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LAUNCHING OF GLOBAL NEGOTIATIONS ON INTERNATIONAL  
ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

Letter dated 30 September 1981 from the Representative of  
Venezuela for Economic Affairs to the United Nations  
addressed to the Secretary-General

I would appreciate it very much if, in accordance with established practice, you would be kind enough to have the attached declaration of the fifth annual meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda items 37 and 69.

(Signed) Manuel PEREZ GUERRERO  
Chairman of the Group of 77

ANNEX

Declaration of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs  
of the Group of 77

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1. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 held their fifth annual meeting in New York, from 28 to 29 September 1981, to review developments that had taken place since they last met in September 1980 and prepare for the thirty-sixth regular session of the General Assembly.

2. The Ministers expressed their deep concern at the alarming worsening of the international situation, both in the political and economic fields and the lack of progress in the establishment of the New International Economic Order. They noted with equal concern that the continued deterioration of economic conditions in the world, with its grave consequences for the economies of the developing countries, which revealed a crisis of a structural nature, had become one of the most serious and potentially disruptive political problems of our times. They regretted that a few developed countries still lacked the positive political will to undertake without delay deliberate and concerted measures designed to achieve effective and equitable solutions to the present world economic crisis. They were convinced of the need for perseverance in the building of mutual confidence among all members of the international community with a view to restructuring the existing international economic order and lessening international political tensions.

3. The Ministers reviewed the economic performance of the developing countries during the past year. They expressed their deep concern at the fact that the world economic crisis had resulted in a further erosion of their terms of trade, high levels of inflation, a considerable increase in the cost of capital and international credit as reflected in the unprecedented increase in interest rates - it had been determined that an increase in 1 per cent in interest rate would result in further indebteding developing countries by \$US 20 billion - insufficient and declining demand for their exports, rising protectionism and continued rigid and unfavourable terms for transfer of technology, disrupting their economic growth and leading to sharp increases in external deficits and indebtedness. It had therefore become imperative for the international community to take effective action for the resolution of these grave problems, which would contribute to the attainment of the goals and objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade.

4. The Ministers expressed their deep concern over the critical food situation being experienced in developing countries at large, and in Africa in particular. They urged developed countries, international agencies and institutions and others that were able to do so to provide food assistance as quickly as possible and to grant increased development assistance to help the developing countries become self-sufficient in food production through, inter alia, an early establishment of a world food security net. The Ministers urged the early replenishment of the

resources of the International Fund for Agricultural Development. They stressed that there was a direct link between the shortage of food and the barriers to food exports from developing countries imposed by certain developed countries.

5. The Ministers were disturbed at the emergence of certain trends that ran counter to the common objectives of multilateral economic co-operation. Among these they were particularly concerned by the excessive emphasis given to bilateralism at the expense of multilateral co-operation, as well as to the so-called free international market forces and the role of transnational corporations, while recourse to protectionist measures on the part of developed countries was on the increase. The Ministers also expressed their concern at the tendency to condition international economic co-operation by East-West considerations, thereby aggravating existing tensions, at the expense of the development of the developing countries. These and other trends, as reflected, inter alia, in the enormous waste of resources on armaments, jeopardized the search for a better and more secure future for the present and coming generations.

6. The Ministers pointed to the serious implications of the erosion of multilateral economic co-operation as evidenced, inter alia, in general by the inadequate transfer of real financial resources for development and, in particular, by the slowing down of official development assistance, the uncertainties regarding voluntary contributions to different programmes and funds of the United Nations system and the declining support for global and regional multilateral development financial institutions, in particular the International Development Association. In this context, the Ministers firmly reiterated the need for continued and strengthened commitment to a further enhancement of multilateral co-operation through, inter alia, substantially higher levels of public multilateral flows of finance for development, particularly in areas which were critically important for the development of the developing countries.

7. The Ministers recalled the initiative taken by the developing countries regarding global negotiations on international economic co-operation for development, which had been endorsed by the international community at the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly. In this context, they also recalled the firm attachment to this initiative which would lead to a qualitatively new stage in the restructuring of international economic relations through the establishment of a New International Economic Order. They reaffirmed that only a global and integrated approach to the present world economic problems, with the participation of all States, would contribute to the restructuring of international economic relations through agreed solutions that would be lasting and equitable for all. The Ministers underlined the urgency of launching global negotiations and expressed their concern that this continued to be jeopardized mainly by one country. The Ministers expressed the hope that this country, recognizing the shared belief that all countries stood to benefit from its outcome, would join the broad support for global negotiations by the international community.

