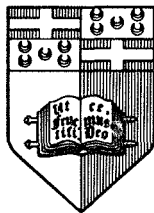


THE UNIVERSITY OF MALTA



G A Z E T T E

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CONVOCAATION FOR THE CONFERMENT OF
HONORARY DEGREE ON
PRESIDENT LI XIANNIAN

The Convocation for the Conferment of an Honorary Degree – Doctor of Laws (*Honoris Causa*) – on His Excellency Li Xiannian, President of the People's Republic of China, was held at the Assembly Hall of the University on Wednesday, 21st November, 1984.

The Ceremony was presided by the President of the Republic and University Chancellor, H.E. Miss Agatha Barbara. The degree was conferred by the Rector, Professor G.P. Xuereb, and the Senior Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Dr. C. Mifsud Bonnici assisted at the Ceremony.

The address was delivered by Professor E. Scicluna, Head of the Department of Management Studies. Professor E. Busuttil, Chairman of the Faculty Board of Laws, sponsored President Li.

The Conferment Ceremony was attended by the Chinese President's wife, Madame Lin Jiamei, Government Ministers, Members of the Diplomatic Corps and other distinguished guests.

The Conferment of the Degree was made following a resolution approved by the Council of the University, which read as follows:

'Whereas a resolution has been passed by the Senate recommending that the Degree of Doctor of Laws (*Honoris Causa*) be conferred on

HIS EXCELLENCY LI XIANNIAN

President of the People's Republic of China

And this, with the earnest wish that the deep feelings of friendship and respect of the Island of Malta and its University, be expressed to the Head of the People's Republic in a particular manner, and in a more general way to the people of China.

Furthermore, the University welcomes the occasion to record appreciation and gratitude for a relationship that has assured for Malta and its people, helpful understanding and consideration of requirement for further development.

We, the Council of The University of Malta do hereby approve this resolution and order that this distinction be conferred on 21st November, 1984 in the course of the visit of

President Li Xiannian

to Malta.'

GRADUATION CEREMONY

A Graduation Ceremony was held in the Conference Hall of the Medical School, Guardamangia, on Friday, 5th October, 1984.

Following an address by Professor Joseph Gatt, Head of the Department of Pathology, the Rector, Professor G.P. Xuereb conferred the following degrees:

DOCTOR OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY

Sponsor: Chairman, Faculty of Medicine & Surgery

BEZZINA Albert
BORG Anton
BUHAGIAR Victor
CAMILLERI Victor
CASSAR David R.
DARMANIN Francis X.
DIMECH Joseph
ELLUL Ernest
FARRUGIA Mary A.
GAUCI John
MARTINELLI Marcel J.
MIZZI John S.
PISANI Anthony
SAID Anna Maria
SAID Mario E.
SAMMUT Mario R.
SCERRI Eric
SCERRI Mario
TONNA Ramon
ZAMMIT Joseph

Honorary degrees were conferred as follows:

DOCTOR OF LITERATURE (D.Litt.) Dr. PAUL CASSAR

Sponsor: Chairman, Faculty of Education

DOCTOR OF SCIENCE (D.Sc.) Professor HERBERT M. GILLES

Sponsor: Chairman, Faculty of Engineering and Architecture

CONFERENCE ON LIFELONG EDUCATION

The Conference on 'Lifelong Education Initiatives in Mediterranean Countries' was held on the 5th to 7th November, 1984 under the auspices of the Faculty of Education. Dr. Kenneth Wain, Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Education, opened the Conference.

The main speakers at the Conference were:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Ettore Gelpi
Chief of Lifelong Education,
UNESCO, Paris | 'Lifelong Education and International
Relations' |
| Alberto Melo
Member of Planning Committee in charge
of setting up a Regional Polytechnic
in Faro,
Portugal | 'From Traditional Cultures to Adult Education:
the Portuguese experience after 1974' |
| Juan A. Bofill
President of the National Association
of Human Communication,
Founder of the Universitat Nova,
Spain | 'People's Participation in Education' |
| Asher Deleon
Ex-member of the UNESCO Secretariat,
Founder and developer of the system of
Workers and Adult Education,
Yugoslavia | 'Relationship between Education and
Communication' |
| George Papandreu
Parliamentary Deputy and
Chairman of the Parliamentary
Committee on Education,
Head of Centre for Research and
Self-Education,
Greece | 'Individual and Collective Self-Learning
(Automorphose)' |
| Mustapha Haddab
Sociologist of Education
Centre de Recherche d'Economie
Appliquée,
Algeria | 'Functions and Effects of Formal Education
in a Rural Environment' |

Short communications from other participants, both local and foreign, were also read during the Conference.

