



**121st ASSEMBLY OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION
AND RELATED MEETINGS**

Geneva, 19-21.10.2009

SUMMARY RECORDS

**OF THE PANEL DISCUSSION HELD DURING THE 121st ASSEMBLY IN GENEVA
(OCTOBER 2009)**

on the subject item

***"The role of parliaments in developing South-South and Triangular Cooperation with a
view to accelerating achievement of the Millennium Development Goals"***

chosen for debate by the Second Standing Committee
(Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade)

during the 122nd Assembly in March-April 2010 in Bangkok (Thailand)

The role of parliaments in developing South-South and Triangular Cooperation with a view to accelerating achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

Item 3 of the agenda

Panel discussion on the subject chosen for debate by the Second Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade during the 122nd Assembly in March-April 2010

Sitting of Tuesday, 20 October

(Morning)

The meeting was called to order at 9.10 a.m. with the President of the Second Standing Committee, Mr. P. Martin-Lalande (France), in the Chair.

The MODERATOR explained that the meeting would consist of an informal debate to prepare the final report to be discussed by the Second Standing Committee during the 122nd Assembly of the IPU to be held in Bangkok, Thailand, in March-April 2010.

Mr. F.-X. de DONNEA (Belgium), *co-Rapporteur*, said that at the halfway point to the 2015 deadline much progress remained to be made in order to attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Three major international crises had affected the world's progress in that regard: the food crisis, the climate change crisis and the economic and financial crisis. All means must be used to decrease the gap that would exist by 2015 between the countries that had and had not met the goals. It was clear that South-South cooperation was an increasingly powerful means of advancing development in least developed countries. That had been confirmed at the Havana and Doha summits, which had shown the results that could be achieved. The Marrakech Declaration had clearly stated the objective that South-South cooperation was more important than ever before. There were several dimensions to South-South cooperation, among which regional cooperation had become increasingly important. The *Accra Agenda for Action* emphasized the important development role of South-South cooperation to support and strengthen north-south cooperation. There were four important elements to South-South cooperation: official development assistance (ODA), trade, foreign direct investment and regional and cross-border cooperation for development. The report had been drafted in four chapters, which addressed each of those elements.

Official development assistance had existed for 50 years. The report contained a series of examples of such assistance, which had increased considerably over recent years. One particular form of assistance was triangular cooperation, in which Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) donor countries and other donors provided funds to developing countries, which used those funds to assist other developing countries. Although the volume of South-South cooperation had increased, statistics on this issue remained imprecise. In the 1990s, OECD donors had provided 95 per cent of ODA, whereas figures showed that South-South cooperation now accounted for between 8 and 10 per cent of total aid. Even fewer statistics existed in respect of triangular cooperation, the idea behind which was that contributors from the South were better placed to respond to the problems of least developed countries. It was therefore sometimes more effective for a country of the North to give funds to a country of the South to assist another country of the South. In the past, South-South cooperation had tended to focus on neighbouring countries. That trend was beginning to change, and China was providing aid to countries in other regions. Turning to the issue of the effectiveness of aid provided, he said that many countries of the South had not been involved in the work of the OECD for aid effectiveness. The *Accra Agenda for Action* encouraged developing countries to become involved in South-South cooperation and to abide by the principles set out in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Donor countries from the South were also urged to work with the OECD to develop good practices for development cooperation.

The second chapter of the report addressed the issue of trade. Developing countries' share of global merchandise trade had increased from 29 per cent in 1996 to 37 per cent in 2006. The third chapter discussed foreign direct investment, which had increased rapidly from developing

countries over the previous two decades, from 8 per cent in 1990 to nearly 15 per cent in 2007. That foreign direct investment was going from developing countries to other developing countries. The fourth chapter dealt with regional and cross-border cooperation for development. The Cotonou Partnership Agreement stated that regional integration was the process of overcoming, by common accord, political, physical, economic and social barriers that divided countries from their neighbours, and of collaborating in the management of shared resources and regional commons. Regional integration had three main objectives: political stability, economic development and regional public goods. The African Union had emphasized that integration was essential, particularly in view of the effects of globalization, since it ensured the viability of small economies. Regional integration could only have positive results if global governance and security were ensured.

Mr. G. LUBINDA (Zambia), *co-Rapporteur*, speaking on the role of parliaments in achieving the MDGs through triangular development cooperation and South-South cooperation, said that there were eight distinct, though interconnected, spheres of action for parliaments: First, parliaments could influence their respective countries' policies on matters dealt with in the United Nations and other international negotiating forums; second, they could keep themselves informed of the progress and outcome of international and regional negotiations with particular emphasis on South-South Cooperation; third, they could ensure the timely scrutiny and ratification of international and regional texts and treaties signed by governments; fourth, they could review national legislation to promote regional integration and South-South cooperation as well as the achievement of the MDGs; fifth, they could vote for sufficient budget allocations to programmes and sectors that addressed the MDGs; sixth, they could scrutinize reports on MDG programmes and sectors and recommend timely actions to enhance the achievement of the MDGs; seventh, they could contribute actively to the implementation process; and eighth, they could engage the general public in discussions about the MDGs and the implementation of programmes aimed at addressing and achieving them.

Parliaments in developed nations had specific responsibilities to fulfil, since the MDGs required their governments to meet certain aid obligations, and ensure that the value of aid given was not offset many times over by the negative effects of unfair trade regimes and the requirements of debt repayment, as was currently the case. That placed the onus on parliaments in developed countries to bring pressure to bear on their governments to honour their aid commitments, to ensure that aid was being used effectively, and not to separate oversight of aid policy from a wider consideration of trade policy and international finance. Northern parliaments could play a significant role in allocating, on an incremental basis, resources that promoted South-South and triangular cooperation. Northern parliaments could also encourage their governments to urge multilateral organizations, such as the Bretton Woods Institutions, to develop and foster the implementation of programmes that promoted trade between countries of the South.

Parliaments in developing countries also had a specific role to play, as the MDGs provided them with a perfectly tailored internationally agreed framework to hold their governments to account. One of the most important aspects of the mandate of parliamentarians in developing countries was to scrutinize the accountable and effective management of public financial resources, which was a fundamental responsibility of governments. According to recent World Bank estimates, approximately 5 per cent of global GDP disappeared through corruption and mismanagement. That figure was much higher in developing countries that were lagging behind in achieving the MDGs. If the goals were to be achieved, scarce resources must be spent on the needs of the people, hence the need for full transparency in the budget process. Parliamentarians should ensure that public expenditure management was accountable and transparent, and that public spending accrued to the poor, instead of to the rich, as was currently the case in too many developing countries.

