

SPEECH BY THE LEADER OF SINGAPORE'S DELEGATION
AND AMBASSADOR TO US, MR P COOMARASWAMY, AT
THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TECHNICAL
COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES HELD IN
BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA ON 6 SEPT '78 (SINGAPORE
TIME 2.30 AM - 7 SEPT '78)

Mr Chairman, I would like to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of this significant Conference. My delegation is confident that under your able guidance this Conference will make concrete and practical ideas towards promotion of co-operation among developing countries. This will also encourage a more constructive framework for international co-operation and understanding.

Mr Chairman, this Conference comes at an opportune time. It could make the developing countries aware that only through cohesiveness can they bring to the forefront the latent strength they undoubtedly possess. The developing countries have abundant natural resources. They have also the manpower to tap the potential of our natural resources. We, the developing countries, also share similar historical experiences. Hence, there are many strong common factors binding us. Our cohesiveness of purpose will lead us to achieve greater self-reliance among ourselves.

Mr Chairman, because of the different physical attributes of the developing countries, we have a pool of collective but varied expertise. A systematic exchange of such varied expertise among developing countries will be a significant and constructive contribution towards the economic and social development of member countries.

In an increasingly inter-dependent world, it is clear that national approaches to national problems are no longer adequate. The experiences and successes of a developing state could be more easily modified to suit the needs of another developing country. By sharing what each is most advanced in, the developing countries can build up more quickly their pool of skills and expertise. Such exchanges will accelerate the economic and social development of member countries.

Such an exchange of skills and expertise must be a continuing basis to promote technical cooperation among developing countries. A comprehensive and practical scheme for technical co-operation among developing countries will be a positive contribution towards

the early establishment of a more just International Economic Order.

Mr Chairman, Singapore is a small resource-scarce developing country with a population of only 2.3 million. My delegation would like to record the appreciation for the technical assistance Singapore has received from member states. Their assistance has contributed in no small way to our developmental efforts. As a member of the developing world, Singapore has also provided modest technical assistance to over 40 member states under multilateral and bilateral programmes. These training awards are mainly in fields such as industrial training; harbour and sport management; housing; communication; family planning and other technical endeavours. Singapore will continue to provide technical assistance through the ASEAN Training Awards, Colombo Plan Training Awards, Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation and the United Nations and other international development agencies. Within the limits of our resources, Singapore will also participate in any technical co-operation programmes which may be decided by this Conference.

Mr Chairman, the promotion of technical co-operation among developing countries must be a priority for all of us. This will be a useful complement to the technical assistance we are receiving from international organisations and the developed countries. The upgrading of the technical skills in the developing countries provides an opportunity for the developed countries to co-operate more actively in an endeavour which will promote international understanding and cooperation. International technical co-operation can be the focal point for the developing and developed countries to establish a durable co-operative framework.