

SOUTH-SOUTH CO-OPERATION BANQUET

HARARE, 12 NOVEMBER, 1985

*Toast proposed by Mr Agha Hasan Abedi,
Chairman, Board of Trustees of the Third
World Foundation for Social and Economic
Studies, in honour of His Excellency Comrade
Robert Mugabe, Prime Minister of the Republic
of Zimbabwe.*

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Honourable Prime Minister, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

For all us in the Third World Foundation and for me personally, it has been a great honour indeed to have had the opportunity of collaborating with the University of Zimbabwe in organising this conference on a subject of vital international concern. Nothing is more important than, for the developing countries, to collaborate with one another in the fields of finance, industry, investment and trade to withstand the challenge and pressure of world economic forces which are threatening to consign the future of the Third World to gloom and despair. Terms of trade continue to worsen, commodity prices in real terms, except the price of oil, are lower than at any time since the aftermath of the Second World War. Industrial countries resort to protectionism, regardless of their professed commitment to free trade and all the while the debt burden continues to worsen.

Excellencies, may I here say a few words to express our thanks to Dr Chidzero, Chairman of the National Committee and its Members, for devising such an imaginative format and structure for the conference and defining the specific themes in the area of South-South Co-operation for examination by the eminent scholars who have gathered to participate in this Conference. It is a tribute to Dr Chidzero's grasp of major economic issues of the world, his experience of the working of international institutions and his contribution to the judicious handling of Zimbabwe's economy that we have with us scholars and statesmen from all parts of the world to evaluate the experience and prospects of South-South Co-operation and recommend appropriate programmes of action for the future.

Excellencies:

The Foundation began its work with the first South-South get-together in Arusha, Tanzania, in December, 1978 where we had the honour to welcome President Julius Nyerere who provided us with the guidelines for our future activities as one of the very distinguished participants. His inspiring contribution helped us to formulate our own *programme of work* as an independent non-governmental organisation. The Arusha conference emphasised the need for the Third World to establish its own institutions in the fields of research, publication, finance, industry and trade to promote South-South Co-operation. Unfortunately, little action has been taken at the inter-governmental level to fulfil that need. As President of the Bank of Credit and Commerce, I suggested in July 1983 the establishment of a consortium of commercial banks, public and private, to promote mutual trade among the developing countries, institute a mutual settlement system

for this purpose, provide bridging finance and extend short-term commodity credit. This proposal has since been intensively examined and we are seeing the prospects of the emergence of a Third World Bank. We felt that there was scope for the Foundation to make a modest contribution in three directions:

1. to carry out an objective and independent analysis of the economic and social problems confronting the Third World;
2. to establish appropriate channels of communication between the developing and the developed countries;
3. to arrange periodic meetings of scholars and statesmen to examine and evaluate the results of strategies and programmes of development and co-operation.

It was also in Arusha that the seeds of the Third World Prize were sown. To illustrate the prestige that the Prize enjoys today, I have only to recall the names of its recipients: Dr Paul Prebisch of Argentina, President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, The International Rice Research Institute, Dr Arvid Pardo and Chancellor Willy Brandt.

The Foundation has promoted joint projects in collaboration with other universities and institutions and co-sponsored a series of seminars. Perhaps the most significant step in this field was taken when the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences agreed to sponsor the first South-South Conference in April 1983 in Beijing. That Conference became a summit meeting of Third World scholars and statesmen and is remembered as South-South 1. The Conference was inaugurated by His Excellency Zhao Ziyang, Prime Minister of the Peoples' Republic of China. The Conference carried out a detailed examination of the strategies of development, co-operation and negotiation and the results achieved in these areas during the last two decades. This Conference decided to convene the South-South summit every three years and to use the intervening period for regional Conferences. Mr Prime Minister, today, here in Harare, it is a matter of pride for all of us to see that this gathering of eminent international scholars, have brought forward the work that was started in Beijing. Papers presented in Beijing and in Cartagena have been published in book form under the titles: *The Rich and the Poor* and *Regional Integration: The Latin American Experience*. The next summit, South-South II, will be held in Kuala Lumpur under the Chairmanship of his Excellency Mohamad Mahathir, Prime Minister of Malaysia, in

collaboration with The Institute of Strategic and International Studies of Malaysia from 5th-8th May 1986.

In the field of communications, beginning with the Third World Review in the London *Guardian*, the *Third World Quarterly* was launched in 1979. And today, it is among some of the most influential political science journals with over 6,000 subscribers. In addition, the monthly magazine, *South*, launched in 1980, now has a circulation of 100,000 and a readership of nearly half a million in 163 countries of the world. The totally independent editorial team of *South* consists of journalists from all continents of the world. This publication is beginning to be regarded as an authentic voice of the Third World which expresses the point view of the developing countries in an objective manner with the purpose of ensuring a better understanding of the problems of the people.

