

Editorial

The world is at crossroads today. Uncertainties and unpredictability are at their highest levels. Some are talking in terms of an emergent new global order, while others are worried about the shifts in powers from the existing players. The second issue of Volume 8 of Development Cooperation Review (DCR) is getting published at this juncture. It is absolutely difficult to identify a particular concern. There are economic crises like increasing inequality – both within and among countries, loss in employment opportunities along with threats of stagflation and increasing indebtedness in the Global South. Extractive relationship between the planet and human beings is also a major issue pointing towards the threat to sustainable existence of either of them in near future. The political and social implications of such crises are visible through increasing tensions – wars and conflicts leading to increased hatred and loss of life – all over the continents. Incidentally, these crises are no longer found to be independent of one another. They have created a complex web of interrelated problems intimately linked to each other. Economic crises cannot be separated from the environmental and ecological threats. Nor can we understand the implications of rising tensions and hatred in the whole world without considering the threats to sustainable and resilient management of human welfare as a whole. It is true that no acceptable solutions to these problems are visible. Every sovereign country is trying to find some ways that may, to some extent, take care of their concerned problems temporarily. However, we are clear that long term resilient solution to such a complex set of problems cannot be realized unless there are multilateral negotiations to arrive at an acceptable pathway that will be mostly acceptable to all. The search for a new world order has to be realized with emphasis on access, affordability, inclusion and equity – a process that we have undermined for quite a long time, especially since the onset of colonization and the subsequent industrial revolution that divided the globe into distinct North and South. The new world order must reduce the gaps between these two groups through a model of development that takes care of human welfare irrespective of citizenship, class, gender, religion or language.

The present issue of DCR is a collection of contributions from scholars across the globe to search for such possibilities. The African continent has been evolving as a serious point of concern in the debate of new international order. The first article by Said Djinnit, Ibrahim Assane Mayaki and El-Ghassim Wane titled “This is a 1990 Moment – Africa Must Seize it” traces the future course of action as an extension of the 1990 report presented by Salim Ahmed Salim, the then Secretary General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). With the liberation struggles largely over in African continent and the apartheid seen collapsing, the Report argued for finding a new reason for existence of pan-African solidarity. Thirty-five years after the report

was written, the concerns are more clear. Africa is still considered a continent full of natural resources to be exported in their rawest forms with prices being determined by oligarchic buyers. The governance structure in most of the African countries is elitist, not looking for the welfare of the common citizenry. The authors argue that if the imperative to act was already pressing in 1990s, it is even more urgent today, not driven by hope but by the necessity navigating a period of profound instability and uncertainty. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) can facilitate the integration in economic domain along with the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment. However, these economic tools are also necessary to be elevated to political, social and strategic imperatives. To be effective in the real sense of the term, the necessity is a paradigm shift in development perspective in continent where the African Union (AU) must occupy the central place.

The ongoing crisis in tune with the tariff war raised since the beginning of the year is raising efforts to identify new partners who can add complimentary inputs and values to countries in maintaining a resilient ecosystem to sustain their economic, social, political and even ecological landscapes. The next contribution by Manuel Gonzalo and Paloma Ochaá through their paper, “India and Argentina Agricultural Complementarity: An Agenda for Trade and Cooperation” argues in favour of opportunities around agricultural trade between Argentina and India. This is important from the reality that obtains that India’s economic cooperation with Latin American countries is yet to take a very prominent shape. Giving a somewhat broad understanding of India’s trade with MERCOSUR countries in the aggregate and more specific pattern in terms of India-Argentina trade structure, they observe that there are lots of complementarities in agricultural trade prospects between the two countries. Prominent sectors that may be considered immediately are sharing of agricultural technology, collaboration in strengthening traditional farming with special emphasis on ensuring food security. Such an effort, the authors feel, will facilitate cooperation among new partners in the spirit of offering horizontal mutual benefits to the partners.

The multifarious global crises require many resources to be accumulated and allocated judiciously. They include human, natural and technical resources. Obviously, these resources, in an economic system aligned to monetary exchanges, are to be expressed in terms of accounting units. This compulsion brings the issue of financing for development as one of the main planks of concern. The 2025 United Nations Conference on Financing for Development (FfD) was held in Seville to identify a renewed approach to engage in linkage between financial requirements and the state of development that is further relevant in our quest for a future road map to simultaneously save the planet. The contribution by Stefano Manservigi and Marion Pezzini titled “From Disillusionment to Strategy”, goes further in their argument that financing for development must not emphasize on the need to generate financial resources but engage in plans to ensure how they are spent. A strong institutional mechanism that ensures that the resources are accumulated and allocated judiciously

is a compulsory requirement for financial resources to be made available. It is argued that new alliances, institutional reforms and cooperative initiatives to not only respond to the systemic challenges but also simultaneously take care of national development priorities of the global south nations are the challenges facing the global humanity. This calls for a transformation from a unilateral financing tool into a co-designed platform for experimental variable geometry multilateralism. Taking the case of the Global Gateway initiative by European Union (EU), they propose a framework of cooperation where global south and Europe engage as equal partners in learning by doing and shaping an inclusive international cooperation system.