This Regional meeting was supported by a UNESCO contribution of \$10,000.

CONFERENCE ON CONCRETE TECHNOLOGY

The Department of Architecture of Civil Engineering, in collaboration with Modern Advanced Concrete of Treviso, organised a Conference on Concrete Technology on the 18th October, 1984.

The main speakers were Mr. Franco Montesin (University of Malta), Professor Mario Collepardi (Ancona University), Eng. Rabinder Khurana (Technical Director of M.A.C.), Professor K. Kaldarar (University of Malta) and Mr. E. Scerri (University of Malta).

At the end of the Conference, Professor K. Kaldarar summarised the conclusions, as follows:

'After Mr. Franco Montesin's explanatory introduction to the subject, we had great pleasure in listening to Professor Collepardi's very interesting lecture on the 'Theoretical Aspects of Durability of Reinforced Concrete Structures', as well as the detailed lecture of Engineer Rabinder Khurana who talked about the practical aspects of the repair of deteriorated concrete structures.

We have heard about the use of superplasticizing admixtures, which are only one branch of the whole range of admixtures, accelerators, retarders, air entraining agents and curing compounds available to engineers. Admixtures are not vital to the production of concrete. They are not magic substitutes for bad workmanship or materials. However, they are available to us to produce the best concrete with the greatest economy and efficiency under the existing conditions.

Superplasticizers, as we have seen, enable us to reduce water/cement ratios whilst retaining high workability. Furthermore, they guarantee a generally better concrete with longer durability. As was explained by our colleague Rabinder Khurana they are also efficient for repairs of existing deteriorated concrete structures.

This implies that significant economies may be made in, for example, maintenance costs; a better quality of concrete would mean less occurrences of steel corrosion, if any; less staining of surfaces; economies in cement contents; since the water content of the mix is reduced a low cement content could be possible without increasing water/cement ratio. In any case, the cement would be more efficiently utilized. Other economies could be made in the assumed safety factors – since a greater uniformity and reliability could be expected from the concrete, lower safety factor, and hence smaller sections may be possible. Supervision could be less of a headache; placing and vibration of the concrete is simplified. The concept of a Ready Mix Concrete could be extended to a Ready-Mix-Pumped-Concrete.

Obviously, there will be also other problems. Greater care would be necessary in formwork design and construction, and the whole concreting operation requires better planning. It is up to the engineer to recognize the advantages and cope with the problems.

The University's role, as was illustrated tonight, is to point out the research possibilities.'

M.A.C. awarded a one week technical visit to their laboratories in Treviso, Italy, to two students, namely Mr. David Spiteri and Mr. Alfred Briffa, who are doing their final year dissertation on concrete, and to their tutor Mr. Franco Montesin. All expenses in connection with this visit will be borne by M.A.C.

COURSE FOR JOURNALISTS
ORGANIZED BY
THE EXTENSION STUDIES BOARD

The Extension Studies Board of the University has organised a series of workshops on topics of immediate and practical use to working journalists.

These sessions, held at the Old University Building, Valletta, were as follows:

DATE	TOPICS	LECTURER
17th December 1984	The Budget	Mr. J. Galdes
21st December 1984	The Constitution of Malta	Dr. I. Refalo
4th January 1985	The Maltese House of Representatives	Mr. C. Mifsud
10th January 1985	Statistical Publications in Malta	Mr. R. Camilleri
18th January 1985	Local Libraries	Miss L. Sciberras
24th January 1985	Press Law and the Laws of Libel	Dr. J. Micallef Stafrace

GENERAL

Public Lectures

On Monday, 29th October, 1984, Professor Giorgio Spini delivered a public lecture on: 'Architettura, Politica e Guerra Sul Mediterraneo nella Toscana dei Medici Granduchi'.

This lecture was held in association with the Italian Cultural Institute.