Mr Prime Minister, the Third World has, as one of its most important focal points, the non-aligned movement, and it is with great hope that the Third World looks forward to your Chairmanship of the movement in 1986. Mr Prime Minister, we know that in recent years your vision and energy have forged a new society from out of the old world tradition. Your ability, Sir, to reach into the depths of the human psyche which discovers in individuals, and allows them to discover in themselves, certain qualities, has helped to create a new nation whose role in Africa is not yet fully understood by the world. But a nation founded upon the will, purpose and energy of its people, cannot be denied its role. During your Chairmanship, the non-aligned movement will become, in the eyes of the world, a dynamic balancing force in international affairs.

In this context, I refer to the recently announced initiative by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Prime Minister Olaf Palme, which has offered to the United States and the Soviet Union a monitoring role by the non-aligned movement to verify such reductions in nuclear arms as laid down in existing or future treaties. This initiative would give a significant and new dimension to the non-aligned movement.

The non-aligned nations have a crucial role to play in the construction of the new world order which must come if we are not to destroy this beautiful planet which is our home. The British statesman Canning talked of '*Calling the new world into existence to address the balance of the old*'. How much more true is that idea today? The whole World needs the cool objectivity, the hopeful idealism and the practical help of those nations who are not tied to the

super-powers, a new world of constructive purpose to transform the old world locked in sterile disagreement.

Sir, there is a growing world consciousness which transcends the clash of political ideology and economic interest between the two great power blocs. This consciousness unites all mankind in the quest for common security. This consciousness was well reflected in the Five Continents Peace Initiative, so quickly responded to by members of the non-aligned movement.

Mr Prime Minister, the world stands on the brink of the super-powers precipice in Geneva. A deeply concerned and anxious world will look to the exercise of practical wisdom from Mr Gorbachov and Mr Reagan.

I believe that the Third World could assist the Geneva Process very materially. If verification, for instance, proves a stumbling block in making new arms control agreements because of the mutual suspicion of the Soviet Union and the United States, why should a supervisory group from the non-aligned nations not undertake, on behalf of the world community, to oversee the process?

'Give me but one firm spot on which to stand and I will move the earth', said Archimedes. Can the non-aligned movement be that firm independent base for those of us who want peace, development and disarmament to stand upon. With this new role, the non-aligned movement could become a catalyst for the changes that are necessary to bring about a new and equitable socio-economic order. There is no task more important and more urgent than for men and women to exercise their collective will to create a climate for the comprehensive security and common survival of mankind.

Last April, following a Symposium held at the United Nations on 'Survival in the Nuclear Age', it was my pleasure, as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Third World Foundation, to submit a proposal for the establishment of a Centre for Comprehensive Security and Common Survival. Preparatory work is in progress and we have been discussing the principles of the Centre, with many eminent leaders of world opinion. We hope we would have given concrete shape to the proposal by the end of 1986.

Mr Prime Minister, ladies and gentlemen, you must wonder why the Bank of Credit and Commerce should concern itself with these activities.

The answer is simple. We in the Bank see our work not exclusively in terms of profits and material gain – they are important because without those we

would not be there – but we see the pursuit of gain in the context of human happiness. That is why we have gone to areas which have been neglected by other businesses and finance houses. We are dedicated to the welfare of the people, we believe in their happiness and in peace and stability and we feel that these objectives can be best achieved through the constant exchange of ideas, through better communication and through mutual understanding. We seek to create no lobby unless it is the lobby of the poor, the under-privileged and the deprived. The only cause we serve is the cause of God and we have no vested interest except the interest of mankind as a whole. We believe in the inescapable truth – the truth of the unity between moral and material. We feel a great identity with the continuing struggle of the people of this great country who are engaged in the task of establishing a genuinely multi-racial society dedicated to the welfare of the masses under, Mr Prime Minister, your humane and forceful leadership. Zimbabwe's struggle for independence remains one of the most remarkable events in the history of liberation struggles throughout the Third World and your leadership is a continuous source of courage and inspiration for oppressed people throughout the world.

Mr Prime Minister, your election as the next Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement is a tribute to Zimbabwe's unswerving commitment to, and identification with, the Third World. We are confident that under your dynamic leadership the Non-Aligned Movement will make a decisive impact on world affairs. The Third World Foundation for its part would consider it a privilege to provide such research support and services as may be considered necessary and useful by the non-aligned movement under your Chairmanship.

And may I now, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, request you to join me in a toast to the health and happiness of His Excellency Comrade Robert Mugabe, Prime Minister of Zimbabwe and Mrs Sally Mugabe and the prosperity and progress of the brave people of Zimbabwe.

