



**STATEMENT**

**BY**

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REPUBLIC OF GUYANA**

**ON BEHALF OF THE RIO GROUP**

**High-Level Meeting on the Mid Term Comprehensive Global  
Review of the Implementation of the Programme  
of Action for the Least Developed Countries  
for the Decade: 2001 - 2010**

**18 September, 2006**

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Madame President,

On this Agenda Item, I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Rio Group.

At this midterm review of the Brussels Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) for the Decade 2001 – 2010, we are called upon to assess frankly the gains that have been made and to act to redeem the commitments of the Programme as the thematic focus for this High Level Meeting enjoins.

Mme. President,

Important developments, including the doubling of ODA to LDCs since 1999, substantial reduction of the debt of the poorest countries, increased duty-free and quota free market access for most LDC products, more systematized flows of untied aid, and increases in private capital flows provide encouraging signs that affirm the Brussels Programme as an invaluable platform for the sustainable growth and development needed to place LDCs on a trajectory of continued positive achievement. The most favorable and sustainable of these positive outcomes have invariably occurred in conditions of sound economic policy pursuits and integrated approaches to development based on vitalized partnerships. It is thus clear that faith in the right combination of national effort and the complementary support of the international community is not misplaced.

Regrettably, notwithstanding the advances to which reference has been made, LDCs on the whole remain in a tenuous situation. Comparison

of available selected data for the LDCs reveals the arduous effort required to honour the commitments articulated in the Brussels Programme.

More worryingly, at present rates and trends, even the minimal threshold of expected achievement cannot be guaranteed. In light of other considerations, such as the undermining impact of the high incidence of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases and the need for quality economic growth that leads to employment creation, reduction of inequalities and the preservation of the natural environment on a sustained basis, are taken into account, a more somber outlook is inevitable.

Needless to say, the situation of LDCs is indeed urgent. At this midpoint of this Third Programme of Action, and mindful of efforts to achieve the MDGs, it is crucial to make the changes necessary to ensure that the course is firmly charted for attainment beyond the disappointing level of results of previous Programmes.

The first five years have underscored the efficacy of vitalized partnerships in achieving the objectives of the Programme of Action. More intensive cooperation can thus accelerate progress and development - especially to counter the crippling incoherence of global trade rules. LDCs have themselves provided the leadership in articulating the focus and commitment now necessary to ensure the full implementation of the Programme of Action. The Rio Group calls attention in this regard to the approach outlined in the Cotonou Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action.

Mme. President,

Countries of our Group have advanced proposals at the global level that take account of the kind of thinking, action and collaboration necessary to inspire further progress. We believe that in advancing the agenda of LDCs, as well as other countries and regions which face special challenges, it is now opportune to give greater consideration to these proposals including the call by my own country for the establishment of a New Global Human Order, the Action Against Hunger and Poverty Initiative of Brazil and joined by Chile from our region and the International Humanitarian Fund mooted by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The standard for the judgment of success stipulated by the Programme of Action itself is its contribution to the progress of LDCs towards achieving international development targets as well as their graduation from the list of LDCs. The report card at this mid-point of the decade shows that greater effort is needed and much better can be done. The Rio Group therefore supports the strong renewal of the political commitment to LDCs by this High Level Meeting. We express our continued interest and support and encourage all actors - the LDCs, development partner countries and the international community - to redouble efforts to assure greater successes and the full achievement of the objectives of the Programme of Action.

I thank you.