On Friday, 19th October, 1984, Dott. Ettore Gelpi, Head of Lifelong Education

Section, UNESCO, Paris, delivered a public lecture on 'Lifelong Education'.

Press Conference

On Monday, 17th December, 1984, the Editorial Board of CENTRO held a Press Conference at the University during which they launched CENTRO, an International Journal of environmental studies in the Mediterranean.

LATEST PUBLICATIONS

Orwell 1984: Myths and Realities Man, The State and Society (edited by Dr. Daniel Massa)	Lm 3 pp. 142
A Colonial Inheritance (Maltese Perceptions of Work, Power and Class Structure with reference to the Labour Movement) (Dr. Edward L. Zammit)	Lm 3 pp. 195
Aspetti Stilistici tal-Poezija ta' Dun Karm (Rev. Dr. Edward Fenech)	Lm 1 pp. 30
Economic and Social Studies (New Series), Vol. 1	Lm 1 pp. 57
Journal of Maltese Studies, No. 15	Lm 1.50,0 pp. 94
Centro Vol. 1 No. 1 (An International Journal of Environmental Studies in the Mediterranean)	Lm 1 pp. 48

These publications may be obtained from: The Publications Section,
Administration Building,
The University of Malta,
Msida,
Malta.

BOOK REVIEW

Economic and Social Studies (New Series) Volume 1, 1983
(Faculty of Management Studies, The University of Malta)

'Economic and Social Studies' is an annual publication of the Faculty of Management Studies. The journal concentrates primarily on issues in applied economics, sociology and business management. Studies in theoretical analysis, which supports empirical research in the Maltese Islands, are also included.

The first issue presents four papers:

- (1) 'Alienation, Anomie and Traditional Powerlessness', by E.L. Zammit.

The author draws up the relationship between the conditions typified by Marx under the concept of 'alienation' and those typified by Durkheim under the concept of 'anomie'. The main traditional responses or adaptations to these conditions are outlined, in turn. The paper concludes that 'the traditional Maltese condition of powerlessness is seen as being related to the combined alienation-anomie syndrome in the context of colonialism. Other objective factors – like the lack of environmental resources and overpopulation – contributed to this condition in varying degrees.'

- (2) 'Measuring Public Enterprise Productive Efficiency: A Suggested Framework' by E.J. Scicluna.

The Study is concerned with the possibility of improving the measurement of public enterprise productivity. The first part of the paper reviews briefly some conceptual issues bearing on this subject while the second part outlines a methodology that overcomes some of the problems inherent in previous work and which has been applied in the more difficult areas of public sector activity.

- (3) 'The Growth of Trade Unions under British Colonialism – A Comparative Study' by Godfrey A. Pirotta.

This paper assesses the impact on trade union movement in former British colonies of the 'British concept of Trade Unionism', which is essentially a political one based on the liberal philosophy which recognizes individual rights in a pluralistic society'.

- (4) 'Overtaxed? A comment on the Maltese Experience' by E.P. Delia.

The paper comments on the theoretical relationships that exist between the tax structure and two policy goals identified in government economic programmes in Malta, namely the encouragement of production through an increased personal effort, and the raising of revenue for the State to finance annual current expenditure. A critical assessment is, in turn, carried out of the proposition that Malta is an overtaxed economy.

OBITUARY

We record with regret the death of Mr. Joseph Camilleri, a member of the staff at University House. Staff and students miss the human feeling with which this employee was endowed.

May he rest in peace.

THE UNIVERSITY GAZETTE

All matter for publication in the next issue of the Gazette should be sent to the Registrar not later than 21st February, 1985.

At the Graduation Ceremony held on 5th October, 1984, Professor Joseph Gatt, M.D., M.Sc., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.Path., D.T.M.&H., Head of the Department of Pathology, delivered the following oration:

THE FRONTIERS AND LIMITATIONS OF SCIENCE

May I say how deeply I appreciate the honour of addressing the Faculty of Medicine on Graduation Day. It is indeed a day of fulfilment; fulfilment for the students who are receiving the accolade of professional maturity; fulfilment for their parents who have staked so much on their children's future; and fulfilment for the members of the Faculty of Medicine who see the fruition of their toils and efforts during the years of teaching by word, by example and by exhortation.

