; Climate Action: From Pledges to Reality; International Trade, Development and Investment to achieve the SDGs; Expanding Access to Finance and Investment in Africa and Countries with special needs (LDCs, LLDCs and SIDs).

26. Pakistan, as Chair, led the Group to an agreement on an Outcome Document of the Conference. The Group was able to adopt the “outcome document” of the Ministerial Conference by consensus, an indication of convergence among developing countries on the global recovery and the SDG agenda. The Document outlines specific actions for combating the current multiple crises including:

- Reforming the international financial architecture;

- Bridging the SDG financing gap through measures such as the Secretary General’s proposed SDG Stimulus;
- An early and sizable re-capitalization of the Multilateral Development Banks;
- A new allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs);
- Ensuring implementation of the climate change agenda in accordance with the principle of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities;
- Fulfillment of the commitment by developed countries to mobilize \$100 billion in annual climate finance and provision of new, additional, predictable, and adequate financial resources to assist developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change;
- Support for a Policy Board on Sustainable Infrastructure under UN auspices;
- Reform of the international trading system; and
- Creation of an international technology framework aligned with the SDGs.

Follow-up

27. Pakistan transferred the Chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China to Cuba in January 2023. Nevertheless, it continues to play an active role in promoting the agenda and proposals of the Group in the on-going negotiating processes.

28. Pakistan has circulated a comprehensive paper on the Reform the International Financial Architecture (which the UNSG has described as “morally bankrupt”).

29. Pakistan will also submit specific proposals on other issues to advance the implementation of the SDGs, including on: the Digital Compact, international trade and taxation, and a Technology Agreement.

30. These proposals will be submitted, with the concurrence of the Group of 77 and China, for adoption at the forthcoming SDG Summit in September 2023 and the Summit of the Future in 2024.