Parliamentary committees, in their debates with sectoral ministries, should ensure that the MDGs featured prominently in sectoral policies, and that those policies were translated into effective service delivery. Countries must adopt policies that promoted South-South and triangular cooperation. Parliamentarians also needed to ensure that legislation became a relevant and effective tool for reducing poverty and meeting the MDGs. In many countries inheritance, property and tax laws urgently needed to be reviewed to ensure that women could participate fully and contribute to development. In order for the poor to be lifted out of poverty by unleashing their entrepreneurial spirit, legal reform was needed to improve the business climate, particularly for domestic investors. In many developing countries the volume of capital flight was actually larger than that of aid received. Legislation should also be established to support South-South cooperation efforts that were conducive to attaining the MDGs. Governance must be improved to create a capable State that could achieve the MDGs through

improving the quality and efficiency of the public sector, modernizing and reforming bureaucracy, decentralizing through empowerment of local authorities, and ensuring that political processes were inclusive, rather than simply politically representative through elected parliaments.

Parliaments must urge their governments to participate actively in efforts to develop South-South and triangular cooperation, including, at the global level, the G77 and China and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) States, which had served as the broadest mechanisms for consultation and policy coordination among developing countries. The positions adopted by the G77 and NAM constituted a comprehensive philosophy and framework for action for developing countries, and United Nations conferences, particularly the 2000 Millennium Summit, had guided recent North-South and South-South initiatives at the global and regional levels.

Mr. V. YU, *Coordinator of the Global Governance for Development Programme, South Centre, Panellist*, said that the South Centre was the embodiment of the idea South-South cooperation. It had been established in 1994 as the result of an understanding that developing countries required their own independent multilateral think-tank. The South Centre believed in the promise and reality of South-South cooperation and in the ability of developing countries to craft a better world for all.

Three interlinked crises faced developing countries at present: the climate change crisis, the international economic and financial crisis and the development crisis. Those crises had a much more severe impact on developing than on developed countries. As the development gap grew and inequality deepened, South-South cooperation at all levels had never been more essential. Parliaments could play a major role in shaping and guiding the actions of governments to ensure that South-South cooperation took place and served as the bedrock for engagement among developing and developed countries.

In order to address the climate change crisis in ways that promoted sustainable development for developing countries, efforts must be made to ensure that developed country partners cut their greenhouse gas emissions down to levels that reflected their past and current responsibility, in order to provide developing countries with their fair share of the global atmospheric space and carbon budget, and that they complied effectively with their existing treaty obligations to provide new and additional financing and technology transfers to developing countries to enable sustainable development. At the same time, developing countries must take on the challenge of using all appropriate means, including the financing and technology provided to them, to develop in sustainable ways. In that regard, effective development could only be achieved through national legislation and policies established by parliaments, which shaped the parameters of government action on climate change. Parliaments must identify the root causes of climate change and study its impact on developing countries. South-South cooperation was essential at the negotiating table in the context of climate change, and would be particularly important at the forthcoming COP15 Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen to ensure that the voices of developing countries were heard.

Developing countries were suffering the consequences of the global economic and financial crisis to a greater extent than developed countries. The current costs to developing countries were in arrested growth and development. In light of the current financial situation, South-South cooperation was essential to ensure the following: first, the creation of a stable financial system that could be enjoyed by developing countries; second, access to financial resources that developing countries would need to address the effects of the financial crisis and recover from its impact; third, that developing countries had the resources at their disposal to fuel their own development prospects, rather than sinking even deeper into economic crisis; fourth, that developing countries enjoyed full and effective access to developed country markets for their goods, since trade still constituted a major element in development strategies; fifth, that measures were taken to prevent collateral damage from developed country policies to respond to the crisis, as they entered the recovery phase; and sixth, that developing countries continued to have policy space. Parliaments must shape the kinds of policies their governments were expected to undertake.

The income gap between developed and developing countries continued to grow, and global inequality had continued to increase. That crisis had systemic roots in flaws in the global economic policy architecture. The role of developing countries in global economic policy making must be increased. Such changes would require the full range of South-South cooperation at all levels to ensure that developing countries' voices were heard. Parliaments would be able to play a significant part by considering the role of their governments in international institutions such as the World Bank, United Nations and the International Monetary Fund. Developing countries must put South-South cooperation into practice. They must look to each other to serve as markets, sources of ideas for development, and as partners in trade and cooperation. Deeper engagement in South-South regional integration

processes would enable developing countries to work effectively with partners in developed countries to furthering development objectives. Parliaments in developing countries should look closely at regional development initiatives, and support South-South cooperation initiatives, such as the Chiang Mai Initiative and the Bank of the South, to create a global system for trade preferences in developing countries, undertake practical technology transfers, and look at skills and capacity building and other practical aspects of South-South cooperation as a multilateral forum. The South Centre considered that the future of developing countries lay in their own hands. They must work together to ensure that work with developed partners was conducted on a basis of equality and full and effective participation. The South Centre was ready to work with parliaments to promote South-South cooperation and ensure that developing countries met their development potential and created the future they so richly deserved.

Debate

Mr. M. MATSUYAMA (Japan) said that worldwide people hoped for the eradication of poverty and hunger; Japan contributed to those world efforts. Speaking from the perspective of a donor country from the North, he said that recipient regions should be privatized. Thus far there had been discrepancies in progress from region to region; remarkable progress had been made in Asia but in Sub-Saharan Africa none of the MDGs were being met. While regions that had already begun to develop could be expected to continue to do so under their own momentum, it would be unrealistic to expect the same in Sub-Saharan Africa. It was important, therefore, to give certain regions priority when allocating development assistance. At the G8 2005 Gleneagles summit, governments in developed countries had pledged to double their official development assistance (ODA) to Africa by 2010. Parliaments must carefully monitor those activities. It was particularly important for developed countries to support South-South cooperation, since the effectiveness of South-South development assistance could be restricted by limited resources. Support from the North, in the form of triangular cooperation, was therefore particularly important. Japan was supporting South-South cooperation by sending experts for third-country training, establishing partnership programme agreements, and establishing the South-South Cooperation Fund under the aegis of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). His delegation believed that the increase in such proactive support initiatives would increase the effectiveness of South-South cooperation. Efforts must be made to ensure the efficiency of development assistance, since they could be costly in respect of human and financial resources. One of the key roles of parliaments was to monitor government activities, including the provision of development assistance, which entailed complex institutional and operational systems, necessitating expert knowledge for evaluation. It would therefore be useful to establish permanent bodies within parliaments, to conduct expert investigations into development assistance policies on an ongoing basis. The Japanese Parliament had established a committee for that purpose, which was fulfilling its monitoring and oversight functions in respect of Japanese-provided ODA, through discussions with government ministers. Development assistance study groups had also been established, the reports of which were used to assist in accounts, auditing and budget deliberations. Development could not be achieved through external factors alone; the most important factor for achieving it were self-help efforts by developing countries themselves. Parliamentarians in those countries should encourage such efforts.

