

SPEECH: ADDRESS BY H. E. Dr Mohamed Ibn CHAMBAS SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ACP GROUP ACP- OIF SYMPOSIUM ENHANCING SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE ACP GROUP ACP House, Brussels, 31 January 2011

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Excellencies,
Distinguished Invited guests,
Distinguished Representatives of International and Regional
Organizations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you all to this Symposium on "Enhancing South-South Cooperation: Challenges and Opportunities for the ACP Group" jointly organized by the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) and the ACP Group.

Excellences,
Mesdames et Messieurs,
Chers amis,

Je voudrais saisir cette occasion pour exprimer aux Représentants du bureau de la Francophonie à Bruxelles mes sincères remerciements pour leur bonne collaboration, et leur constante disponibilité qui ont permis la conception et l'organisation de ce Symposium dans les meilleures conditions.

Cette bonne collaboration témoigne, à ne pas en douter, de la pertinence et de la validité de l'accord de coopération conclu entre nos deux organisations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to extend a special welcome to our distinguished guests who have graciously accepted the invitation to participate in this Symposium. I know that some of you have travelled long distances to be here with us today. We are pleased that you are able to avail us of your insights, knowledge and experience on South-South cooperation.

This symposium could not have been more timely. We face a world economic crisis which economists agree is one of the worst in living memory. While the world economic landscape has undergone profound transformation in the last decade, opening up vast opportunities in the integrated global market place, we are also saddled with portentous risks that require wisdom, sagacity and courage. While recognizing that significant progress has been made regarding the evolving international development consensus, developing countries face challenges that require deep reflection and focus.

Within this evolving global context, one harsh reality still remains, i.e, the fact that poverty remains the dominant life-situation of the vast majority of the people of our ACP member nations.

Today's symposium, I believe, provides a platform for us to share and to learn from each other's development experience with regard to the diverse configuration of development partnerships and cooperation in which we are engaged, and to be able to find ways and means to make them more effective.

The discussions today should, I hope, be able to raise awareness of key issues linked to international aid for development, explore the possibilities for the ACP Group's effective engagement in South-South cooperation programmes, and assist in devising a process that will enable the ACP Group to contribute to the deepening of partnerships for South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation.

On this note, I wish you all a productive and fruitful exchange.

Thank you for your attention.

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