

STATEMENT ON THE FIRST DRAFT of the BAPA+40 OUTCOME DOCUMENT
Southern CSO Alliance on South-South Cooperation

We, civil society organizations from Asia, Africa and Latin America under the banner of the Southern CSO Alliance on South-South Cooperation, welcome the following positive developments to the draft of the outcome document and propose further improvements:

(i) **SSC IN RELATION TO N-S COOPERATION** - defining SSC as being only complementary and not an alternative to the North-South cooperation, which still stands as the main channel for development cooperation.

While distinguishing it from ODA, however, SSC should be monitored, measured and evaluated not only based on the principles of Bandung, but also of development effectiveness and human rights. We also reiterate acknowledging the historical context of Southern peoples' struggle against colonialism and the paternalistic nature of the post-war North-South cooperation that gave the impetus for strengthening solidarity through South-South cooperation. Finally, we suggest clarifying that South-South cooperation and its various forms and modalities are aimed at contributing to the realization of the sustainable development goals and genuine human development and reduction of inequalities between and within countries, not mere economic growth.

(ii) **DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS** – the welcoming of efforts to enhance development effectiveness of triangular cooperation; and acknowledging the need to enhance development effectiveness of SSC by increasing its mutual accountability and transparency, as well as coordinating its initiatives with other development projects and programmes on the ground in accordance with national development plans and priorities;

We reiterate our call to commit all actors, in all aspects and stages of South-South and triangular cooperation (i.e. from planning to monitoring and evaluation), to human rights conventions, laws, norms and standards -- in addition to the Bandung and development effectiveness principles.

(iii) **TECHNOLOGY** - ensuring that technologies are not simply diffused massively but are accessed and transferred on voluntarily and mutually agreed terms; and are environmentally-sound, affordable, adaptable and context-based; that SSTRC promotes broader South-South collaboration to acquire capabilities not only for technology management but more importantly for research and development.

We suggest adding that technology 'should be based on the real needs of the people on the ground; that triangular cooperation's role is to promote not only access to and transfer of but also developing capacities in producing environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on voluntary and mutually agreed terms.

(iv) **RECOGNIZING AND ENABLING SMEs** - recognizing the need to enhance the capacity of developing countries to create an enabling environment for SMEs as agents of sustainable industrialization and decent work for all;

(v) **DEBT** - noting with concern the increase in debt levels in many developing countries and call on borrowers and creditors to address the challenges linked to debt sustainability as a matter of priority; and

(vi) **RURAL DEVELOPMENT** – calling on countries to scale up SSTRC towards participatory urban planning and management, as well as decent work for all, local community development and service delivery in rural areas to reduce rural-to-urban migration and related challenges.

These, however, are not enough. Firstly, participatory urban planning should ensure and prioritize participation of the locals, not the private sector in profiting through the construction of 'green cities', which have been massively displacing entire communities in the South. There needs to be genuine agrarian reform so that land is owned by the hands that till, with state support to modernize and promote sustainable agriculture, coupled with national industrialization all aimed at feeding and employing the nation.

In addition, we call on the UNOSSC and the governments concerned to consider our recommendations addressing certain areas of concern and for improvement:

1. **On strengthening and further invigorating South-South and triangular cooperation.** As the goal of the conference, strengthening and further invigorating South-South and triangular cooperation should be defined to answer the questions “for what and for whom?” This will make it easier to see if each of the section is relevant and will serve the overall goal. It should be stated that strengthening and further invigorating South-South and triangular cooperation should be for achieving human development and equality within and between countries and between men and women, together with a reaffirmation of the commitments to the 2030 Agenda, Sendai Framework, the other agreements mentioned.

As a way to augment resources to meet the Sustainable Development Goals of Agenda 2030, South-South and triangular cooperation should have safeguards in inviting and welcoming support from all willing and able traditional donors and their institutions. Citing the context and specifying the shared sympathies of Southern peoples’ resistance to colonialism and neo-colonialism, there should be safeguards to stop Northern governments’ perpetuation in triangular cooperation, and Southern governments’ replication in South-South cooperation as a whole, of the flawed policies and practices of the traditional North-South development cooperation. There should also be a demand for these traditional donors to deliver on their ODA and development effectiveness commitments and obligations, as well as to commit to strict adherence to the principles of respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, and non-interference in domestic affairs (without using this as an excuse to support authoritarian regimes).