Mr. K. EL SHAZLI (Egypt) said that twentieth century experience showed that countries could not face development challenges alone. There was therefore an urgent need for international cooperation in order to overcome development challenges at all levels. Tripartite, South-South and South-North cooperation were all fundamentally important when facing development challenges. Many countries were lagging behind in the development race. In order to deal with underdevelopment in developing countries, parliamentarians should play a monitoring role and ensure that governments were aware of their obligations at the internal and external levels. Food security was a priority MDG, the subject of which had been raised during the 2009 G8 meeting in Italy. The best approach to ensuring food security had been identified as not focussing on food aid, but rather on long-term solutions, namely the capacity of people to produce their own food and products locally and to have access to domestic markets. The President of Egypt had decided to provide an Egyptian initiative to explore the growth rates required for development and establish policies to avoid protectionism and trade imbalances. His delegation called on African States to make efforts to ensure stability, which was a pillar of development. Parliaments must urge their governments to comply with their commitments at the national, regional and international levels. Consideration should be given to the extent to which

countries of the North were committed to their engagement towards the countries of the South, knowing that developing countries were being exploited and used by developed countries for their own interests.

Mrs. TANG XIAOQUAN (China) said that development was the long term task of the international community. Since the Millennium Summit achievements had been made to ensure international cooperation and progress in the realization of the MDGs. Resources for development were still lacking, however, and the international financial crisis had resulted in many developing countries facing domestic economic difficulties and the deterioration of their external development structures. South-South cooperation was therefore an integral part of international cooperation for development efforts, since it encouraged developing countries to deepen their cooperation and support each others' development efforts. In recent years progress had been made in that regard, with the increase of trade and investment between developing countries, and new mechanisms and initiatives had been established to inject a new vigour into South-South cooperation. Developing countries should strengthen South-South cooperation efforts and work together to address the global financial crisis, follow the principle of mutual benefit and support, and explore new challenges and areas for cooperation. As representatives of public opinion, parliaments had a responsibility to promote international development cooperation and realize common and sustained development.

The National People's Congress of China encouraged all parliaments to encourage South-South cooperation and promote the achievement of MDGs. The Governments of developed countries should honour their commitments in respect of development assistance and debt relief, increase development resources, and create a favourable external environment for South-South cooperation. They should promote the opening of markets, expand trade and investment cooperation, strengthen technology transfer and share development resources and opportunities. They should also help developing countries to improve their capacities for self development, expand cooperation and exchange experiences. China had made significant progress in realizing the MDGs and was actively participating in international cooperation to help other developing countries through South-South cooperation. China provided assistance to 125 other countries, had waived the debts of 49 heavily indebted poor countries, and had granted a zero tariff agreement for 40 least developed countries. At the Beijing Summit on the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, Chinese leaders had announced a series of measures to help developing countries, in particular in Africa, including the establishment of a trust fund, debt relief and tariff exemption. At the forthcoming fourth ministerial meeting of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, new measures would be announced. China had faced considerable difficulties since the beginning of the international financial crisis. The National People's Congress was making great efforts to establish a global development partnership with other developing countries.

Mr. Y. THOMA (Cyprus) said that humanity was facing considerable problems, in particular poverty and hunger, which affected the daily lives of millions of people in developing countries. The fundamental question was how the international community could organize its response to those challenges, and what role parliamentarians could play in that endeavour. Those challenges had intensified as a result of recent financial turmoil and the current energy and food crises. The financial crisis would have undesirable consequences on development if efforts to repair damaged economic systems were not bolstered. The achievement of the MDGs depended on national and international parameters in developing and developed countries alike. Parliaments from the North and from the South could play an essential role in the attainment of the Goals, and by enhancing South-South and triangular cooperation by monitoring the implementation of development policies to guarantee their effectiveness in delivering poverty reduction. In that regard, it was crucial for Northern parliaments to support their governments in efforts to achieve the MDGs, and to provide oversight of aid policies and ensure that those policies contained elements on trade and international finance. The gap between developed and developing countries could only be breached by political will on the part of developed country governments. Thus far that political will had been lacking, and double standards were being applied.

Mr. P.B. BOGATI (Nepal) said that nine years earlier the international community had made a solemn pledge to ensure development for less fortunate populations by 2015. Six years from that deadline the time had come to take stock of the progress made and lessons learned. Serious introspection was required on the part of the international community and national governments. Parliaments had a role to play in overseeing government policies to ensure the fulfilment of the

commitments made at the Millennium Summit. Failure to meet the MDGs would be a collective failure of humanity. Nepal urged developed countries to meet their MDG obligations through the provision of ODA. Predictability of aid flows was required, along with support for capacity building and development programmes. Human needs must be fulfilled. Countries of the South must be innovative, recognize their strengths, and endeavour to share their best practices. Triangular cooperation could be particularly effective in that regard; if such efforts were made, the MDGs could be achieved.

Mr. D.H. OLIVER (Canada) said that South-South and triangular cooperation constituted innovative strategies, which signalled a growing recognition among nations that effective international development should not only occur in hierarchical relationships between traditional donor countries and the developing world. Merging economic powers blurred the lines between developing and developed, and showed that valuable skills and practices had been instrumental in achieving the impressive levels of economic growth and political stability enjoyed by particular countries in the developing world in the recent past. As a traditional donor country with a longstanding commitment to international development, Canada was eager to identify policies and programmes that would help its development assistance serve developing countries more effectively. That was a particularly pressing issue, since the deadline for meeting the MDGs was fast approaching. Developed countries had an obligation to support developing nations in the achievement of the MDGs. Strengthening support for developing countries did not only mean increasing aid volumes, but also ensuring that aid was provided more effectively. While Canada was already involved in North-North dialogue, South-South and triangular cooperation remained a relatively small proportion of Canadian programming. Some Canadian programmes, however, had been modelled on those development strategies, for example: In Haiti, Canada had funded an immunization campaign in partnership with Brazil, as well as an agricultural development project funded in partnership with Spain and run by Argentina and Brazil. Canada had also financed a project by which South Africans with expertise in public services delivery and management had provided assistance to civil servants in Burundi, Rwanda and southern Sudan to build new public services in order to assist in post-conflict recovery efforts. Those efforts showed the positive results of cooperation in which Canada provided financial assistance in conjunction with the expertise of southern partners that had a much more sophisticated understanding of the unique needs of fellow developing nations. Parliaments could use their positions and mandates to ensure that development policy objectives were formulated in a manner that best served the needs of the developing world.

