



**Remarks by**

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**President of the 68th Session of the United Nations**

**General Assembly**

**High-level Forum on South-South Cooperation for Sustainable  
Development**

Theme: South-South Cooperation, ICT and Financing for Sustainable Development

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Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho,  
Ministers,  
Excellencies,  
Ambassador Francis Lorenzo,  
Chairman Mr. Cai E'Sheng,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to join you here today to discuss how South-South Cooperation, ICT and Financing for Sustainable Development can help us realize our global development agenda.

Work is now well underway at the United Nations to craft a new development framework for the post-2015 era. Deliberations are ongoing in the three main tracks that emanated from the Rio+20 Conference, namely the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and the Intergovernmental Committee on Sustainable Development Financing, meanwhile the discussion on options for a technology facilitation mechanism will begin at the end of this month.

At the same time, Governments have initiated preparations for a Third International Conference on Financing for Development, with the objectives to assess the progress made in the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration, to address new and emerging issues, and to reinvigorate and strengthen the financing for development follow-up process.

Within all these discussions a broad narrative is emerging. There is a common understanding that the financing needs are enormous and that the fulfilment of Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments will remain critical. There is also a need to focus attention on domestic resource mobilization, including through more effective tax systems and greater international cooperation. However, during the Rio+20 Conference Heads of State and Government acknowledged that in the face of our global challenges, public financing alone will not be sufficient. Public funds will have to be complemented by innovative sources of financing and multi-stakeholder partnerships.

In this context South-South cooperation offers new avenues for constructive collaboration, not as a substitute but rather as a complement to traditional North-South cooperation. Following a different historical rationale, South-South cooperation further emphasizes solidarity amongst developing countries, a cycle of mutual learning and sharing as well as national ownership, non-conditionality and demand driven assistance.

As the world witnesses the emergence of a global South, these models of cooperation offer great potential. Countries of the South are increasingly interdependent and interconnected as trade among them now represents a quarter of all world trade. With a shared understanding of their development challenges, developing countries can support each other and exchange solutions and approaches which are grounded in a common experience. Such collaborations can take various forms including knowledge and technology transfer, training, financial and in-kind contributions and bring together different actors in multi-stakeholder partnerships. As was evidenced in the thematic debate on the role of partnerships which we held this week in the General Assembly, these new configurations will play an essential role in the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

For this reason, I have decided to convene on 21 and 22 of May a High-level Event on the Contributions of North-South, South-South, Triangular Cooperation, and ICT for Development to the implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. This high-level event will focus on mobilizing political commitment at the highest level for the means of implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda and promote the scaling-up of the impact of all forms of cooperation. Excellencies,

As we seek to develop innovative forms of collaborations, Information and Communication Technologies is certainly a sector that has the potential to provide new solutions to our global development challenges. ICTs and broadband networks are instrumental in giving people voice and access to basic public services, information, knowledge and education. Innovative projects in the area of mobile telephony have made a difference in the lives of people on the ground. From the provision of banking services to the delivery of critical weather updates to farmers, the use of new technologies can bring life changing opportunities.

Yet, the digital divide is still keeping billions of people away from information networks. Significant disparities in access to Internet and broadband services within and among

countries create additional exclusion barriers. To close this gap, collaboration with the private sector, civil society and technical communities is essential. We have seen for instance how private investments in ICT infrastructure have complemented public financing in many countries. In addition, governments have a crucial role to play to ensure that ICTs support national development efforts. Effective use of ICTs should be embedded in policy design as well as in the delivery of public services.

This is why I am convinced that the achievement of our future sustainable development goals will be accelerated by spearheading action on existing goals and targets on ICT for development, such as the international commitment to significantly increase access to telecommunication services and to provide 100 per cent Internet access to Least Developed Countries by 2020.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Putting our planet on a sustainable development course is a task of momentous proportions, one that will require significant resources and commitments of all actors, including governments, the private sector and civil society. I trust that your discussions today will provide insightful contributions to the ongoing deliberations on the post-2015 framework and in particular, to the upcoming high-level event I will convene in the General Assembly on the Contributions of North-South, South-South and Triangular Cooperation, and ICT for Development to the implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Thank you.

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