All of us have heard, repeatedly, that we live in a period of transition, when change is taking place so fast it is almost impossible to keep abreast with the discoveries and advances in sciences. It is accepted by everyone that progress is inevitable; that change and development are inherent to our industrial community and that science is central to the dynamism which propels our society on its path of progress.

Equally therefore, progress in science, especially in applied science, is synonymous with progress in industry; in trade, in administration, in telecommunications, in defence and in medicine. Yet the facts of life are to be faced and understood. It is, indeed, astonishing to see how rapidly modern knowledge gets out of date to be replaced by fresh knowledge which again calls its own discoveries into question. How often have we heard in academic circles, the phrase 'PUBLISH OR PERISH'. Yet, how much print has been chummed up to be relegated to oblivion within weeks of its publication because it has been overtaken by new discoveries. By the same token even relevant and original work becomes dated and obsolescent; for it is a truism that by the time that medical text-books are printed, they are already obsolete; the knowledge they contain is inevitably fifteen years behind recent advances. Also books which claim to be compendia of recent advances are really ten years behind recent discoveries. Modern learning, therefore, unlike that acquired in past centuries, is not a capital accumulated in youth and on whose interest one will survive to old age. It is more like a current account which may be drawn upon, provided payments into it are kept up and additions to it never cease to be made.

Why is this so? Because contemporary science fulfils two functions: the first one answers the utilitarian needs of a society which thrives on technology and the second responds to the requirements of theoretical research and insight into the secret script of the Book of Nature. Medicine, an applied science, is based both upon the utilitarian technologies which belong to the first category of modern obsolescent knowledge and at the same time it is a branch of biology and thrives on theoretical research in basic sciences.

When faced by this constant shifting and transience of knowledge we, the teachers of the university, can no longer be satisfied to transmit knowledge but we must initiate the student to scientific methods which make him capable of ensuring his own auto-apprenticeship and his own education. Truly, therefore, this is the age of the perpetual student. However, life is short and the perpetual student must be selective both in the choice of technologies and in the lines of research.

Yet, is knowledge so easily devalued that none is worth preserving except the memory of it? No, there is more to knowledge than that; there are other categories of knowledge which are not as volatile and as evanescent as we are led to believe.

Scientific method is one type of durable knowledge; for it is a mental habit, an art which guides us surely in our search for truth. It is the VIRTUS of the erudite scholar; the intellectual equipment of the educated practitioner; 'IL VIRTUOSO' who because of this accomplishment knows how to evaluate, select and classify what is good and what is genuine from the dross that is pelted upon us by the master-printers of this earth.

This durable knowledge is therefore the ability to sift, to compare and to collate relevant information. It is a scientific habit which once understood and acquired will last a lifetime. It is the prize, the charism of the professional and of the scholar who has had a University education.

Thus it is not entirely true to state that modern knowledge discards old technologies which evolved during past centuries to replace them overnight by newer technologies which in their turn will be supplanted by others. It is nearer the truth to state that there are areas of human knowledge where techniques are being refined and improved and as a result, new horizons and new frontiers are being reached.

Soon after the last world war, there were moments of elated optimism among academic communities, which also coloured scientific journalism, concerning the potential of scientific research. Society was led to believe that the frontiers of science were as remote as the margins of the Universe and were also within our reach. This may have been true in the case of physics and chemistry where simplicity of structure is the hallmark and where the laws of quantum mechanics are only limited by Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle.

Yet serious thinkers were already pondering the limitations of the human mind and of the faculties. The difficult problems posed were not those of physics or chemistry. They were in fact, problems of biology, of disease at molecular level and of basic pathology; in other words, the problems emanating from the immense complexity of the living cell and its components. The difference between Biology and Physics emerged as a difference of quality not of quantity. A difference which is so deep that it is and remains unbridgeable, despite the fact that the basic laws of physics and chemistry are still applicable to the living organism and to the Science of Biology.

