

**FIFTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

STATEMENT BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON BEHALF OF  
**THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY**

GENERAL DEBATE  
SECOND COMMITTEE

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Mr. Chairman,

It is an honour and privilege for me to make this statement on behalf of the fourteen (14) Member States of the Caribbean Community that are members of the United Nations. Our Member States wish to associate themselves with the statement made by Venezuela on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and by Samoa on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States.

Mr. Chairman,

Developments over the past year within the world economy have not been encouraging. Growth has been sluggish, affected by creeping recession in major centres of the global economy, and overall there has been a downward trend in commodity prices. Financial markets have been affected by the events of September 11 last year and its consequences, including the prospect of a new war even today.

In addition, disclosures of corrupt practices within corporate structures have undermined confidence and contributed to uncertainty and instability in the financial market, affecting not only portfolio investments but also the provision of long-term investment capital and transnational business. In trade, there have been setbacks for progress in the opening of markets by some significant decisions on industrial tariffs and agricultural subsidies. In a world of increasing interdependence and globalisation, these developments have a pervasive effect.

It is always important that such developments are reviewed to devise global responses. In this context, it was timely that very important conferences were held during the past year at Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg focussing on important matters of trade, finance and sustainable development.

The results have provided some encouragement as a basis for moving forward. What needs to be done now are two things: First, there must be implementation of the commitments undertaken. This is paramount and there should be some mechanism for effective monitoring of compliance and progress towards the targets that have been set. Second, we should regard the consensus achieved as a basis for building to promote even higher levels of development cooperation within the international system.

For developing countries, it is vital to continue the process of dialogue to influence the direction of economic relations and decision-making in all areas of the development agenda, in particular, those relating to finance, trade and the transfer of technology. The goal is to promote the spreading of the opportunities and benefits of globalisation. This will not be achieved without the full participation of developing countries in the overall decision and rule-making process in the international economy.

As small countries, we should not be excluded from this process. Economies in our region have felt the painful and damaging effects of exclusion in the area of financial services where decisions and regulations were made, affecting a significant area of the

regional economy without any effective consultation. It is an example of the importance of entrenching principles of transparency, non-discrimination and reciprocity in any system of international regulation.

There are some other areas in which our Caribbean countries have some special concerns which we need to give some emphasis.

As Small Island Developing States (SIDS) with very open and vulnerable economies, it is important that the work programme for small economies should be an essential part of the Doha agenda and in the Johannesburg Programme of Action. We are looking forward to giving full effect to the principle of special and differential treatment which is a matter of cardinal importance to all developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

We would also like to see the development of a policy framework to ensure that the international financial system take into consideration and make concessions to enable the economies of Small Island Developing States and other countries that are vulnerable to natural disasters to work towards a more effective programme of mitigation of the frequent and recurrent threat of natural disasters. We have recently felt the effects of hurricanes which have caused great damage in Barbados, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Cuba, Haiti and in my own Jamaica, resulting in resources earmarked for development being diverted to relief and rebuilding efforts.

In the area of the environment and sustainable development, Small Island Developing States continue to face consequences over and beyond those that threaten people everywhere. Fossil fuels, which contribute to global warming, expose us in undisputed ways to more frequent and more intensive storms and storm surges and to sea level rise. We therefore urge the continuation of efforts to promote adherence to the goals of the Kyoto Protocol.

CARICOM welcomed the recognition given at Johannesburg to the special needs of Small Island Developing States and look forward to a frank and comprehensive review of the Barbados Programme of Action scheduled to be held in Mauritius in 2004. We take this opportunity to support the call made by the Alliance of Small Island States for the involvement of the UN Secretariat in the organization and convening of this conference.

The SIDS resolution to be negotiated under Agenda Item 89 (f) during this session will determine the framework and parameters for the review. CARICOM countries are of the view that the BPOA should not be re-negotiated, but should be strengthened, and look forward to the discussion on this agenda item.

Oceans and seas represent the virtual lifeline for all Small Island Developing States. In the Caribbean there is growing anxiety about the preservation and sustainable management of the resources of the Caribbean Sea. In our region, we have recognized that the Caribbean Sea can no longer sustain the heavy demands placed upon it without a holistic and integrated management approach. It was for this purpose that Caribbean countries sought the UN's support for the resolution "Promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean sea area in the context of sustainable development." This Agenda Item will also come up for discussion in the context of the resolution on Small Island Developing States and we look forward to the support of delegations on this issue which is so important to the region.

Mr. Chairman,

In addition to the matters raised here, CARICOM Member States will intervene on other issues of special concern during the course of the Session. We hope that the work of the Second Committee over the next few weeks will help us further to achieve our national and regional development goals and promote principles of equity to guide programmes and policies of international economic cooperation.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.