We are presenting interviews from two distinguished policy makers from global south in this issue. They have been engaged in constantly arguing in favour of equal space for the global south in global development scenario. The first one is by Carlos Correa and Sachin Chaturvedi provides the second one. Both of them emphasize the importance of south-south cooperation and triangular cooperation as important cornerstones of development processes in the coming days. They are not substitutes for aid-based North-South cooperation, but are engaging larger space in the sense that many challenges like poverty and climate change are being looked into by such processes. Dr. Correa argues that these complementary modes of cooperation are moves towards Bandung and beyond which are emerging as 21st century equivalent of the Bandung Principles of mutual interest that puts the Global South working together to cater to the problems of increasing debt faced by the developing world. However, further efforts are necessary to take care of the issues related to technology transfer that are yet to be achieved in reality. South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation must make future actions to facilitate future of technology sharing among the southern countries. He also made a clear argument in favour of a clear balance between investment forthcoming from foreign partners and the environmental and domestic social implications for the concerned country. The balance should be geared towards achievement of sustainable development that simultaneously takes care of the planet and her people.

The interview by Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi is interesting in the sense that he argues in favour of 'de-silo'-ing North-South, South-South and Triangular Cooperation as time has come to show pragmatism towards global development. The silos are not going to solve our problems. We are required to fight the fragmentation and be clear that we cannot create more walls. In the context of countries participating in triangular cooperation Professor Sachin Chaturvedi argues that they should be free from conditionalities and the approach should be demand driven. Then only the development priorities of Global South will not be compromised. He also emphasized the importance of global development compact that brings harmony between the five modalities – capacity building, trade, technology transfer, concessional credit and grants. He also observed that the younger generation in global south is necessary to be engaged to the idea of global responsibility and not just think of running after the US and Europe. A good initiative runs in terms of bringing the younger generation

and teaches them about global responsibility is the University Connect Programme initiated in India by RIS.

Pratyush Sharma has reviewed a very interesting book, “The Palgrave Handbook of Ubuntu, Inequality and Sustainable Development”. It explores how the African philosophy of Ubuntu - I am because we are - can address contemporary global challenges, especially inequality, poverty, climate change and social exclusion. The book is divided into a number of thematic entities. The first theme deals with a thematic reflection on Ubuntu where the moral theory, ethics, leadership and reinterpretations of Ubuntu for contemporary contexts are examined in detail. Interestingly, rather than romanticising the concept, it is linked to the present day concerns about sustainable development. The next thematic area contextualizes the environmental and climate change in the light of climate justice. It also takes care of global inequality, status based inequality, racism, migration and xenophobia and gender inequality as different themes captured in this monograph. Each theme combines case studies, philosophical analysis and policy reflections to capture Ubuntu’s theoretical and practical implications. The book also identifies several operational challenges in implementing Ubuntu based policies. It observes that it is important to move away from including the idea as a policy rhetoric and employed symbolically without being matched by practical mechanisms for implementation. Such efforts are required to not only incorporating enforceable Ubuntu principles in constitutional and programme mandates but also well designed capacity building programmes for all necessary stakeholders with skills to translate Ubuntu ethics into practical strategies. This book attracts relevance from other regions that are also trying to engage their traditional knowledge, often lost sight of due to colonial imposition, in changing their policy perspectives.

The final section in this issue takes care of SSC Statistics. Titled “Public Debt Crisis in Global South: A Call for Urgent Actions”, it highlights the deepening debt crisis faced by the global South that threatens sustainable development and global economic stability. Tracking the trends in public debt in Northern and Southern world the concerns emerge in terms of a significantly faster rate of increase in indebtedness of the Global South, with a comparatively lower rate of growth of their collective GDP. Sushil Kumar also identifies the top 30 countries in Global South in terms of their public debt in 2023. It also brings to our notice that the government expenditure on interest payment linked to their loan obligation has been rising, even though the share of total government expenditure to GDP remained more or less stable between 2010 and 2023. This is no doubt a serious concern for the Global South.

The present issue is an attempt to capture some important concerns related to global development and the required roadmap for international cooperation. If these contributions enable further debates and discussions on our way forward, the efforts put up in presenting this issue will be successful.