Ms. L. AL-GAoud (Bahrain) asked how developing countries could meet the MDGs in light of the present financial crisis. Despite the positive message being given by some developed countries, the situation had deteriorated. The current global financial crisis was linked closely to the global energy crisis and climate change. It therefore constituted a global humanitarian crisis. That crisis had crossed borders. Poverty, hunger, lack of water and desertification were all fundamental difficulties that required a clearer and more just world order. The current financial system should be brought into question, to enable a fairer distribution of resources to all countries in the world. While her delegation noted its appreciation of the efforts of some countries to reduce these crises, it would be undesirable if loans provided imposed additional debt and burden on developing countries. She asked where were the billions of dollars that were supposed to have been pledged in official development assistance (ODA). They seemed to be moving between countries of the North, rather than arriving in countries of the South to provide the assistance promised. She called for improved monitoring and transparency in respect of the allocation, transfer and use of ODA funds. Greater accountability was required among donor countries, since their assistance was crucial to the fight against global poverty and hunger.

Mr. S.N. MOUSAVI (Islamic Republic of Iran) pointed out that some new opportunities for South-South cooperation had led to economic development, including interdependence and the promotion of trade and development between developing countries. The flow of investment from more to less developed countries of the South had led to increased cooperation and better progress towards the achievement of the MDGs. Participation in the international arena and triangular cooperation could help strengthen South-South cooperation in all developing countries. The MDGs should be viewed in the context of overall national development, economic growth and the fair distribution of wealth and resources. Achievement of the goals in the medium term would be possible through a cooperative atmosphere, synergy and exchanges of ideas in science and technology and human resources development. Parliamentarians had a key role to play in that regard. The Islamic Republic of Iran had

taken measures to reduce extreme poverty and reduce infant and maternal mortality. Enrolment in primary education was almost universal across the country and the ratio of female to male pupils was equal. The proportion of the population with access to safe drinking water had been greatly increased. Education and research in science and technology had been developed, and information communication technologies were widely available to the public. The national development plan of the Islamic Republic of Iran was based on justice, which could be a solid step towards the achievement of the MDGs.

Mr. R. Al SHAREEQI (United Arab Emirates) said that in the year 2000, the international community had pledged that 2015 would be the deadline for alleviating poverty once and for all as well as for ensuring gender equality, improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, and meeting other development goals. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) focussed on attaining those goals and giving assistance to other developing countries. The United Arab Emirates had provided over 10 billion dollars in assistance in 2006. That aid had been targeted at development efforts in the Gulf region and to assist other developing countries. Further initiatives were required at the national level to meet the development goals. In 2008 the UAE had launched an initiative to provide healthcare for over half a million people to address eye diseases. Cardiovascular centres provided care for many patients from developing countries. Initiatives of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and G20 must take account of the changes taking place at the international level, and take care not to marginalize developing countries, thus ensuring fairer distribution of funds. Trade flows were needed to promote economic development in southern countries and solve problems, including poverty, by eliminating tariff barriers to trade.

Mr. K.R. KHAN (India) said that in September 2000 the international community had set the Millennium Development Goals to work towards a fairer world order. In 2009, halfway to the MDG deadline of 2015, there were considerable gaps in progress towards meeting those Goals. Added to that less than optimistic scenario the world was going through unprecedented economic and food crises, and the effects of climate change were becoming increasingly evident, with potentially devastating impact. Global partnership, as embodied in the Millennium Declaration, was crucial and must be complemented by national efforts. Although India followed the principle that the responsibility for meeting the MDGs lay with national governments, a global partnership for development was also necessary. The key issue in that regard was to significantly increase official development assistance (ODA). Attainment of the MDGs would remain elusive unless development assistance commitments were translated into action. Although India, as a developing country, did not have aid responsibilities in the context of global partnership, it had been making efforts at the multilateral level through South-South and triangular cooperation. Several innovative ideas had been raised for financing development and the attainment of the MDGs. In that context, India had been an active participant in the Sixth Plenary Meeting of the Leading Group on Innovative Financing for Development. Innovative financing, however, was not a substitute for ODA. Many developed countries considered that South-South and triangular cooperation should involve larger developing countries shouldering a shared responsibility in the provision of ODA, based on the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. His delegation believed that the Paris Declaration pertained only to developed countries and was not applicable to South-South and triangular cooperation.

Mr. F.-X. de DONNEA (Belgium), *co-Rapporteur*, said that the comments made so far in the debate had highlighted the increasing importance of South-South and triangular cooperation not only to meet the MDGs but also to resolve the crises currently facing the world. Thus far a consensus had emerged on the importance of South-South cooperation to resolve complex problems facing the North and South alike, including the food and climate change crises. Parliaments had an important role in strengthening cooperation between the North and the South.

Mr. G. LUBINDA (Zambia), *co-Rapporteur*, commended the wealth of ideas that was being expressed. He noted in particular several questions: where were the billions of dollars that had been pledged in official development assistance and the MDGs? Where was the zeal, with which the whole international community had adopted the MDGs in 2000? And why had it taken so long for the world's parliamentarians to consider what their role was in the process? The world had become a global village, in which elements that affected the least developed would eventually affect the whole world. Consideration should be given to the practical measures parliamentarians could take to concretize

initiatives to reduce poverty, and what steps could be taken at the national, regional and international levels. He welcomed all the comments and ideas being put forward, which would serve to fuel the discussion of the Second Standing Committee at the 122nd Assembly in Bangkok.

Mr. V. YU, *Coordinator of the Global Governance for Development Programme, South Centre, Panellist*, said that the comments made thus far resonated closely with the work of the South Centre. On the question raised by the representative of Bahrain on where the billions of dollars pledged in official development assistance had gone, he said that words must be backed up by action and commitments must be complied with, and for far too long that had not been the case. The global community's commitment to support the development objectives of developing countries had not been respected. For too long there had been policy incoherence between institutions. The key value of South-South cooperation – the commitment of developing countries – was therefore crucial for shaping coherent global economic, financial and environmental policy architecture. The practical examples of South-South cooperation given during the debate thus far showed that progress could be made. Country-level actions on South-South cooperation must be linked to the actions taken by the global community and by developing countries, to ensure that institutions were more equitable, and that countries were better represented and could make their voices heard in the shaping of global policies. Parliamentarians should consider how to make global economic policies and institutions more coherent with each other in respect of the attainment of the MDGs. Regarding triangular cooperation and the role of emerging developing countries as providers of ODA, he said that while existing mechanisms for donor-recipient relationships such as those developed in the context of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) had a role to play, those mechanisms had been born of the experiences of developed donor countries, and were not necessarily applicable to developing countries in the context of South-South cooperation. The United Nations Economic and Social Council had established a high-level Development Cooperation Forum in 2007, which was more legitimate and more universal, and provided the space for developing countries to have a greater input in shaping development efforts.

