



SIXTIETH SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ADDRESS BY H.E. MR. BHARRAT JAGDEO
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

AT THE

HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY MEETING

September 16, 2005

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**Mr. President, Distinguished Colleagues & Representatives
Ladies and Gentlemen**

The international development goals, especially the Millennium Development Goals, which we set ourselves at the Millennium Summit five years ago and which we are called upon to review at this Session, have been a major benchmark for development. Addressing as they do such fundamentals as health and education, they constitute important prerequisites for our economic and social advancement.

Despite serious financial and human constraints, my country has made appreciable progress towards these objectives. Through a progressive poverty reduction strategy and the allocation of more budgetary resources to the social sector, we have managed to reach the poor in our society and to provide them with increased opportunities to improve their lives.

Sad to say, however, our hard-won gains are now threatened by forces and influences that are well beyond our control.

Although Europe has declared support for the Millennium Development Goals, the European Commission has nonetheless made proposals to reduce the price for our sugar exports, which if implemented will deal a devastating blow to the industry, forcing a large number of our people who depend on it for their livelihood into extreme poverty. In the case of Guyana, our economy stands to lose some forty million dollars per annum, a sum that negates the eight million dollars debt relief which is expected to flow from the recent G-8 decisions.

This action is typical of some developed countries which, while giving with great fanfare some assistance to the developing countries, they quickly take away through harmful trade and economic policies. Worse yet, despite their asseverations of partnership and commitment to consultation and coherence, they decide unilaterally on measures that adversely affect the lives of millions in the developing countries. As it is therefore, we will be hard put to achieve the Millennium Development Goals within the time-frames set.

Altogether, our experience - one that I know is shared by many others, has been daunting. We cannot avoid the conclusion that while the realization of the Millennium Development Goals provides the necessary foundation for national development, adequate economic and social progress cannot be achieved in the absence of a more comprehensive framework that encompasses significant development and investment flows, wider debt relief, more equitable

trade and economic cooperation as well as the transfer of science and technology for development purposes.

These economic and social challenges are made, as the Secretary General's Report reminds us, all the greater by the political insecurity that is the defining reality of today's world. The threats to the security of states - more particularly the small and vulnerable - have been greatly magnified by the spread of terrorism, transboundary crime, disease, arms and drug-trafficking. Most of our countries are ill-equipped because of scarce resources to defend themselves from these encroachments.

Mr. President, contemporary circumstances have brought us to a watershed. The multiplication of threats to our common existence, whatever their genesis, represents as foreboding a scenario as any the scourge of war could conjure up. We must act to contain these dangers by strengthening the United Nations to perform its functions.

For more than a decade, we have been engaged in the examination of ways and means to reform the United Nations. On the basis of the recommendations that have emerged, we must take action at this General Assembly to make the organization more democratic in its decision-making and more effective in the discharge of the many mandates with which it has been entrusted.

Of particular urgency is the need to reform the Security Council, the organ responsible for the maintenance of global peace and security, to allow it to better cope with the several threats to our safe and secure existence. The records of the Working Group which was set up for this purpose will show that widespread agreement had been reached on the expansion of the Council in both categories of membership to provide greater balance in representation and greater credibility to the Council's activities. This has presented us with a window of opportunity which, if not grasped now, may remain indefinitely closed.

Let us therefore not be faint-hearted but rather, with boldness, accelerate and complete the process of reform so that the principles and purposes for which the United Nations stands, may be fully implemented.

I thank you.