

Group of 77

Organization: Group of 77

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Description At the conclusion of the first intergovernmental meeting of UNCTAD on 15 June 1964, developing countries issued the Joint Declaration of the 77. This Declaration indicated their willingness to work together to establish a new international division of labour and a framework for world trade that would accelerate economic development. The coalition was formalized as the Group of 77 (G-77) developing countries in October 1967 with the adoption of the Charter of Algiers. Highlighting the shrinking share of developing countries in world trade due to import barriers they faced in developed countries, and long-term declines in the terms of trade for primary commodity exporters, the Charter called for a new trade policy for development. It advocated the relaxation of trade barriers and the introduction of a system of trade preferences, as well as a scheme for stabilizing commodity prices at higher levels and the diversification of developing country exports. On the whole, the Charter indicated the G-77's desire for more autonomy and equity in the global economy.

Since Algiers, Ministerial Meetings to set the G-77's agenda have been held each year at the start of the General Assembly's regular sessions in New York. The organization continues to produce joint statements, declarations, and programs of action to advance the collective economic interests of its members. Additionally, the G-77 sponsors and negotiates resolutions and decisions at global conferences and other meetings held under the United Nations (UN) flag. Today the G-77 represents 135 countries and has chapters at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Educational and Scientific Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF)/World Bank. A subsidiary body, the G-77 Chamber of Commerce and Industry, promotes economic cooperation through its trade information network: a gateway for investors from member countries to access the markets of other members.



Group of 77 Member Countries

Many developed countries rejected the G-77's early initiatives, such as the Declaration and Programme of Action for a New International Economic Order (NIEO), the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and the Integrated Programme for Commodities. Nonetheless, due to the Group's efforts, economic and social questions have a more prominent place on today's UN agenda than they did during the initial North-South debate.

In April 2000, prior to the Millennium Summit, G-77 Heads of State and Government met together for the first time and made the case that the Joint Declaration of the 77 was still relevant. This event, termed the South Summit, and subsequent negotiations driven by the group, led to the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In June 2005, leaders of the G-77 held a Second South Summit in Doha and issued a Declaration and Programme of Action that affirmed the importance of South-South cooperation to make economic globalization more equitable.

Suggested Reading:

Group of 77 website. *Doha Declaration and Plan of Action. Doha: Second South Summit of the G-77*, www.g77.org/southsummit2/en/intro.html (accessed 14 July 2005).

Sauvant, Karl P. 1981. *The Group of 77: Evolution, structure, organization*. New York: Oceana Publications.

South Centre website. *The Group of 77 at forty*, www.southcentre.org/publications/booksindex.htm (accessed 14 July 2005).