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THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LE PRESIDENT DE L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE

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**Message of Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann,
President of the 63rd Session of the General Assembly,
on the Occasion of the 5th North East Asia Investment and Trade
Expo, the 5th North East Asia Economic Cooperation Forum and the
South-South Gate Convention**

Honorable Premier,
Governor of Jilin Province,
Distinguished Mayors of Changchun and Shanghai,
Leaders and Citizens of China,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a distinct pleasure for me to send you this message of welcome, congratulations and best wishes in my capacity as President of the United Nations General Assembly.

When we met in New York recently, the Honorable Governor of Jilin Province, Mr. Han Changfu, was kind enough to invite me to attend these very important events – the 5th North East Asia Investment and Trade Expo and 5th North East Asia Economic Cooperation Forum.

However, much as I would have been happy to be with you in Jilin today, and later in Shanghai, the intense work of the last weeks of my presidency have prevented me from doing so.

Nevertheless, I am with you in spirit, and I will follow your deliberations and outcome with great interest. I consider your gathering here as a very significant contribution to trade and investment, not only among immediate neighbors in North East Asia, but also to Asia as a whole, to the developing countries in general, and therefore to the world at large.

The Expo and the Forum are aimed at establishing a solid, long-term cooperation platform for the Northeast Asian countries, and to create more cooperation opportunities among them.

Your activities in the next few days in Jilin and Shanghai will greatly contribute to the universal quest for global economic and social advancement, which we all recognize as a strong counterpart to world peace and security – the principal objectives and preoccupation of the United Nations.

These events are especially important and topical as we confront the ongoing global economic and financial crises that are challenging nearly all countries. As you may be aware, UN Member States addressed these problems at a major United Nations Conference which I convened in New York in June. I believe increased South-South cooperation is key to assuring that developing countries can participate in sustainable and responsible global governance.

I therefore salute the organizers of the Expo and the Forum - all the Government authorities and other public and private sectors and individuals in the national, provincial and district Governments of the Peoples Republic of China, as well as our colleagues in the United Nations system, namely, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations World Trade Organization (WTO).

I am also very pleased to welcome all the participants, not only from the North East and other regions of China, but from all parts of the world as well.

Your gathering here gives concrete and practical expression to the call of Premier Wen Jiabao to expand regional cooperation in the North East Asia region and to accelerate revitalization of the old industrial base in northeast China. I share Premier Wen Jiabao's vision and hope that this event will deepen regional and interregional economic communications.

Your Expo and the Forum will be followed by the very important 2009 Convention of the South-South Global Assets and Technology Exchange (SS-GATE), Shanghai, to which I was also invited. I send my greetings and best wishes to the organizers and participants at the SS-GATE Convention as well.

As a remarkably innovative process, SS-GATE provides a platform where entrepreneurs, civil society organizations and governments of developing countries can interact and obtain needed technology, assets, and finance in an open but secure environment. It is an important pioneering multilateral mechanism aimed at helping developing countries to accelerate South-South knowledge and technology transfers through demand-driven, market-based and transparent transactions.

It is our hope that many people will benefit from your activities here, through South-South and Triangular cooperation, which is a very important economic and social development modality for the United Nations.

Therefore, in addition to all the organizers and participants at these events, allow me to commend the UNDP's Special Unit for South-South Cooperation, under the leadership of its Director, my friend Yiping Zhou, for collaborating in the formulation and management of the Expo, the Forum and the SS-GATE Convention. The Special Unit will have the important responsibilities of following up the conclusions that you reach -- in Jilin and Shanghai -- at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, and with relevant stake- holders elsewhere.

Please accept my very best wishes for a very fruitful, effective and successful programme in the next few days, on behalf of the people in all our countries, who will derive the greatest benefits from your deliberations in this beautiful People's Republic of China.

Thank you very much.