In 1632 Galileo, the Father of Modern Science published *I Discorsi*. In it he outlined the first theory of Relativity and also outlined scientific method. He pointed out that nature was like a book written by God in cypher which could be read using a mathematical key. Since then, this scientific method has been elaborated and refined. There are two approaches for research, either of which gives us an insight into the laws of nature. The first approach is based upon the collection of statistics and their probabilistic or stochastic interpretation of the known facts, i.e. the theory of best fit. This method is restricted to those sciences which are not amenable to direct experiment like the science of meteorology, earthquakes, geology. The second approach is that of reductionism which has been widely and successfully used for centuries in the physical sciences. It rests upon the precept that if we have a complex system 'A', we can with proper experimental and theoretical analysis clarify its entire behaviour by studying its constituent parts, determining the basic 'laws of interaction which these parts obey; then reassembling the parts into the original configuration found in the complex system 'A'. This process could be continued in principle until resolution is obtained of the complex system into its ultimate constituents. This procedure has been followed in physics and chemistry with ever increasing clarification at every different level of resolution.

There would seem to be no valid reasons why the reductionist approach should not apply to Biology. The laws of Quantum Mechanics should in fact govern the dynamic behaviour of the atomic and molecular constituents in any biological system up to and indeed beyond the complete cell.

The great advances achieved to date in cell biology by the reductionist approach have been associated with the partial determination of cell structure and certain cell constituents such as cellular membrane, mitochondria, chloroplasts, lysosomes, the Golgi apparatus, the endoplasmic reticulum and, above all, the nucleus and its constituent D.N.A. Here the biologist has made astounding advances aided by the fact that the molecules of D.N.A. are linear and play out their master-template role in a way which is subject to detailed analysis. This genetic code is applicable universally to all living matter and this simplicity has been extended to certain important proteins implicated in health and disease.

We will be very fortunate indeed if, in our search for the origin of all types of cancer, we were always to find decipherable and localised changes in the cellular D.N.A. which can be traced back to identifiable agents which enter the cell and modify it through action on nuclear D.N.A. It is of great interest to note that some virus induced cancer in animals and in man are clearly associated with localised changes in the genes of the host. This simplicity has been exploited to the extent that vaccines have been used successfully against fowl leukaemias.

It would be most unfortunate if it were discovered that cancer is a manifestation of deeper cellular malfunction and cannot be linked back to a relative simple decipherable change in sub-cellular organelles or genetic D.N.A.

This is not unwarranted pessimism but it is based upon the fact that the living cell possess such complexity that Quantum Mechanical analysis is no longer applicable. The application of reductionist analysis to a complex biological system like the living cell, useful though it may be, does not have the same practical implications that it has in the physical system. Even if we were successful in obtaining the massive encyclopedia-like list of all the molecular constituents of the cell, we would still be unable to use Quantum Mechanics to obtain a model of the living cell. This information barrier does not rest upon the fact that the normal cell contains billions of atoms. Less severe types of indeterminacy involving a hundred atoms or less would still be undecipherable; of course, with the proviso that we are trying to understand the behaviour of a system which is not homogeneous and possesses a low order of symmetry as is characteristic of the cell.

Another immense barrier to analysis lies in the fact that of all the dynamically feasible rearrangements of the constituents of the cell, only an infinitesimal function is compatible with life. No machine, even if we had at our disposal all the energy in the universe, would be able to sift out those potential rearrangements of interest for biological purposes. The problem in fact belongs to a category, which computer theorists call TRANSCOMPUTATIONAL. It is obvious that intelligence, memory, will power, judgement, affection and character are not analysable. There seems to be other areas in biology which are beyond the tools forged by reductionist theory; embryonic induction, individualism, longevity and senility are all problems which are transcomputational. It is surprising and amusing to note that when this argument is carried out to its logical conclusion, transformation of species is also proved to be transcomputational and Darwinian evolution becomes mathematically impossible again because of the immense complexity of the living cell. Such concepts as phylum, family, tribe and all the verbiage coined by taxonomists together with such terms as primordial ooze become nothing more than beings of the mind for which there are no corresponding facts existing in reality.

To sum up, in the study of biology and in the study of medicine, the reductionist approach is the major tool at our disposal to help us unravel the stupendous complexity of the living cell. It has in the past yielded and is still capable of yielding vast knowledge about the inner workings of living organisms. But there are limitations to this method. Our prayer is that these limitations will not be a barrier to the unravelling of the causation of disease especially cancer. As to the problems of the first appearance of the living cell and to the problems of intercellular organisation of the living systems, a quantitative reductionist solution seems very remote indeed.