Ms. R. DASHTI (Kuwait) said that the world was still suffering the negative impact of the economic and financial crisis, and the resultant increase in unemployment. In countries of the South, the standard of living had deteriorated and economic plans had collapsed. The whole international community had a role to play in facing the crisis. Governments must strengthen South-South cooperation and find the means to overcome the worst effects of the crisis. Consideration should be given on how to proceed to prevent the situation deteriorating further. Laws must be passed by parliaments to increase exchanges and trade flows between countries of the South. The National Council of Kuwait had set up a unique fund, which had been the first financial institution established to help Arab developing countries. Since 1994 the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development had provided over 14 billion dollars in aid, from which many developing countries had benefitted. Awards had been granted by the Fund to reward economic development achievements, small and medium enterprises and developments in the healthcare sector. Kuwait had tried to ensure debt relief following an initiative launched by the late Sheikh Al-Sabah.

Mr. P. TANBANJONG (Thailand) said that Thailand was playing a leading role in regional and subregional development initiatives in order to promote economic cooperation and human development, and achieve the MDGs. Thailand aimed to increase multilevel dialogue and cooperation at all levels. In response to a new paradigm in the Thai Government's foreign policy, Thailand had transitioned from being a recipient country to becoming an emerging donor country. Since 2003, Thailand's International Development Cooperation Agency had been playing a more active role in promoting development cooperation efforts reaching from South Asia, to the Middle East, Africa and even Latin America and the Caribbean. Thailand had transferred its experience of sustainable economic policy to other countries to enhance their development and strengthen their human resources. An example of that support was the establishment by the Thai Government of a self-sufficient economic programme in Lesotho. Thailand also supported the involvement of the private sector in development in the South. His delegation believed that parliamentarians must encourage their governments to participate actively and increasingly in efforts to develop South-South and triangular cooperation at all levels.

Ms. CHEW MEI FUN (Malaysia) said that South-South cooperation was an important modality by which the experiences and skills of some developing countries were transferred to others. Globalization had magnified the inequalities between countries. In order to safeguard their own interests, developing countries must strengthen South-South cooperation in order to strengthen their capacity to participate effectively in the decision-making processes of global institutions. Only through coming together in South-South cooperation could developing countries hold an equal footing in negotiations with countries of the North. There was an urgent need for developing countries to strengthen the effectiveness of multilateral processes, since the core economic interests of developing countries were the same. No developing country alone had the capacity to influence the nature and outcome of negotiation processes in international forums. Sharing experiences and best practices was a cornerstone of South-South cooperation. In light of that, parliaments should promote technical cooperation programmes to share their areas of expertise with other countries of the South. To further promote South-South cooperation, partnerships should be forged at all levels, including civil society, businesses, political leadership, the media, labour, and the population at large. South-South cooperation could be improved with the involvement of countries of the North. Such efforts should be based on the pooling of expertise from partner countries of the North and South, for the comparative advantage of countries of the South. Multilateral agencies, such as the United Nations Development Fund (UNDP), could provide support for improved South-South cooperation. A systematic approach to technical cooperation among developing countries and third-country training programmes with emphasis on the requests of the recipient country was required. Such an approach should replace the ad hoc programmes currently being implemented. Developing countries should use South-South cooperation as a key strategy for attaining the MDGs. South countries should bear in mind that while support from the international community was welcome, they must not become overly dependent on assistance. In respect of poverty eradication, parliaments should ensure that a comprehensive social safety net policy was established, and that best practices were shared among countries of the South. Such a policy should involve not only traditional financial aid but also, and most importantly, the implementation of productive welfare through understanding the root causes of poverty, categorizing needs and the support required in respect of human capital development.

Ms. G. GAUTIER (France) said that she had requested that the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians focus on the fifth MDG on maternal health. In 2015 a major target must be met, and although progress had been made much remained to be done. The international financial and economic crisis had been a hindrance to the achievement of development objectives, particularly in least developed countries, and women were in the most vulnerable situation. Efforts must be increased and no stone should be left unturned in strengthening South-South and triangular development cooperation. Challenges to maternal health should be addressed through health education, particularly for teenagers; training in respect of customs, traditions and lifestyles, in particular food and hygiene, and equal access to healthcare. A particular focus should be placed on single women in precarious health situations. Lack of access to healthcare was a main cause of high levels of maternal mortality. Efforts should be made to improve data collection in order to assess the situation. In sub-Saharan Africa one in thirteen women died in childbirth, as opposed to one in 4000 in developed countries. Those statistics demonstrated that the situation must be addressed as a matter of urgency, and parliamentarians had a role to play in that regard. The MDGs pertaining to healthcare were still far from being met. Consideration should be given to the degree of awareness parliamentarians had of the situation of maternal health in their country and in other countries, to what degree aid for South-South cooperation should be increased in order to improve maternal healthcare, and to what should be the focus of new policies in order to attain the MDGs. The international community could rise to those challenges through determination and improved awareness.

Mr. P. MUSHELENGA (Namibia) said that South-South cooperation was an important element of the foreign policy aimed at achieving mutually beneficial relations among the countries of the South. Multilateral South-South cooperation was pursued in a number of organizations including the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77. Bilateral South-South cooperation differed between countries, with the countries of Southern Africa focusing their development cooperation efforts on relations with Brazil, China and India. Thus far, Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Trade had played an exclusive role in championing South-South cooperation. It had become accepted, however, that foreign policy could no longer remain an exclusive domain of the executive branch of government. The role of parliament was increasingly relevant not only for ratifying agreements but also for monitoring their

development and implementation. Parliaments should be adequately informed of the progress made by the executive towards attaining the MDGs. Brainstorming sessions should be convened to bring together the relevant ministries, parliamentary committees, regional governments, local authorities and the private sector to define the role of each stakeholder in ensuring the attainment of the MDGs. Informal and formal consultations between the executive and legislature would ensure that parliament was given regular updates, and could therefore monitor effectively the South-South cooperation aspect of foreign and trade policies, and could not fail in fulfilling its oversight functions.

Ms. Y. REGUEIFEIROS (Cuba) said that there were a number of forums currently discussing progress towards the attainment of the MDGs. Cuba had declared that it was determined to resolve the situation of poverty, which was affecting over 80 per cent of the global population. That situation could only change if the wealthy abandoned their privileges to ensure a fairer distribution of wealth. The unsustainable global order that was condemning the South to live in poverty must be changed. South-South cooperation was an important aspect of international development cooperation, which should complement, rather than replace, North-South cooperation. The international community must support the efforts of developing countries through development cooperation without any conditionality. Cuba had a vast experience in that regard and had used its cooperation capacity to improve the situation of people in 27 different countries. In cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Cuba was making efforts to promote education based on solidarity between different cultures, since education and cultures were an important aspect of nations' wealth. Although a better world for all was possible and necessary, it could only be achieved if the countries of the North faced up to the world's development challenges.

