

**Speech to be delivered by Graziano as Guest of Honour at SSC EXPO
9th Dec 2011**

Thank you Mr. Juneja,

Your Excellencies Ambassador Al-Alsani and

Ambassador Kamau

Mr. Osotimehin

Mr. Malor

Ladies and Gentlemen

Dear Friends,

1. I feel most honored to have been invited to share with you some ideas on South-South Cooperation on the occasion of the closing ceremony of the Global South South Development Expo hosted this year in FAO.
2. Increasing the role of South-South Cooperation in FAO's programmes is one of the pillars of my platform.
3. Giving emphasis to South-South Cooperation does not mean that we will turn our back on North-South Cooperation. Far from it! Making progress on hunger combat demands the fullest possible sharing of knowledge and experience between *all* nations. We are talking about a fundamental challenge affecting all of humanity and I see it as a collective responsibility of all nations – South and North.
4. We can see in this EXPO that there is a huge reservoir of technical, scientific, policy and institutional experience in developing countries that has the potential to generate large

improvements in many sectors, especially in agriculture and food security.

5. As we look to expanding South-South Cooperation, we need to be guided by some principles and I mention some of them:

- Each country has something to learn from another: exchanges must be on a two-way basis. Any sense of superiority or paternalism, or of dependence, must be avoided.
- The basis for expanded SSC must be a genuine sense of solidarity and sharing between countries; and also between the individuals involved.
- SSC must usually be demand-driven. A country, institution or individual may offer innovations that others could benefit from sharing, but it will be for the “recipient” to make its own assessment of what is on demand.
- There must be much flexibility in the ways in which SSC is conducted, so that it does not have to fit with any externally imposed model, but responds to what the partner countries see as the best modes of sharing their experiences in their mutual interest.
- It needs to be managed in ways that maximize the use of scarce resources, offer a high level of administrative efficiency, and ensure proper monitoring of deliveries and impact.

6. Much SSC is expected to continue on a bilateral basis. However, I sense that FAO can play a much stronger facilitating role, with more flexibility in its approaches. Several developed and middle-income countries and regional organizations have also

indicated their interest in supporting an expansion in SSC through trilateral agreements.

7. From FAO's perspective, this would enable the Organization to increase the scale and impact of its technical cooperation activities and ensure that they have a strongly demand-driven approach.

8. FAO's role has its comparative advantages, due to its long experience in technical cooperation; its network of country-level representations in the developing world; its options for integrating SSC within its mainstream activities; its capacity to provide technical backstopping and to complement SSC with funding for essential equipment, as well as its capacity to serve as an intermediary in negotiating tripartite agreements between its member governments.

9. Subject to discussion with parties involved in FAO's SSC programmes, I envisage taking two inter-related steps in the beginning of next year:

1) To ask the Technical Cooperation Department to prepare guidelines on a new approach for the management of South-South Cooperation activities in FAO, in line with the principles that I have outlined. In doing this we must learn from the valuable experiences that have been displayed in this EXPO.

2) To arrange for informal and operational meetings between all major current SSC donors and their partner countries to explore new ways of strengthening and improving SSC

activities in FAO, taking into account their views on how each partnership can be made more effective.

10. Friends, I believe that we all share a common desire for a more just, prosperous and peaceful world. South-South Cooperation can, beyond accelerating the processes of innovation, do much to increase the understanding and mutual respect between nations and cultures.

Thank you.