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India to launch network of think-tanks of South-South Cooperation countries

Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury, ET Bureau Mar 8, 2016, 10:54PM IST

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NEW DELHI: South-South cooperation (SSC) has been in existence for the last several decades. Post-2015, particularly in light of adoption of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Financing for Development Agenda (FFD) and WTO meeting, SSC has assumed new importance across various international forums. This calls for a new coalition and information exchange among the Southern research institutions and think-tanks which could contribute in building consensus on evolving a suitable model for promoting Southern development cooperation for mutual benefit.



(Dharmendra Pradhan Oil...)



Thus launching of the Network of Southern Think-tanks (NeST) at the Conference on South-South Cooperation (SSC): Issues and Emerging Challenges' being organised by Delhi-based think tank RIS in partnership with Ministry of External Affairs and UN India on 10-11 March at the India Habitat Centre in New Delhi, assumes great importance.

In an interaction with media here on Tuesday former foreign secretary and Chairman, RIS Shyam Saran underlined the growing importance of South-South Development Cooperation in view of shrinkage of resources in the developed North and the emergence of South as a new centre of economic gravity. Therefore he emphasised on the forging of a new international consensus on developmental cooperation.

Amb. Saran also stressed on an emerging southern consensus on developmental cooperation which is non-prescriptive and non-intrusive. In this context, he called for widening the ambit of South-South by proactively enlisting Southern think-tanks, civil society, academia and media in this process. He also emphasized that in this context, the launch of network of Southern Think-Tanks called NeST would be a path-breaking initiative on the parts of Southern countries.

Dharmendra Pradhan Oil Minister would deliver the inaugural address at the Conference on 10 March. The Foreign Secretary would be giving valedictory address on 11 March.

The Conference is an effort to put forward India's narrative on development agenda and the nature, scope and modalities of South-South Cooperation. More than 100 eminent speakers would be attending the event from abroad, in addition to a large number of Indian scholars, researchers, subject experts, high ranking officials from government officials, academia, civil society members etc. would be taking part in it. As is known, India's development partnership programme is based on solidarity and demand-driven.

The shifting of the global center of gravity from North to South is increasingly evident especially in the areas which are significant for further economic development in the South though there are several contemporary challenges. The areas of development include financing and partnership, peace and security, environment, people centered development, and science, technology and innovation (STI).

This shift in gravity has been fueled by rapid and sustained economic growth over a fairly longer period of time in the "emerging economies" during the last decade. Such a shift has also resulted in efforts at building a new development cooperation architecture that led to considerable flow of resources within the Southern countries.

The South began looking beyond the North-South Cooperation (NSC) and Triangular Development Cooperation (TDC), which had traditionally been fuelled by the Official Development Assistance (ODA) for development cooperation. South-South Cooperation (SSC) emerged as a parallel mechanism to support

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global quest for improved quality of life across the world.

The SSC has contributed meaningfully to qualitative transformative changes that took place due to the rise in development partnership - that focused primarily on capacity building and experience sharing to begin with - and now increasingly infrastructure and institution building. Increase in the quantum of financial resources committed to SSC in contemporary times resulted in the desire of Southern providers to harness the potential of their cooperation through the creation and formalization of several platforms like New Development Bank, etc.

India's vision of 'one world' has existed for centuries, it has only attracted greater attention in contemporary times when the world is faced with graver problems such as climate change, environmental pollution, growth in inequality, etc which require global solutions. However, given the global real politic, it may seem incongruent to assume unilateral pursuance of the idea. In this context SSC stands for human centric development and not economic development alone.

The conference would, among other things, deliberate on the modalities for enhancing our collective understanding on the dynamics of SSC; South and the global economy; Global aid architecture and SSC; and Theoretical framework for SSC, besides sharing regional and sectoral experiences.

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Jayeshkumar (India)
09 Mar, 2016 12:02 AM

...and the Most important would have to be the Climate Change and Global oops South Warming!