Your Excellencies,
Colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to all of you here today who made this First Arab States Regional High-Level Forum of Directors-General (DGs) for Development Cooperation possible. I would like to express my deep appreciation to our co-organizer, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), for their long-standing commitment to South-South and Triangular cooperation and for its significant support to this First Regional forum. Also, I would like to thank the State of Qatar for hosting the First Arab States Regional South-South Development EXPO 2014 and this High-Level Forum and IsDB’s as a sponsor of the DGs Forum.

Let me stress that South-South Cooperation is an agenda of the South, by the South and for the South, and the Directors-General are the main articulators, makers and drivers of this agenda. You are the champions of South-South and Triangular cooperation (SSC/TrC) efforts.

In the Nairobi Outcome document, developing countries committed to making South-South cooperation contribute more towards sustained economic growth and sustainable development. Member States also committed to strengthen their own national South-South cooperation management and coordination mechanisms; share best practices among South-South cooperation authorities; enable mutual learning and mutual capacity development; form innovative and inclusive partnerships, especially triangular and public-private partnerships; and maximize and scale up the development impact of both South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation.

SSC is a key component of UNDG’s strategic priorities and it will be at the centre of the United Nations activities for sustainable development, especially in the post-2015 agenda. The new Strategic Framework of the UN Office for South-South Cooperation 2014-2017 will be instrumental in supporting the strategic priorities in SSC through its global Three-in-One Multilateral Support Architecture for South-South Cooperation that consists of the Global South-South Development Academy, Global South-South Development EXPO and the South-South Global Assets and Technologies Exchange. As a way to implement the three-in-one architecture at regional level, we developed a concept on the regional
approach based on three key elements that reinforce each other and further increase their cumulative value added to promoting South-South Cooperation in the Arab region and beyond.

Today’s forum, organized around five main sessions from policy and development coordination to successful country strategy for SSC/TrC, intends to provide a distinct space for Directors-General of development cooperation agencies to exchange best practices and share successes and challenges to scale up the regional impact of SSC/TrC.

My Office is here to support you. The UNOSSC will:

1. Support match-making of demand and supply for SSC/TrC, provide a space for DGs to discuss and formulate new initiatives in closed environment.
2. Offer and provide ownership of a virtual DG Space, created in UNOSSC’s website, to DGs Offices so that they can continue the discussion around today’s thematic areas and upload information directly regarding their policy/activities in SSC/TrC.
3. Support partnership building for scaling up of SSC, including triangular cooperation, making use of GSSD Global and Regional Expo and other international fora.
4. Support your efforts to create the Regional Arab Roadmap on fostering SSC/TrC as concrete way of harmonizing regional efforts and it will represent the synthesis of national- and regional-level analysis of individual strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and possible risks from the point of view of South-South and Triangular Cooperation agenda and strategy of each participating country.

I would like to recall that in January the new Strategic Framework of the UN Office for South-South Cooperation 2014-2017 has been discussed and approved at the First Regular Session 2014 of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board and my Office firmly committed to support the capacity development of of DG Offices through its multilateral support architecture, Expos, DG Forums (physical and virtual), and through the capacity development on-going project in collaboration with ABC (Government of Brazil) and JICA.

As the Secretariat of the First Arab States Regional South-South Development EXPO 2014 and co-organizer of this High-Level Forum, we are honoured to provide this physical space, as well as the virtual one, for the purposes of mutual learning and networking.