Mr. I. GHALIOUN (Syrian Arab Republic) said that despite the efforts being made to increase development, there remained a considerable disparity between quality of life in countries of the North and those of the South. The South had witnessed terrible suffering. The responsibility of countries of the North lay in international solidarity, rather than charity. Development in the South must be achieved in a dignified manner. Invasion and occupation constituted a waste of resources and denied occupied countries the right to fulfil their potential, and the people their fundamental rights. Since 1967, the Golan Heights had been occupied by Israel. Owing to that occupation, the Syrian Arab Republic was being prevented from using and benefitting from its national resources. The land and resources should be returned by Israel to the people of Syria. Developed countries must ensure that developing countries could participate in their own development and the creation of wealth. Developing countries should not have to pay the price for the ruining of the planet, which had been caused by the developed world.

Mr. F.K. KUNDI (Pakistan) said that there were a number of challenges currently facing the world. If unaddressed, those challenges could reverse the efforts made so far to attain the MDGs. Parliaments had an important role to play in ensuring the attainment of the MDGs. His delegation considered that South-South cooperation could be improved by encouraging South-South trade initiatives, such as investment in transport and communications networks. Innovative financing solutions should be encouraged, such as regional systems that would allow the use of local currencies in international trade. Aid for trade should be made available to enhance South-South cooperation. Regional development banks should be established, and the resources of central banks of countries of the South should be pooled at the regional level, in order to provide regional coordination support for exchange rates. Access to export insurance services should be improved. Continuous evaluation and improvement of trade-related infrastructure were required to link developing countries at the regional and international levels. South-South cooperation should be strengthened through improving technology transfers. The Doha round of trade negotiations should be concluded as soon as possible. Trade access to the South could be promoted by relaxing visa regimes. Equality and environmental standards for exportable products should be harmonized. Regional trade and transfer agreements and the establishment of free trade areas between developing countries would promote development, peace and stability, and would help towards the attainment of the MDGs. The support of the international community was required in that regard. South-South and triangular cooperation, and the building of meaningful partnerships between developing countries were the most effective way to ensure development and financial security.

Mr. S. AL-HUSSEINI (Saudi Arabia) said that there were a number of reasons for the current international financial crisis. Long-term rather than ad hoc solutions must be sought. The IPU must

examine all of the factors that had contributed to the crisis very carefully, in order to contribute to finding a solution. International development cooperation was particularly important, since it provided support for the development of nations. Unfortunately, the global financial crisis, which had originated in the richest countries in the world, was having a serious effect on developing countries. Rich nations should consider and address the reasons for the crisis. Saudi Arabia considered trade liberalization to be one of the factors behind the current crisis situation. Saudi Arabia, as a donor country, provided a substantial amount of development assistance, and played an important role in development cooperation.

Mr. N. EVANS (United Kingdom) said that all parliamentarians had an important role to play to ensure that governments fulfilled their obligations, and should question them on the whereabouts and use of funds allocated to development assistance. Since the world was facing a major financial crisis, it would be easy for governments to cut back on financial aid for international development. Such an approach would be wrong. The needs of the poorest people in the world were crucial and must be met. His Government had pledged to allocate 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product to unconditional official development assistance by 2013. Developed countries had an ethical responsibility to ensure that their technology, particularly in respect of climate change, was shared with the poorest countries in the world. In developed countries supermarkets traded with the developing world. They must not be allowed to take products from developing countries at the lowest possible prices. Supermarkets had an ethical obligation to ensure fair trade, since any other type of trade was tantamount to stealing food from developing countries. Parliamentarians in developed countries had a responsibility to ensure that fair prices were paid for food procured from developing countries.

Mr. M.M. EL-TIGANI (Sudan) said that his delegation supported the reference made in the draft report to the link between policies and the possibility of meeting the MDGs. The participation of the private sector in a climate of political stability in developing countries was particularly important. Stability was essential for investment. Violence, political instability and poor infrastructure in many African countries were creating obstacles to development. Direct air links did not exist between many African countries, which rendered practical access to cooperation possibilities particularly difficult. Serious consideration must be given to how the situation could be changed. Many aspects of cooperation had not been mentioned thus far in the debate, such as cooperation through education and teaching, and the issuing of scholarships. Many universities in Sudan offered courses and diplomas to students from other countries who were seeking a sound education, which constituted a good example of South-South cooperation. Scholarships from education institutions in developed countries for students from developing countries could enable students to obtain a quality education, and return to their home countries with greater expertise, which would be a positive step in the development process.

Mr. F. MEZA (Chile) said that more than a billion people lived on less than one dollar per day, and the same number did not have access to clean drinking water. The international community had pledged to eliminate the effects of HIV/AIDS and halve the number of people living in poverty by 2015. At the halfway stage to that deadline, there was a high risk that those objectives would not be met. Although progress had been made in Chile, and poverty had been halved, obstacles remained to the attainment of the MDGs. Although the Goals constituted a set of declarations, which had been established for developing countries by the developed world, failure to attain them was viewed as the responsibility of countries of the South. Global statistics on development had been skewed by considerable progress in a small number of countries, particularly those in East and South East Asia, which concealed the problems that remained in other regions. While there had been a global reduction in average poverty figures, in some countries the poverty gap had increased. Free public education was essential to reduce the inequality of opportunities currently seen in the world. The international financial crisis had become an obstacle to the attainment of the MDGs. Local actors were being held responsible for failure to meet the MDGs, particularly least developed countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Global actors must also shoulder that responsibility. Parliamentarians must turn the MDGs into an opportunity to work towards the increased wellbeing of a significant portion of humanity.

Mr. N. M'MITHIARU (Kenya) said that the dual problem of poverty and hunger was affecting all developing countries. Without overcoming the root causes of poverty and hunger progress could not be made in other aspects of development. Kenya depended heavily on agriculture. Regarding trade, he

said that distortions had occurred as a result of subsidies and other protection mechanisms, which must be eradicated in order to achieve a trade balance between the North and the South. The MDGs were a joint venture between developed and developing countries, and all stakeholders must therefore shoulder their respective responsibilities. There was a tendency to place blame for lack of development on countries of South for failing to make appropriate use of aid received. He called on all countries of the North to ensure that they met their commitments on the provision of official development assistance. Kenya was on course to meet the second and sixth MDGs, but had much progress yet to make in order to reach the other Goals. The role of parliaments could not be downplayed at such a crucial stage. South-South cooperation was very important, and should be central to development efforts. Parliaments must ensure that governments were accountable and transparent, in order for the use of all development assistance funds to be followed up. A coordinated approach was required to linkages between North-South and South-South ventures. A working group for countries of the South should be established under the auspices of the South Centre or the IPU to ensure that there was a coordinated approach to monitoring progress towards the attainment of the MDGs.

