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**Closing Statement by
MR. LIU ZHENMIN
Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs**

**DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FORUM
ARGENTINA HIGH-LEVEL SYMPOSIUM**

**“South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Achieving the 2030 Agenda:
Building Innovative and Inclusive Partnerships”**

San Martín Palace, Buenos Aires, 8 September 2017

Let me begin by expressing my deepest sympathy to countries and families affected by Hurricane Irma. I wish they have a speedy recovery.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our host, the Government of Argentina, for its gracious hospitality. My special thanks go to the honourable Vice President Gabriela Michetti and honourable Minister Jorge Faurie for their enthusiastic personal engagement. My sincere appreciation goes to Director General, Ana Ciuti and all of the hardworking colleagues on the team in the Ministry.

I also would like to extend my gratitude to the honourable President of the Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Marie Chatardová, for her presence and inspiring remarks.

Our gratitude goes to the moderators and panellists, who have ably steered and inspired the discussions. I am thankful to all interpreters. I especially appreciate all of the participants here, each one of you, for your honest and thoughtful interventions.

Today, the United Nations family around the world celebrate the UN staff day. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge my team at Department of Economic and Social Affairs for their dedication and tireless work.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The DCF Argentina High-level Symposium offered an excellent space to reflect on the potential contributions of the South-South and triangular cooperation to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

I will not attempt in these few minutes to capture the richness of the discussions we have had during the past three days. We the co-organizers will prepare a written summary that will be shared with all of you.

Instead, I would like to highlight 10 key messages from this Symposium that we can carry forward.

First, South-South cooperation is making a positive development impact in developing countries. It is reducing asymmetries and building a community of equals.

South-South cooperation has a role to play in achieving the 2030 Agenda, Addis Agenda and Paris Agreement. Yet, its promise should not be overstated. It is not intended to substitute North-South cooperation, which remains a vital form of support for all developing countries. The commitments must be kept.

Second, BAPA+40 will happen against a backdrop of a global South that is economically empowered and has developed important capabilities. There are new challenges to all states: among them, the real threat to multilateralism. South-South and triangular cooperation can contribute to a new multilateralism and drive the revitalization of the global partnership for sustainable development.

Third, there is strategic opportunity and urgent attention needed especially in the area of Southern efforts to mobilize science, technology and innovation as a key means of implementation.

Fourth, South-South and triangular cooperation must take inclusiveness to a new level. The importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships in implementing the 2030 Agenda is widely recognized. While governments have the principal role of coordinating and leading development efforts, all actors and beneficiaries must be meaningfully engaged in the process. There is some progress in developing legal and institutional framework to foster effective multi-stakeholder approaches, and we need to build on this.

Fifth, an inclusive international development cooperation system should follow the principles of accountability, with an ultimate focus on the wellbeing of citizens. It is important that people are empowered to determine the future of their country. Parliamentarians, civil

society, local authorities and women are key to realize sustainable development. Their role, especially on accountability in South-South and triangular cooperation, should be strengthened.

Sixth, South-South and triangular cooperation have enabled developing countries to learn from their own experience on how to solve comparable problems through lessons learned. Triangular cooperation is growing even more relevant with the 2030 Agenda. It could play a prominent role in achieving the productive dialogue between North-South and South-South cooperation.

Seventh, we have identified several roles of multilateral development banks in supporting South-South cooperation, and we need to continue this important debate. Here I want to highlight one special strength on which we can all agree. More than act as a “knowledge bank” or think tank, MDBs can play a role in creating or supporting knowledge networks across the south.

Eighth, the time has come for the global South to lead the efforts to assess the value addition and specific results or impact of its cooperation, in order to enhance the development benefits to the beneficiaries. Whether one understands them as measurement, monitoring, evaluation or impact assessment, these efforts should focus not only on quantitative, but also qualitative aspects. And these should be based on the key principles of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. I want to emphasize that these will be shaped by the South.

Ninth, I have heard strong calls here to strengthen the institutional structure at all levels to enhance South-South and triangular cooperation, and make their benefits bigger, better, more visible and more tangible, especially for the poor and most vulnerable people. This institutionalization must also have, at its core, intensified effort in capacity development – through South-South and triangular cooperation.

Tenth, the global financial architecture should reflect the new reality that South-South and tri-angular cooperation are helping to create. We need to think also about the role of the United Nations in this context.

The United Nations is an inclusive and impartial place to discuss South-South and triangular cooperation and to learn how to overcome the challenges of mainstreaming sustainable development at the national level.

We can boil these ten messages down to five areas for further work in our preparations for BAPA+40 and in the daily work of South-South and triangular cooperation: (i) adjusting to the new context and global sustainable development frameworks; (ii) knowledge management and knowledge sharing; (iii) systematization; (iv) institutionalization; and (v) capacity development.

Esteemed colleagues,

The outcome of this Symposium will feed into the High-level Political Forum in coming July as well as the third ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development in April.

South-South and triangular cooperation will be one of the themes of the 2018 Development Cooperation Forum. Our discussions here will directly feed into the preparation of the Forum, along with the outcome of the next preparatory Symposium, to be held in the first quarter of 2018. DCF will cover other themes too.

In the lead up to the next Development Cooperation Forum, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs also plans further analytical work – including the fifth DCF Survey on Mutual Accountability, a voluntary exercise for knowledge sharing and mutual learning. I encourage all developing countries to participate in it.

The views expressed at this Symposium were very diverse. Behind the divergent positions are very different world views, geopolitical positioning, socioeconomic contexts, development paths, systems, institutions and cultures, to name just a few. There is no "best" or "superior" way of development cooperation. We should respect all views. We should also go beyond, bringing these views together. We should also look at what is behind the diversity, with modesty and impartiality. DESA offers scope of knowledge needed for this work, which covers all dimensions of sustainable development. DESA also has the track record of conducting impartial and neutral policy analysis on highly sensitive topics and offers the connection with intergovernmental processes. We will work closely with other UN entities, the Office for South-South Cooperation in particular, to facilitate the process for discussions.

I believe your excellent ideas will be carried forward. Our recommendations in Argentina will resonate in the preparations for the BAPA+40 Conference and way beyond.

Thank you all. I wish you a safe journey home!

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