

The importance of the Summit of the G-77 + China in Cuba.

From the 15th to the 16th of September 2023, Havana Cuba will host a Summit of Heads of State and Government under the theme: “Current Development Challenges: Role of Science, Technology and Innovation”. The Group of 77 (G-77) was established in Geneva in 1964 within the Movement of Non-Aligned countries at the end of the first session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The bloc originally comprised seventy-seven developing countries.

Although it maintained the name, other countries joined in and it now has 134 members making it the “largest coordinated and diversified multilateral group”. Its members represent two thirds of the membership of the United Nations system and 80% of the global population.

This group, joined by China in 1992 - which participates and collaborates externally - aims to provide the means for the countries of the South to articulate and promote their collective economic interests and to improve their joint negotiating capacity on major international economic issue.

The G77 + China bloc has aimed at remaining united with multilateralism as the guiding principle of South-South cooperation strategies, despite the marked cultural, geographic, economic and national realities of its members.

In 1987, a one-calendar-year term of office was instituted for the Presidency of the Group of 77.

In the history of the Group, some 11 African countries (Egypt, Madagascar, Tunisia, Ghana, Algeria, Tanzania, Nigeria, South Africa, Morocco, Sudan, Yemen) have assumed the pro tempore presidency, some of them more than once. It is to be noted that Uganda is to be the next Pro tempore President in 2024.

In January of this year, Cuba assumed the presidency of the Group, and on that occasion the Cuban Foreign Minister pointed out that during its term of office, the Caribbean island intended to contribute to the promotion of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the midst of

a context marked by the crisis generated by the pandemic, international armed conflicts and the lack of raw materials.

Similarly, it intended to foster international solidarity and cooperation in support of the post-pandemic recovery of the developing countries, making South-South and triangular cooperation a more effective tool.

It also intended to foster the advancement of common positions among members, preserve and consolidate the unity of the group, support the multilateral trading system and advocate universal access to quality education and health care.

To that end, over the last eight months, the Cuban presidency of the G-77 and China has made it a priority to promote international solidarity and cooperation and to confront the challenges generated by the current unjust international order.

Notwithstanding its well-known economic constraints , Cuba has created the conditions to ensure the success of the G-77+China Summit in Havana, with its legendary hospitality and the conviction that it is a necessary event to set the road map for the Group's concrete actions towards the achievement of legitimate development aspirations.

As Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel Bermúdez rightly stated in correspondence with the Heads of State and Government of the aforementioned group, the purpose of this meeting is to allow the Heads of State and Government to express a state vision in relation to the most important international issues of the present time that are as challenging as they are adverse for the countries of the South.

It is essential to create the conditions for access to and use of technology and innovation, and at the same time, chart the road maps for political agreement on South-South cooperation, North-South cooperation or related formulas.

The G77-China Summit will be of great importance given the nature of the agenda and the declaration that is intended to be signed as the outcome, an event of political proportions, a State event.

The Cuban Presidency of the Group of 77 and China hopes that the Summit will contribute to strengthening the Group's voice in the current international context and in the relevant intergovernmental negotiation processes.

The G77-China Summit will be a key forum for consultation in the run-up to the Sustainable Development Goals Summit due to take place this September and the Summit of the Future to be held in 2024.

Finally, with the presence of the Secretary General of the United Nations and numerous delegations led by their respective Heads of State and Government, the Cuban capital will attract the attention of the world over the next few days, particularly the countries of the South, due to the importance and the nature of the issues to be discussed.

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Embassy of Cuba in Uganda.