



GRENADA

STATEMENT

BY

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PRIME MINISTER

GRENADA

**HIGH LEVEL PLENARY MEETING
OF THE 60th SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Distinguished Co-Presidents
Heads of State and Government
Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen

At the outset, let me express on behalf of my Government and people, profound sympathy to the people of the United States of America over the massive destruction and loss of life caused by Hurricane Katrina, particularly in the States of Louisiana and Mississippi. We can certainly empathise with your pain and loss.

Co-Presidents

I wish on behalf of the delegation of Grenada to extend warm congratulations on your election, and for steering so efficiently, these deliberations.

I also salute Secretary-General Kofi Annan for guiding this Organisation through a very difficult period and whose vision for the future we are adopting at the conclusion of this summit.

I am deeply honoured to address this High-level Plenary Meeting on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the founding of this august body, and to associate myself with the Statements made by the Prime Minister of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the Prime Minister of St. Kitts and Nevis on behalf of the Caribbean Community, at the Special Meeting on Financing for Development.

Five years ago, we came together to share our vision of the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century, when we adopted the Millennium Declaration. Since then the United Nations has been confronted with several world problems; conflicts of varying kinds, in the areas of humanitarian disasters, natural disasters and terrorism. These national and global challenges unforeseen 60 years ago are forcing us to the conclusion that new and innovative ways are required to uphold the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter.

We are gathered here to take decisive action on the very important issues of development, peace and security and human rights, which would affect us for a long time to come. We share the expressed view that development, human rights and peace and security are dependent on each other and we applaud initiatives taken in these areas.

Co-Presidents

Grenada fully supports the proposal to effect positive changes within the Secretariat and all organs of this body. We agree that change must come, but with increased effectiveness.

We welcome the decisions taken in the area of development and commend those developed countries who have committed themselves to meeting the target of dedicating 0.7 percent of ODA towards reducing poverty and improving health and education, as well as trade liberalization and debt relief to countries in need.

We urge other countries to follow this lead.

We find it difficult however, to understand the decisions taken by the European Union concerning the reform of the sugar and banana markets, which will virtually destroy the Caribbean Banana and Sugar Industries and wreak havoc on the vulnerable farming communities and their dependents. These policies run counter to the attainment of the MDG's for the small economies of the Caribbean.

Co-Presidents

Despite being faced with the major task of rebuilding our country and its economy, Grenada continues to remain committed and dedicated to its obligations in support of the work of this organization.

On Tuesday, September 7th 2004, the Caribbean Island of Grenada was devastated by Hurricane Ivan. Sustained wind speeds at 150 miles per hour, laid waste the country's social and economic infrastructure, and left the population severely displaced, homeless and in a ravaged state of psychological trauma.

With the assistance of many friendly countries and multi national agencies, we have been able to commence the recovery. But ten months later, on July 14th 2005, another Hurricane, Emily, hit Grenada. Although, less severe, Hurricane Emily wiped out the post-Ivan gains which were made in Agriculture and food production, and further severely undermined the agricultural and housing infrastructure.

Co-Presidents

Prior to September 7th 2004, the economy had been on a path of positive economic growth driven by advancement in the tourism, agricultural, transportation and communications sectors.

The set back in economic and social progress points to the vulnerability of small states to natural disasters, and the way in which several decades of progress can be wiped out in a matter of hours.

We applaud the efforts to improve the Central Emergency Revolving Fund to strengthen the effectiveness of the United Nations humanitarian responses, as well as the mechanisms for the use of emergency stand-by capacity, for a timely response to humanitarian emergencies. We expect that this support to small island developing states will strengthen their ability to respond more efficiently and effectively to natural disasters and mitigate their impacts.

The passage of these two hurricanes has reversed all the gains we have made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. In fact it is now 'unlikely' that Grenada will achieve the eight goals by the year 2015.

May I take this opportunity, on behalf of the people of Grenada to thank all members of this body for the kind and generous assistance granted to Grenada in the aftermath of both hurricanes. This is where we experienced the privilege of belonging to such a diverse family of nations.

The economic and fiscal situation remains a major challenge and we applaud the efforts of the International Monetary Fund in calling on the international community and donor agencies to provide more grant financing and technical assistance to support the country's reconstruction and rebuilding efforts.

Co-Presidents

As we embark on a new era in the history of the United Nations, let us, as leaders, challenge ourselves, whatever our national capacity, to work assiduously towards the elimination of poverty, hunger, discrimination, war and other ills, and to make this organisation function efficiently to meet the objectives of universal peace and progress.

Finally, I would like to reiterate our call for further assistance from the International Community, in support of Grenada's continued reconstruction efforts.

I thank you.