2. **On inclusiveness and multi-stakeholder partnerships.** While emphasizing the importance of inclusiveness and multi-stakeholder partnerships and calling on all actors to be meaningfully engaged, there is *still* hardly any mention of how to concretely and meaningfully include communities and civil society organizations and the issues we stand for – human rights, fundamental freedoms, social justice, addressing the root causes of poverty, women empowerment and gender equality, environmental sustainability, labor rights, social services, among others.

We thus call for emphasizing that national priorities and strategies, on which SSC should be based, are *democratically-owned*, that is, owned not just by the national and local governments but above all, by the people. This means that the people – communities and their organizations - are meaningfully included in all stages of development processes.

We urge for the promotion of people-to-people cooperation through the creation of institutional frameworks, spaces, and resources to ensure people’s ownership and demonstrate SSC as a manifestation of people’s solidarity.

We also demand respect for CSOs as independent development actors and a commitment to provide us with an enabling environment – i.e. institutional frameworks, spaces, and resources – while ensuring that we are not instrumentalized to increase the role of and enable private sector’s profit agenda.

On the other hand, we express our objection to the further inclusion of multilateral and bilateral IFIs and DFIs, particularly the IMF-WB and ADB, given their disastrous impacts on the people, who actually call for their shutdown. We likewise reject partnerships with and scaling up of engagement of big local and transnational/multinational corporations in South-South and triangular cooperation being the drivers and benefactors of these IFIs and DFIs in the corporate capture of development – as insatiable thirst for profit and sustainable development goals are totally opposite agendas. In welcoming Southern providers who have increasingly been following the footsteps of their Northern counterparts, UNOSSC and all Members States should commit them and their newly established financial and other institutions, to the principles of Bandung, development effectiveness, and human rights.

3. **On reaffirming WTO-consistent trade cooperation arrangements.** South-South trade is the developing world's resistance to neoliberal trade prescriptions/impositions, and a key strategy to achieve national economic development. Even with WTO's pretentious attempt to 'address' the unfair trade deals and lack of economic development protested in the past, its economic development framework remains to be anchored on market liberalization and has time and again failed and exploited the South even more. Rather than reaffirming the importance of WTO-consistent South-South trade cooperation agreements, we urge you to clearly define which aspects of South-South trade-related arrangements count as development cooperation, and that these follow the principles of Bandung, development effectiveness and human rights to ensure that such trade cooperation contributes to meeting the basic needs of developing nations.
4. **On promoting industries and ensuring food security.** The document emphasizes the need to leverage SSTRC as a means to promote and support industrial and semi-industrial ventures and ensure food security through food processing agro-industries, which have the potential to link with global value chains and effectively address the market needs of developing countries. On this, we say that ensuring food security can only be achieved through genuine agrarian reform – land distribution to poor farmers and subsidies and other forms of support to develop sustainable agriculture – not through supporting industries just because they can link with global value chains and can address market needs. SSC should focus on promoting the food sovereignty of local communities and desist from massive land grabbing for food security of powerful countries in South.
5. **On innovative mechanisms of additional financing.** We note the invitation to more countries to voluntarily join in implementing innovative mechanisms, instruments, and modalities which do not unduly burden developing countries. In addition, we ask that innovative mechanisms should mean neither austerity measures nor greater tax impositions on the people, and that all resources generated should be untied, unconditional, and accessible including to CSOs. Neither should it mean leveraging private finance nor targeting peoples land and resources.
6. **Recognizing the local context.** We ask to acknowledge and not repeat the local context in which BAPA was adopted in 1978: (i) the perverse military technical cooperation called Plan Condor which was responsible for genocides and capture and enforced disappearance of persons; and (ii) the centralization of cooperation actions in the hands of the government while undermining the role of civil society. These emphasize even more the need to uphold the principles of Bandung, of development effectiveness, and of human rights.
7. **SSC, Triangular cooperation and conflict:** The SSC and Triangular cooperation induced much contestation and conflict due to the over focus of seeking economic and political mileages of powerful countries in the South, such as land grabbing, pursuance of extractive industries or control of geo-strategic locations, thus causing multi-layered conflict and human rights violations. SSC and Triangular cooperation should desist from causing conflict and cycle of instability and violence, but rather promote genuine peace and development rooted in human rights. SSC should not promote military cooperation to subdue indigenous peoples or local communities' rights.