



Permanent Mission of St. Kitts and Nevis to the United Nations

STATEMENT

BY

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OF THE FEDERATION OF ST. KITTS & NEVIS

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Thank you Mr. President

Colleagues, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

I have the honor to address you at this 62nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly on behalf of the Government and people of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis.

I extend heartfelt congratulations to you, Mr. President, and your country, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, on your assumption of the Presidency of the 62nd Session of the General Assembly. I assure you of my delegation's full cooperation as you endeavor to chart the course of positive interaction and coordination in this international arena.

Mr. President, I would also like to welcome the new Secretary General, H.E. Mr. Ban Ki Moon, who is presiding over his first General Assembly Debate as Secretary General. My delegation congratulates him and stands ready to support him in his all too important task of managing the affairs of the United Nations.

Small Island Developing States such as St. Kitts and Nevis rely on the United Nations to level the playing field in international discourse, so that we can interact, contribute and benefit on an equal footing with other members of the international comity.

St. Kitts and Nevis at 24

Twenty four (24) years ago, St. Kitts and Nevis took the bold step of joining this august body. We pledged then to do all in our power to pursue peace and security, human rights and development. 24 years later my beautiful country can boast that it has kept the faith with our people and the international community. It has achieved much and the pace and nature of its development set an example for other Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Today the UNDP human development index ranks us at fifty one (51) out of one hundred and seventy seven (177) countries evaluated in the world. St. Kitts and Nevis has comparable indices on per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP), health and educational enrolment as many in the developed world.

Pleased as we are with our progress we all too aware that the journey is not yet ended. Much more work needs to be done. Poverty in our Federation and Caribbean is still at an unacceptable level and the turbulence of the global climate vitiates our continuing development.

Millennium Development Goals and Development Cooperation

We are almost at the mid-point of the implementation period for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). If we evaluated ourselves as a whole, we would acknowledge that many of the commitments have not been met. Aid has fallen off, official development assistance has been limited, and we have seen competing initiatives divert the drive of fulfilling the MDGs.

Today St. Kitts and Nevis calls upon all states be they in the north or south, east or west, developed or developing to do all in their power to ensure the realization of the fruits of our united vision that proposed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs').

Financing For Development

We are not all equal in endowments. Those who have more resources must allocate more to the global development agenda. The developed world must meet their financing commitments as agreed at the Monterrey Conference on Financing Development. That Conference represents a landmark because for the first time the developed world agreed that we were jointly responsible for development and that they had a special role in financing development. That commitment regrettably has not been matched by real resources.

The United Nations will hold a follow up to the Conference on Financing for Development. The State of Qatar has generously offered to host this meeting. We applaud that country for its commitment to the cause. We again call upon all countries to implement their commitments made at Monterrey.

My delegation would like to see cooperation, commitment, agreement, and implementation being undertaken at the preparations for, and at the Meeting of the follow up to Financing for Development.

HIV/AIDS

We acknowledge that the HIV/AIDS pandemic constitutes a threat to our development and security. Prime Minister Dr. Denzil Douglas in his capacity as Caribbean lead-spokesman for human and social development within CARICOM's quasi-Cabinet system has often stated that this matter requires serious and dedicated monitoring and action.

The fight to eradicate the scourge of HIV/AIDS must continue, and we must dedicate ourselves to this task. No matter the merits and demerits of the debate concerning issues in relation to intellectual property rights, the evidence has

shown that only with cheaper anti-retroviral drugs the HIV/AIDS pandemic can at the minimum be managed and this threat to mankind be reduced. Therefore there is a need to address the issues around the cost of these drugs so that they may be available to all who may need them.

My delegation also supports and looks forward to the International AIDS Conference to be held in May of 2008. We also commit ourselves wholeheartedly to the preparations, and intend to participate fully at the Meeting.

Climate Change

Mr. President

The book of Genesis reminds us that man was made to coexist peacefully with his environment. Planet earth is not an inheritance but rather a loan from our children and grandchildren who hope that one day we will return to them a clean wholesome earth. We must be careful then that our production and consumption patterns and behaviours do not surpass the environmental capacities to sustain them.

