

Editorial

Welcome to the January-March volume of the Development Cooperation Review. In this volume and through their articles, our contributors come back to two topics that have already appeared in previous volumes of the review: the modalities of South-South cooperation, and the status of multilateralism. In so doing, their contribution is particularly helpful, because it helps us both establish linkages between articles, not only inside the present number but also across the different volumes of the Review and, we hope, progressively develop specific debates and sometimes even certain common suggestions. Join us in exploring these critical themes that shape the discourse and action in the realm of international development.

As for South-South cooperation, Atul Kaushik describes the Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) initiative and reiterates (see also Sachin Chaturvedi in the July - September 2023 issue of the Review) its significance as a transformative approach to addressing climate change. LiFE is a pathway for empowering individuals to make conscious choices that benefit the environment, thereby contributing to global sustainability efforts. In particular, he underlines that collective action in the Global South has the potential to lead the way in sustainable development and environmental conservation as these regions face a disproportionate impact of climate change, despite contributing less to global greenhouse gas emissions. The challenges in promoting sustainable lifestyle changes are considerable (economic constraints, cultural norms, the need for widespread awareness and education on environmental issues, etc.), and therefore Kaushik outlines strategies for effectively promoting the LiFE initiative, such as leveraging social media for awareness campaigns, incorporating environmental education in school curriculums, and encouraging public-private partnerships to support sustainable practices. He also calls for international organizations, governments, and civil society to collaborate in spreading the message of sustainable living across the Global South.

The significance of South-South Cooperation is exemplified in the paper by Omegere John Patrick by partnerships like that between Uganda and Bangladesh to leverage each country's strengths for mutual benefit. The cooperation has to do with sharing knowledge, skills, and successful strategies to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The areas of collaboration include agricultural development, poverty reduction, access to technology, health,

and education. The article provides examples of successful initiatives and projects that created enabling environments for partnership and exchange, but it also stresses the challenges to South-South cooperation, such as funding constraints, logistical issues, and the need for sustained political commitment from both parties. The article calls for expanding the areas of cooperation, coordinating development assistance, enhancing private sector involvement, and leveraging international platforms to showcase the partnership's successes.

Sushil Kumar outlines the increasing exports of high-tech products, including electronics, pharmaceuticals, and biotechnology from countries in the Global South. These countries are gradually carving out a niche in the global market shifting from traditional agricultural and raw material exports to more knowledge-intensive and high-value products. However, Kumar suggests that governments in the Global South underscore the importance of innovation and research. The policy implications are clear. Governments should fully understand the ongoing shift in specialization in the Global South, engage in international trade agreements that support technology transfer and create conducive environments for innovation by supporting universities, research institutions, digital infrastructures, stronger IP laws and their enforcement, and private sector R&D efforts. Research and technology transfer should also inspire collaboration between more developed countries and countries of the Global South with limited access to capital, inadequate infrastructure, and the digital divide.

As for the status of multilateralism, this volume continues our series of in-depth interviews of eminent personalities in the field of international relations and cooperation, a tradition we began a year ago. Following enlightening conversations in earlier issues with experts, we are honoured to present an interview with Enrique Iglesias. A figure of immense experience in international development, economics, and policymaking, Iglesias shares his perspectives on societal transformations and the global economic landscape, underscoring the pressing challenges of inequality, technological changes, the rise of populism, and the erosion of democratic norms. He reflects on the evolving dynamics of global governance and the necessity of revitalizing multilateralism. Reform to enhance international organizations' representativeness and effectiveness in tackling evolving global challenges is imperative. An interview is to be read in detail.

This topic is further explored in the article by Spanish diplomat Paula Perez Muleiro, who emphasizes the urgent need for revitalizing multilateralism in the face of geopolitical tensions, nationalism, and scepticism towards global institutions. Set against the backdrop of a "multiplex world" with multiple centres of power and emerging actors from the Global South, the article advocates for more inclusive and equitable forms of global cooperation. Paula supports a pragmatic approach to

cooperation, focused on specific areas rather than broad ideological alignments, and suggests transactional diplomacy with issue-based coalitions as a complementary strategy to traditional negotiations. The potential role of the EU as an example of more inclusive and functional internal governance frameworks is highlighted as a beacon of hope in navigating these complex challenges.

Two contributions explore more specific topics of multilateral global governance and contribute to defining a detailed agenda for multilateral governance reforms. They have been written by Sergio Lugaresi and by Pratyush Sharma reviewing Erin R. Graham's book "Transforming International Institutions". The first article concentrates on the governance structure and the voting system, and the second one on the profound influence of financial dynamics on the functioning of multilateral institutions such as the United Nations.

The article of Lugaresi focuses on the governance reform within Multilateral Development Banks. Lugaresi highlights the role of MDBs in the global financial architecture and discusses the new global challenges that they face. These challenges require MDBs to adapt and evolve beyond their traditional roles and approaches. In particular, the author underlines that their governance structure and the weighted voting system often reflect the economic power of member countries, sidelining the voices and interests of smaller or less economically powerful nations. Lugaresi suggests reforms, based on ongoing examples, to democratize decision-making processes, enhance transparency, and ensure that the development needs of all member countries are adequately represented and addressed. Another critical point raised is the need for MDBs to increase their capital base to effectively support large-scale projects related to climate change mitigation and sustainable development. Finally, the article advocates for enhanced collaboration among MDBs and between MDBs and other international institutions to avoid overlap and ensure that resources are used efficiently and effectively.

The book by Erin R. Graham is subtitled: *How Money Quietly Sidelined Multilateralism at the United Nations*. It examines the financial dynamics within international institutions. Through a series of case studies, it stresses that financial constraints and other factors affect the strategic choices and flexibility of international institutions in implementing their missions. Sharma points out that Graham's work offers a nuanced understanding of the financial underpinnings of international governance and its implications for global cooperation. Sharma also touches upon the critical perspectives offered by Graham on the need for more equitable financial governance structures within international institutions to ensure they are more responsive and representative of the global community's needs.

In the “Ambassador’s Perspective”, Pierre Duquesne, a former French Ambassador, focused on Mediterranean regional cooperation. Historically a hub of trade and cooperation, the region is now facing challenges exacerbated by geopolitical tensions and historical divisions. The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), initiated in 2008 to address these issues, struggles due to constitutional flaws and France’s misguided approach Duquesne argues, which initially excluded key stakeholders like Germany and prioritized symbolic gestures over substantive action. Financial constraints further hinder its effectiveness, compounded by the European Commission’s reluctance to allocate development funds. Criticism of the term “Euro-Mediterranean” highlights its inadequacy in addressing the region’s complexities and the Ambassador calls for a shift towards more inclusive and actionable frameworks. Proposals for a Mediterranean bank and a genuine “Mediterranean Partnership” underscore the need for comprehensive strategies and increased financial support to foster sustainable development in the region.