8. The Ministers underlined the importance of the results of the High-Level Conference on Economic Co-operation among Developing Countries, held at Caracas from 13 to 19 May 1981, the convening of which had been decided at their last

meeting in September 1980. The Caracas Conference, which followed other important meetings on Economic Co-operation among Developing Countries, was designed to take practical measures in this field and agree on mechanisms that would ensure their implementation and follow-up. The Ministers were of the opinion that the Caracas Conference had achieved fully this objective and stressed the importance of carrying out effectively the provisions contained in the Caracas Programme of Action. They noted with satisfaction that the first steps towards this end had already been taken. The Ministers reaffirmed their conviction that increased economic co-operation among developing countries was of critical importance to all members of the Group of 77, to whom this new impulse towards collective self-reliance would yield balanced and lasting benefits, consolidating their solidarity and enhancing their negotiation position with the developed countries.

9. The Ministers stressed the importance of continued support, particularly through technical assistance and financing by organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, to economic co-operation among developing countries. They also stressed that past decisions in this regard provided the necessary legislative basis for this support.

10. The Ministers took note with interest of the results of the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy, held at Nairobi from 10 to 21 August 1981. They did, however, express regret that agreement could not be reached on some of the fundamental issues. The Ministers, therefore, stressed the need for a further effort by the international community, particularly by the developed countries, to agree as soon as possible on the institutional mechanisms and measures for the additional transfer of financial resources required for fully carrying out the Nairobi Programme of Action, and for an effective contribution to the energy transition as defined in that Programme.

11. The Ministers, stressing the importance of meeting the critical economic situation of the least developed countries, took note of the positive outcome of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Paris from 1 to 14 September 1981, and urged all countries and multilateral institutions to take immediate and appropriate steps for the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1980s, adopted at the Conference. They also recommended that for effective follow-up, monitoring and implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action adequate resources should be made available to the concerned agencies of the United Nations system.

12. The Ministers also discussed specific questions of interest to the Group of 77. As a result of these discussions:

(a) The Ministers underlined the need for improving and strengthening the flows of information among developing countries, especially within the framework of economic co-operation among developing countries, in order to ensure the coherence and increasing coverage of activities undertaken under the Caracas Programme of Action. The Ministers expressed their expectation that the Development Information Network would be implemented without further delay.

(b) The Ministers took note of the common position on a code of conduct for transnational corporations adopted by the developing countries in the Commission on Transnational Corporations. They recognized that it was important for the Chairman of the Group to continue to inform the Group of 77 as a whole in New York on the results achieved in the forthcoming negotiations on the subject, recognized and the need to ensure the participation of all developing countries at a later stage and facilitate the adoption of a universal code of conduct for transnational corporations.

(c) The Ministers, while regretting that no decision had been taken on the long-term arrangements for the Financing System on Science and Technology for Development during the resumed third session of the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development, stressed the necessity that negotiations be held during the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly on this matter to enable the Financing System to become fully operational as from 1 January 1982, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 34/218.

(d) In noting the results of the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy, the Ministers recommended that the high-level meeting foreseen in paragraph 49(e) of the Caracas Programme of Action on Economic Co-operation among Developing Countries should be convened in the first quarter of 1982, and that it should, inter alia, consider and make recommendations to the Group of 77 on the establishment of a Centre for Research and Development on New and Renewable Sources of Energy based on the proposal submitted by Jamaica at the Nairobi Conference.

(e) The Ministers emphasized the importance of an early conclusion of the protracted negotiations regarding the convention on the law of the sea and expressed the hope that the ensuing year would, as envisaged, see the conclusion and signing of that convention. The Ministers urged all members of the international community to co-operate in the attainment of this goal.

(f) The Ministers agreed on the need for all countries that had not yet done so to take expeditiously the necessary measures towards the early entry into force of the agreements establishing the Common Fund for Commodities and individual commodity agreements. The Ministers welcomed the agreement reached at the High-Level Conference on Economic Co-operation among Developing Countries, held at Caracas, that the headquarters of the Common Fund for Commodities should be located in a developing country. The Ministers took note of the offer by the Philippines of a permanent site for the headquarters of the Common Fund.

(g) The Ministers took note of the report of the Group of Experts on the preparatory work relating to the Global System of Trade Preferences and called for the convening of a meeting of senior officials in early 1982 to finalize and approve the rules for the launching of negotiations to establish the Global System of Trade Preferences, in accordance with the Caracas Programme of Action.

(h) The Ministers recalled that the Conference on the Revision of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property should take all appropriate

measures to eliminate the abuses of the monopoly of the patentee, such as the lack or insufficiency of exploitation of the patent inside the country which had granted the protection. The Ministers believed that the proposed article 5A, as submitted to the Conference in the basic proposals, was a balanced article and regretted that some developed countries seemed not to be in a position to live up to their commitments. The Ministers requested the developing countries members of the Paris Union to maintain the Group of 77 in Geneva informed on the results achieved in the second session of the Conference on the Revision of the Paris Convention.

(i) The Ministers expressed deep concern that the fourth session of the United Nations Conference on an International Code of Conduct on the Transfer of Technology had not completed its work and recommended that all efforts should be made in order that the Code might be adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session.

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