

# **Intervention of the delegation of the Republic of Cuba at the Ministerial Meeting on South-South Cooperation.**

**(Doha, Qatar, 7 March)**

Excellencies,

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Cuban delegation welcomes and appreciates this Ministerial Meeting on South-South Cooperation within the framework of the Fifth Conference of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

The importance of prioritizing countries in special situations is reaffirmed, within the South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation schemes and initiatives promoted, due to their special vulnerabilities to face the challenges of development in an increasingly complex and critical international scenario for developing countries.

It is reiterated that South-South Cooperation is a complement and not a substitute for North-South cooperation, and is called to play an important role in the creation of solutions in the South and for the

South, through the promotion of platforms and tools that favor access to technical assistance schemes, the exchange of knowledge, capacities and the transfer of environmentally friendly technologies, under favorable conditions for developing countries.

The efforts made by the United Nations Development System to integrate South-South Cooperation as a means of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in its work programs and interventions at the national, regional and international levels, including through the Joint Strategy of the United Nations System on South-South Cooperation approved by the Secretary-General, are acknowledged.

Mr. Chairman,

The Cuban State takes advantage of the framework of this Meeting to reaffirm its commitment to South-South Cooperation, as endorsed in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action and the mandates derived from the Nairobi and PABA+40 High-Level Conferences on South-South Cooperation.

We make our limited resources and expertise in cooperation available to other nations, without conditions, with unrestricted respect for the sovereignty, national laws, culture, religion, and self-determination of the nations that request it.

We do so, firm to the principle of sharing what we have and not what we have too much, in spite of the obstacles and slander sustained against Cuba, such as the continuity and intensification of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the government of the United States against the country for 60 years, or the arbitrary and unjust inclusion of Cuba in the list of countries sponsoring terrorism.

In those same 60 years, Cuba has offered its international cooperation to 186 countries, mainly in the sectors of health, education, culture, sports, and disaster risk management and reduction, based on the principles of solidarity and friendship.

The country has cooperated with more than 30 nations through the teaching method "Yes, I can", and maintains a scholarship program that contributes to higher professional education in different countries, especially in Least Developed Countries.

The Cuban State's vocation for solidarity has earned it the Public Health Award in memory of Dr. Lee Joung-Wook, granted by the WHO Executive Board for the international solidarity work offered by our country in the face of natural disasters and serious epidemics, such as the Ebola outbreak in Africa or, more recently, the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the most critical moments of the pandemic, 46 medical brigades of the Henry Reeve Contingent provided their services in 39 countries.

In this context, I would like to extend our deepest condolences to the families of the victims of the recent earthquake that struck Türkiye and Syria, where we have sent a medical brigade that we hope can help care for the injured and sick at this painful time.

I would like to conclude this intervention by recalling a phrase of the Commander in Chief of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro Ruz, who expressed:

"To be an internationalist is to settle our own debt with humanity. Whoever is not capable of fighting for others, will never be capable enough to fight for himself."

Thank you very much.