At the Convocation for the Conferment of the Honorary Degree on President Li Xiannian, held on 21st November, 1984, Professor E. Scicluna, Head of the Department of Management Studies made the following address:

SOUTH-SOUTH CO-OPERATION

During the course of the 1970's and early 1980's, the developing countries put forward a series of proposals for international economic and political reform upon the agenda of the United Nations and its member organizations. Their proposals for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) have been debated at great length at innumerable conferences within the United Nations system and elsewhere, and have been the object of negotiations in a wide variety of different occasions. Among other objectives, the proposed New International Economic Order involves: improved access to Northern markets for the exports of Southern countries and appropriate adjustments in Northern economies to facilitate the expansion of Southern shares of global manufacturing industry; the regulation of the activities of transnational corporations and the creation of a code of conduct governing the international transfer of technology, the regulation and stabilization of international primary commodity markets and the creation of a Common Fund for this and other purposes; international monetary reform; the promotion of co-operation among developing countries; increased resources flow to developing countries; and over-all the alteration of existing institutional mechanisms and structures so as to support the objectives of development in the Third World. At the root of this call for an NIEO lies the LDC's dissatisfaction with the old order which, it is felt, contains systematic biases perpetuating inequalities in power, wealth and incomes and impeding the development efforts of the developing countries.

Although the Sixth Special Session of the United Nations adopted a consensus resolution expressing support for the concepts of the NIEO, the countries of the North have never accepted the details of the proposed reform programme. It is unfortunately obvious that the developed countries have not responded more constructively and imaginatively to the pleas of the developing countries.

In response to the current impasse in the dialogue, the Third World has to follow a different strategy, based primarily on self-reliance. With greater self-reliance, and further South-South co-operation, it is expected that the South will increase its bargaining power and also expand the areas of common interest between the South and the North. It is important however to go deeper into the concept of South-South co-operation and examine the present day realities, the problems, and of course the long-term benefits expected from mutual co-operation in the South.

The case for co-operation is quite a powerful one. First, the LDC's are slowly realizing that economic growth in the North over the next decade or so will proceed at a slow pace. It will therefore be prudent for developing countries, who have in the past depended on the spill-over effects of the North for their own development, to look to themselves and to each other if they are to accelerate their development.

Second, the South is now aware that rhetoric eloquence alone will not convince the North to 'give' the South an NIEO as a benevolent gesture. It is the South itself which must create the framework of a new order through its own efforts. The central issue is the organization of countervailing power by the South on a political, economic and intellectual front.

Third, there are certain benefits which are inherent in a South-South co-operation such as in the transfer of 'appropriate' technology and material goods. Through mutual aid and assistance countries of the South may evolve their own styles of development.

Any organized effort for South-South co-operation must realistically recognize the innumerable political, economic and institutional obstacles which impede such progress. In the area of trade, for example, historical trading conditions have been responsible for the growth of North-South transport, communications and marketing arrangements that do not exist on a South-South basis. The same can be said for intellectual ties: education from universities of the North reinforces preferences and life-styles less congenial for the South. Another area presenting major difficulty is the wide diversity within the South, partly created by colonial powers and partly arising from the different stages of development of the LDC's.

Specific possibilities for economic co-operation are relatively easy to describe. However, one can foresee little chance of implementation, unless there is a political movement behind them. One cannot avoid the somewhat long-term process of identifying mutual interests within the Third World and setting up concrete institutional arrangements within which LDC's can derive the long lasting benefits of self-reliance. In the first instance, therefore, realism demands that such co-operation be conceived between a relatively few countries in pursuit of commonly agreed objectives, rather than on a global basis.

Among the prerequisites for this co-operation there need be a sense of optimism and self-confidence. Outright rejection of foreign goods, technology or value systems is no part of the philosophy of self-reliance. That can only result from a feeling of insecurity. What is required is for a liberated society which is capable of distinguishing between slavish imitation of all that belongs to the North, and the indigenous adaptation of that which can contribute to their welfare.

Finally, if South-South co-operation is to succeed, one cannot but advise the developing countries to emulate China in adopting the renowned Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence as their guiding principles of foreign relations. They are: mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. It will be found that South-South co-operation, rather than being a substitute, is an essential prelude to any meaningful North-South negotiations.