Mr. President

The matter of climate change is one of continuing high interest to my government. Indeed we view associated problems of high frequency of abnormal climate, sea level rise, global warming and coastal degradation as matters affecting the economic and environmental security of small island states such as St. Kitts and Nevis. We are heartened by the priority being accorded to this matter by the Secretary General.

This year St. Kitts and Nevis signed the Kyoto Protocol signaling my country's commitment to do all that it can to reduce its carbon emissions. We urge other states to sign up to the United Nations Framework Convention on climate change and the Kyoto Protocol.

St. Kitts and Nevis will never shirk its responsibility as a global citizen. We believe that global environmental management and combined multinational efforts could solve many issues particularly at this time when all of us have experienced environmental deterioration. We call on developed countries to provide greater support to Small Island Development States (SIDS) in combating the adverse effect of climate change. We urge far greater South - South Cooperation on climate change.

Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Assistance

Mr. President,

We live in a time when disasters are occurring with a rapidity not previously felt. Within CARICOM we were impacted by the passage of Hurricane Dean where

lives were lost, livelihood threatened, and in the case of Jamaica, an election postponed. This same hurricane, moved on to create havoc in Mexico, and was followed very closely by other equally destructive hurricanes.

Over the past year, nearly every region of the world has endured some form of natural or man-made disaster.

My delegation believes therefore that we need an increase in Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Assistance. No country escapes the need for this assistance, and in addition to supporting the existence and role of the Central Emergency Response Fund, we encourage Member States to commit to this and other similar initiatives.

UN Reform

Mr. President

During the course of the 61st General Assembly, the issue of the reform of the United Nations, and in particular system wide coherence also received extensive attention. St. Kitts and Nevis believes that reform is necessary.

My delegation's position therefore is that the time has come for agreement on the issue and on the way forward. We need continued dialogue, but most importantly, Member States need to agree on the plan of action and its implementation, and set forth acting on it. If we do not agree, or if we remain inflexible to the concerns of each other, we are all disadvantaged. Therefore the dialogue amongst civilizations must continue, and implementation must occur, for true reform of all aspects of the United Nations to come to fruition.

Taiwan

Mr. President

The United Nations (UN) must remain open for all states to become members. In this regard experience has shown that membership of the United Nations (UN) is not a deterrent to unification see for example East Germany and West Germany. Nor is it the panacea to fragmentation as some have argued with the deconstruction of the former Soviet Union. What has always been clear is that the United Nations (UN) extended a warm welcome to all states and respected the equality of all states.

In the context of the principle of universality, my country renews its call for Taiwan to become a member of the United Nations (UN).

It is of grave concern that the twenty-three million people of Taiwan have been denied the right of participation in the UN and its related bodies. During the 61st Session that exclusion and isolation continued even more aggressively. There

were even attempts to muffle the voices of the friends of Taiwan when they implored the UN family to recognize that they are a disenfranchised people. Many of us were once also disenfranchised and un-represented, but through an international recognition of our inalienable right to participate, we are here today. My delegation wishes to see that same right bestowed upon the people of Taiwan.

Taiwan has shown that it can be a true partner in development. In our view, the international community has been deprived of the gift of that partnership. In this the seventh year of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, Taiwan's assistance could have been even more useful to many Member States.

Slave Trade Commemoration

Mr. President

In March of this year, the United Nations General Assembly observed the 200th Anniversary of the abolition of the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. My Prime Minister, the Honorable Dr. Denzil Douglas, had the distinct honor of addressing this body on behalf of CARICOM.

Mr. President

One of the significant results of the commemoration exercise has been an acknowledgement that the injustice of slavery still exists in one form or another, and there is a need to address this problem. Child slavery, and economic slavery impact the societies of the international community and we need to mobilize our collective resources to combat this scourge. Only when this has been accomplished can we feel that the battle waged over 200 years ago to abolish the transatlantic slave trade and all elements associated with it, has been won.

Conclusion

Mr. President

As we look to the rest of this 62nd Session, I reiterate my country's pledge of cooperation, commitment and dialogue to address the many challenges that we will encounter, in ensuring that the United Nations remains the relevant organ for international relations and the basis upon which world issues are decided on a multilateral level.

I thank you.