Mr. M.S. SONG (Republic of Korea) said that South-South and triangular cooperation were particularly important in the context of meeting the MDGs. The Republic of Korea had accumulated knowledge and experience in extending official development assistance to countries in the different regions, and had transitioned from being a recipient country to being a donor country. Korea's experience in economic, social and political development was therefore broadly applicable and provided fresh lessons. In the Republic of Korea's experience, triangular cooperation had added value when granting increasingly large sums of ODA. The National Parliament was currently in the process of drafting a basic law on ODA, which included the establishment of a development assistance committee and efforts to streamline development assistance in a manner more suitable to recipient countries and regions. It would also enable the process of South-South and triangular cooperation. His delegation expected international efforts to be made, including the more effective arrangement of triangular cooperation through specific programmes that enabled concrete results, rather than vague promises. Efforts should be made to enhance the governance of recipient countries, which would promote and expand the scope of triangular cooperation.

Mrs. K. FERRIER (Netherlands) said that there had been much discussion on the effectiveness of development cooperation, which had shown that although much had been achieved, negative effects remained. Developing countries tended to be too focussed on donors, which resulted in donors holding the decision-making power. There had been global recognition of the considerable possibilities and benefits afforded by South-South cooperation, including exchanges of ideas and experiences, and common programmes and projects. The success of development lay primarily in the hands of developing countries. Parliamentarians in developing countries must therefore ensure that their governments were held to account. Often governments of developing countries placed more focus on the opinions of donor countries than on the opinions of their own populations. Parliamentarians must seek opportunities to work together on South-South cooperation at a practical level. Parliamentarians in donor countries should recognize the benefits of strengthening South-South and triangular cooperation, for example through involving migrant communities in establishing development policies in donor countries. The world was facing many challenges, and South-South cooperation could make a considerable difference to how easily those challenges were overcome. Developing countries must have the space to organize the use of those donations in their own way.

Mr. M.V. SISULU (South Africa) said that in the arena of global governance the line between the domestic and the international was often blurred. Matters relating to international trade, the global economy, peace, security and climate change would continue to be areas of focus for national governments and parliaments. South Africa viewed its relationship with countries of the South as central to its international relations and international policy development. South Africa was closely involved in the activities of organizations such as the Non-Aligned Movement, and the Group of 77 and China. The leaders of those forums had commended the progress towards attaining the MDGs, which was evident from the establishment of the initial poverty and social assessment (IPSA) facility fund for the alleviation of poverty and hunger. The Non-Aligned Movement had also called for a comprehensive evaluation of progress towards meeting the MDGs. The G77 promoted South-South trade through a global system of trade preferences. The G77 and China had adopted numerous ministerial declarations that had reiterated their commitment to the MDGs. His delegation noted with gratitude contributions made by

Canada to South Africa's assistance efforts in Burundi, Rwanda and southern Sudan. That was a specific example of triangular cooperation. Parliaments had a role to play in overseeing the implementation by the executive of internationally adopted declarations. In 2006 the IPU had adopted, which clearly set out the role of parliaments in overseeing the attainment of the MDGs. Parliaments must remain true to their commitments to represent the voice and aspirations of the people in all aspects of governance. In that regard, parliamentary international relations were a continuation of political processes, cognisant of global developments and a changing world order. Parliaments must ensure that governments fulfilled their international obligations.

Mr. A. MONTIEL (Venezuela) said that Venezuela's international cooperation experience was based on four principles to ensure that the will of the people was respected in all public policies: first, respect for sovereignty; second, solidarity between peoples; third, cooperation and diplomacy; and fourth, complementarity between nations. Venezuela's strategy was intended to strengthen democracy, ensure that poverty and inequality were eradicated and that the international community focussed on the realities and expectations of developing countries, where the injustice of international capitalism caused the greatest damage. Achievements had been made in Venezuela, owing to the leadership of President Hugo Chavez, who had made efforts to ensure international communication. The President had begun an initiative to establish inter-regional and bi-regional cooperation forums. Such forums had been held recently, in which heads of State from Latin American and African countries had participated, so as to take cross-cutting measures to ensure that the MDGs would be attained. Venezuela had already made considerable progress towards the attainment of the MDGs.

Mr. A. SUGANDI (Indonesia) said that the MDG indicator report showed that progress towards meeting the goals was slow. His delegation urged developed countries to meet their commitments to accelerate the achievement of the MDGs and take particular measures to support the attainment of the first MDG, on poverty alleviation. Consideration could be given to establishing a United Nations trust fund for the achievement of the MDGs. Developing countries must continue their efforts to negotiate debt cancellation or reduction programmes, to take advantage of global non-loan funding schemes and to remove internal obstacles to the attainment of the MDGs, such as corruption. On multilateral cooperation, he emphasized the importance of developing countries working closely with developed countries to find creative and collaborative solutions to poverty around the world. There was a lack of institutional infrastructure and coordination and the national and international levels for South-South and triangular cooperation activities. Parliaments should work closely with their respective governments to facilitate the establishment of coordinating agencies for South-South cooperation. Those agencies should gather information from academic institutions, enterprises and NGOs on their activities in other developing countries. They should also compile information on South-South and triangular cooperation activities assisted by traditional donors or multilateral or regional agencies. His delegation acknowledged that the IPU placed considerable importance on the attainment of the MDGs, and expressed its support for the draft report.

Ms. J. ABU ZNAID (Palestine) said that sustainable development could not take place without social justice. Countries were providing assistance to Palestine to help establish an adequate infrastructure, which was continually attacked and destroyed by Israel. Billions of dollars had therefore gone to waste. Social safety and security did not exist in Palestine, when destruction was being wrought on a daily basis. Palestine needed sustainable development, which could not be achieved owing to the wall of separation, the destruction of infrastructure and the closure of roads. Such treatment of Palestine was contrary to the principles of South-South cooperation. Immediate assistance was required, since sustainable development could not be achieved under occupation. The Palestinian people must be allowed to enjoy their fundamental rights.

Ms. E. BUCUMI (Burundi) said that Burundi had been affected by crises and atrocities. In 2005, the Government of Burundi had taken measures to ensure free schooling, provide free medical services for children below the age of five years and new mothers. Those measures had included the building of new schools and dispensaries, using community work. The President of Burundi had turned to the local population to seek their support in that development effort. Action had been taken to reduce the number of cases of malaria. The 2005 Constitution made specific provisions for the empowerment of women in all sectors. Burundi had also sought active South-South and triangular cooperation possibilities in respect of education and healthcare.

