

ADDRESS

BY

**H.E. YOWERI KAGUTA MUSEVENI
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

AT THE

**THE THIRD SOUTH SUMMIT OF THE GROUP OF 77
AND CHINA**

21st JANUARY, 2024

KAMPALA

**His Excellency, Salvador Valdés Mesa, Vice President of the Republic of Cuba and Chair of G 77 and China;
Excellencies, Heads of State and Government;
His Excellency, Dennis Francis, President of the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly;
His Excellency, António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations;
Ladies and Gentlemen**

I welcome you all to Uganda, the Pearl of Africa for the Third South Summit of the Group of 77 and China. Your personal participation at this Summit, which is being held 18 years after the Second Summit that took place in the State of Qatar in June, 2005 demonstrates your commitment to the work of G77 and China. I commend His Excellency, Miguel Mario Díaz-Canel y Bermúdez, President of the Republic of Cuba, for the exemplary leadership of the G77 and China in 2023. I would like to thank His Highness, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar for hosting our last Summit.

Excellencies,

The Group 77 developing countries was founded in 1964 at the first session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), at the time these countries were faced with challenges of basic development. It was the first organized effort by developing Countries to unite, to steer their Countries on the path of economic development, in the unjust world economic order. Building on their joint declaration at the conclusion of first session of UNCTAD, these 77 developing Countries, at their first Ministerial meeting held in Algiers, united by common aspirations, agreed to identify collective interests and to pursue their joint efforts towards economic and social development, peace and prosperity. This unity within the Group has provided it to stay on course to promote and defend its members' collective economic interests at the United Nations. We must continue to embrace the founding principles that gave life to this heterogeneous and representative group of nations. Currently, the population of the G77 and China represent 80% of the global population. In addition, its GDP accounts for more than 40% of the global GDP. This shows that inspite of the challenges, the group has registered progress in defending and promoting the interests of developing Countries.

Excellencies,

Uganda welcomes the theme of the Third South Summit of the G77 and China. We meet at the time,

where the developing Countries continue to face multiple global challenges that undermine our national and collective efforts to achieve sustainable development and our national development aspirations. We are now passed halfway to the 2030, unfortunately, the overall progress in the attainment of the sustainable development as agreed at the Heads of State and Government and High Representatives meeting held at the United Nations in September, 2015, falls short of the expectations with developing Countries lagging far behind. Therefore, this Summit is an appropriate forum to speak with a common voice as leaders of the G77 and China on the urgent need for effective actions to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development during the remaining 7 years to realize our vision, shared principles and commitments, particularly the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions and the pledge that **“no one will be left behind”**.

Excellencies,

Setting the path towards the realization of leaving no one behind requires that as a group, we remain united in our demand to the international community

to support developing Countries to urgently address the global challenges, in particular; poverty, hunger, digital divide and climate change. We continue to witness the threat to multilateralism and the rise in unilateralism, which makes all susceptible to the impacts of the current unjust international economic order. As the G77 and China, we should continue to work collectively to ensure that we achieve an international economic order that is just and equitable as envisaged 59 years ago at the founding of the Group.

Excellencies,

Uganda remains committed to the pledge to “*leave no one behind*”. In this context, Uganda has accelerated its national efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in its entirety. We firmly believe that accelerating our progress towards the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda is critical to our national aspirations to ensure that no one is left behind, particularly, during this time when we strive to build back better from the COVID Pandemic and respond to other global challenges.

Uganda has identified four key sectors of wealth creation and job creation that include; commercial agriculture, industrialisation, services and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

to support our socio-economic transformation. The Government of Uganda is implementing targeted interventions in the above key sectors, with a view to ensure that no one is left behind. In addition, we are equally prioritizing the promotion and protection of all human rights, including the right to development, in line with our national legal framework and international commitments. We wish to emphasize that the issue of human rights should be handled objectively and not politicized.

Excellencies,

South-South Cooperation continues to play a critical role in supporting developing Countries in their efforts to achieve self-reliance. In this regard, I commend all developing Countries for their contributions in strengthening this element of international cooperation. As Countries in the Global south, we need to uphold this solidarity, which is a pillar in helping us to safeguard our collective interests. We need to strengthen trade and investment among our Countries. Therefore, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) leads the way to strengthen intra-trade among African countries to ensure prosperity for the African people. As developing Countries, we should support the implementation of these regional trade

blocs. We must also support strengthening Triangular Cooperation.

Excellencies,

Leaving no one behind cannot be realized without adequately addressing the challenges and needs faced by Countries in special situations, in particular, African Countries, Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States as well as specific challenges faced by many middle-income Countries, conflict and post-conflict Countries and Countries and peoples living under foreign occupation. These challenges continue to undermine the efforts of these Countries to ensure that no one is left behind. In this regard, we support the call for the international community to provide targeted support to enable these Countries address their challenges. We also support the urgent reform of the international financial architecture to ensure that it is fit for purpose to respond to the financing needs of developing Countries. In our view, the International financial institutions and multilateral development banks must support the national priorities of developing Countries without any conditionalities that infringe on these Countries' sovereignty.

Excellencies,

Uganda is taking over the Chairmanship of the Group at an opportune time when we celebrate our 60th anniversary. I thank you all for entrusting Uganda with chairing of the Group 77 and China for 2024. We commend the African Group for endorsing our candidature for the chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China. Sixty years of the existence we continue after 59 years of our group's existence to yearn for a revitalized multilateral system which is capable of adequately addressing current and emerging global challenges. We firmly believe that multilateralism remains a fundamental and crucial mechanism for addressing our common challenges together as nations in solidarity.

Excellencies,

Uganda's Chairmanship will strive to further promote: acceleration of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; scaling up action to address climate change and biodiversity loss; strengthening international tax cooperation; financing for development; fight against illicit financial flows and strengthening digital cooperation, among others. This year, 2024, is a crucial year with various

intergovernmental processes at the United Nations on issues that are of paramount importance to the group. These include, inter alia, Fourth international conference for the Small Island Developing States, Third UN Conference on the Landlocked Developing Countries, ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council) Forum of Financing for Development Follow up, ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council) High Political Forum on Sustainable Development, Summit of the Future, Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development and 2024 UN Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP29), all of which demand that we as the Group, remain even more steadfast in promoting the interests of developing Countries. Uganda, therefore, commits to consolidate the unity, presence and influence of the Group in these intergovernmental processes.

In this regard, we look forward to working closely together with all the members of the Group in this endeavor.

In conclusion, it is critical that the Group of 77 and China remains united in its pursuit of collective interests at the United Nations. In the intergovernmental processes at the United Nations, we must ensure that priorities of the Group are promoted and defended. I assure you that my team, led by the Permanent Representative in New York, has my full support to chair the Group of 77 and China.

It is our sincere hope that our Chairmanship will be an invaluable new step to the path towards the realization of our aspirations as developing Countries.

I thank you all.