

Antalya: South-South cooperation offers major opportunities to support vulnerable countries – UN official

28 November 2017 – As the most vulnerable countries continue to face serious development challenges, South-South cooperation offers enormous opportunities and potential to effectively support them in accelerating progress on implementing globally agreed goals, a senior United Nations official has said.

This vital message was delivered to delegations gathered yesterday in Antalya, Turkey, for the opening of the [Global South-South Development Expo 2017](#) by Fekitamoeloa Katoa Utoikamanu, the UN High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS).

“These are all countries faced with complex and unique development challenges which lend themselves to exploring how and where we can maximize South-South cooperation and leverage global partnerships to support countries’ efforts toward sustainable and inclusive futures,” said Ms. Utoikamanu, who advocates on behalf of 10 billion people in the world’s most vulnerable countries.

She is participating in the 2017 Global Expo along with other senior UN officials, government ministers, national development agency directors, and civil society representatives, who have gathered to share innovative local solutions and push for scaling up concrete initiatives from the global South to achieve the [2030 Agenda](#) and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)).

“The central promise of the 2030 Agenda is to ‘leave no-one behind,’ and thus is about addressing poverty, reducing inequality and building a sustainable future of shared prosperity,” explained Ms. Utoikamanu. “But it is already clear that these noble Goals will be elusive if the 91 countries my Office is a voice for remain at the bottom of the development ladder.”

As such, she said, South-South collaboration has led to increasing trade between and with emerging economies, investors, providers of development cooperation and sources of technological innovations and know-how. “This trend is confirmed by trade preferences for [least developed country products], enhanced trade finance opportunities, but also innovative infrastructure finance emerging,” noted Ms. Utoikamanu.

“The complex and pressing challenges the vulnerable countries experience demand that we further strengthen and leverage South-South cooperation,” added Ms. Utoikamanu. “South-South cooperation is not an ‘either-or’; it is a strategic and complementary means of action for the transfer and dissemination of technologies and innovations. It complements North-South cooperation,” she emphasized.

This week's gathering will focus on a number of issues, including how to transfer science, technology and innovation among developing countries.

With that in mind, Ms. Utoikamanu said that to a large extent, the future will be determined by the abilities to leverage science, technology and innovation for sustainable growth, structural transformation and inclusive human and social development.

"It is proven that innovative technologies developed in the South often respond in more sustainable ways to the contextual needs of developing countries. Last, but not least, this is a question of cost," she said.

In all this, the [Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries](#) has a major role to play in boosting science, technology and innovation capacity. "It must facilitate technology transfer and promote the integration of [least developed countries] into the global knowledge-based economy."

While countries in the South continue to deepen cooperation to achieve the [SDGs](#), the trend of declining official development assistance (ODA) is cause for great concern. ODA remains a crucial source of external financing for the vulnerable groups of countries UN-OHRLLS represents," she said.

"OHRLLS is committed to working with countries both of the North and the South to deliver on the 2030 Agenda and above all its pledge of leaving no one behind," concluded Ms. Utoikamanu.