Mr. M.S.A. BHUIYAN (Bangladesh) said that the effects of the global financial crisis had been worldwide, as a result of which the 2009 MDG Progress Report had stated that the number of people living in extreme poverty could increase from 55 million to 90 million. Comprehensive economic development could not be achieved without a shared sense of responsibility. Bangladesh had been able to preserve gains made in respect of security, economic performance and social protection. According to the UNDP, Bangladesh had advanced significantly on the Human Development Index ranking. The Government of Bangladesh had been addressing sustainable development by drafting and implementing comprehensive national studies. In order to address the food crisis, a social safety net programme had been launched. Funding had been prioritized for infrastructure development, energy, universal primary and secondary education and healthcare. A national action plan had been developed, which had been approved by Parliament to overcome the effects of the economic and financial crisis. The plan included specific policy and fiscal action to improve food security, stimulate employment, ensure security of energy supplies and stimulate economic markets. South-South and triangular cooperation were growing dimensions in international development cooperation, which played a complementary role to traditional bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Almost all types of development cooperation were in the form of projected and technical assistance with few or no conditions attached. His delegation considered that the international community should ensure a full global partnership for development. Donors should strive to strengthen the national and global capacities that were already in place. The international financial, monetary and trade systems should be reformed. Protectionism must be avoided and a system should be provided to ensure that developing countries, and particularly those emerging from conflict, could attain the MDGs. South-South cooperation should complement North-South cooperation. Decisions taken by the G20 should be honoured swiftly. United Nations development agencies should seek to overcome the unjust economic order and secure long-term financial development. Developing countries should seek to establish secure partnerships for the attainment of the MDGs by 2015.

Mr. A.D. DICKO (Burkina Faso) said that South-South cooperation involved technical cooperation among developing countries focussing on exchanges of experience, capacity building, technical assistance and economic cooperation. Although to date Burkina Faso's experience of South-South cooperation remained limited, it had engaged in a number of triangular cooperation projects in respect of agriculture, healthcare, sports and vocational training. Burkina Faso was establishing more effective mechanisms for the evaluation of such technical cooperation projects with development partners. Technical cooperation would motivate private and public partners to implement projects in a South-South context. That kind of cooperation should set a sound basis for peaceful development. The President of Burkina Faso had expressed his commitment to bilateral development projects with Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire.

Mrs. J. FOTSO (Cameroon) welcomed the efforts of the IPU to address development issues around the world. Parliaments were often not consulted in decisions regarding development aid, despite the fact that parliamentarians were the representatives of the people. Parliaments should be involved in those decisions in order to ensure true aid effectiveness. Donors should give priority to projects that met the basic needs of the people, rather than more complex projects.

Mr. K. APPIAH PINKRAH (Ghana) said that sub-Saharan Africa was a major recipient of development assistance. Efforts should be made to redress imbalances and ensure IPU and national parliamentary participation in development processes. South-South and triangular cooperation should be based on certain principles: it should not infringe on the sovereignty of countries, and good practices should be adapted to the specific situations of different countries. In order to ensure that the maximum benefit was gained from such processes, the IPU should take measures to integrate the MDGs into its agenda. A special IPU unit should be established to develop mechanisms for the coordination of South-South cooperation. Parliaments should play a number of roles at various levels, including advocacy of South-South cooperation, and parliaments should promote development cooperation policy initiatives. Parliaments could develop a clearing house mechanism to facilitate exchanges of information, expertise and opportunities. Policy initiatives should be promoted and supported by parliaments. Investment policies should be linked to legislation, and parliaments must ensure that an investor-friendly environment existed. They should also strive to ensure transparency and inclusiveness, and provide oversight and ensure accountability on the part of governments.

Mr. A. VOTSIS (Cyprus) said that effective, democratic and transparent governance was required in order to accelerate the achievement of the MDGs, which would facilitate the establishment of global partnership for development with objectives for aid, trade and debt relief. Some countries had made considerable progress towards meeting the MDGs, while others had slowed down, or even regressed. Although countries in the South had established comprehensive programmes for growth and poverty reduction when the Goals had been set, successful implementation remained a challenge. Sustained economic growth since the late 1980s had led some developing countries to become regional centres of economic development. In the context of South-South cooperation, developing countries could work together in solidarity to design and implement strategies to ensure a constant driving force behind the new geography of international economic relations, which was constant and had a positive outcome throughout the South. Parliamentarians had an important role to play to promote South-South and triangular cooperation by influencing decision makers and monitoring and controlling the implementation of the relevant budget. The Cypriot Parliament was fully committed to that effort, despite the fact that 40 per cent of the territory of Cyprus had been under Turkish occupation since 1974. All parliamentarians must be committed to screening their governments' policies for attaining the MDGs.

Mrs. A.A. AL QUBAISI (United Arab Emirates) said that parliamentarians must consolidate cooperation and solve the problems of developing countries. Parliamentarians should be included in international meetings to discuss the implications of the global financial crisis. All efforts should be made to rectify the impact of the crisis on developing countries. Investment was particularly important. Richer countries should play a greater role in decision-making processes for development programmes in developing countries. The United Arab Emirates was taking measures in respect of education and healthcare, which it hoped would be taken up and developed by other countries in order to accelerate the attainment of the MDGs.

Mr. V. YU, *Coordinator of the Global Governance for Development Programme, South Centre, Panellist*, said that the debate had shown that for developing countries South-South cooperation represented not only technical and financial cooperation but also political cooperation. North-South cooperation at the political level was required to secure the attainment of the MDGs. Countries of the South should focus on working together on the basis of common development objectives. Regional institutions should engage with each other in cooperative action. A new global development partnership should be established with a view to meeting the MDGs.

Mr. F.-X. de DONNEA (Belgium), *co-Rapporteur*, said that the ideas expressed during the debate would be incorporated into the draft resolution to be discussed at the Second Standing Committee during the 122nd Assembly of the IPU in Bangkok in 2010. The debate had illustrated a general recognition of the importance of South-South and triangular cooperation in order to reach the MDGs and overcome the challenges posed by the food and financial crises. Several delegations had given examples of how South-South cooperation went beyond technical cooperation, and included the liberalization of trade in regional spaces, and the reduction of trade and customs barriers. He emphasized that the IPU should ensure monitoring and follow-up of the resolutions adopted at its meetings.

Mr. G. LUBINDA (Zambia), *co-Rapporteur*, said that there had been a number of clear statements made during the debate, in particular that all parliamentarians were committed to making a better world, with socioeconomic justice and equality for all. Parliamentarians had a significant role to play in that regard. It was also clear that parliamentarians from countries of the North had a very specific role to play through questioning the efficiency of their governments' foreign direct investment and the prudence of investors when imposing conditions on their investments. Parliaments should enquire of their governments the precise destination and intended use of their official development assistance. The discussion had provided a significant number of ideas to be incorporated into the report and draft resolution for discussion at the forthcoming 122nd Assembly of the IPU in Bangkok.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.