



Address

by the

President of the Republic of Suriname

H.E. Runaldo Ronald Venetiaan

at the

High Level Plenary Meeting

of the

United Nations General Assembly

New York

16 September 2005

Check against delivery

*Permanent Mission of the Republic of Suriname to the United Nations
866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 320, New York, NY 10017 Telephone 212-826-0660
fax : 212 980-7029 email: Suriname@un.int*

Thank you Mr. President!

Co-Presidents,

My delegation is pleased to see you both preside over this very important meeting.

Suriname joins the rest of the international community in expressing its profound sorrow at the tremendous loss of life and property in the Gulf coast of the United States of America, wrought upon by hurricane Katrina.

This significant gathering should be a testimony of the resolve of the international community to collectively arrive at adequate responses to the many challenges it has to face. It should also represent the genuine beginning of an era of concerted actions towards implementing commitments made at major UN conferences. This requires a reformed UN that can effectively deal with these challenges.

The outcome document we are about to adopt outlines concrete measures to ensure the effective follow-up to a number of commitments we solemnly made over the past 60 years. For some of the major issues we still need to adopt measures in order to reach the lofty goals we have set ourselves.

Suriname recently submitted a baseline report on the national implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. I am pleased to report that we are making progress in some areas, especially in education and environment. However, like the rest of the world, we are still encountering difficulties in other areas. My Government remains committed to working with national stakeholders, as well as regional and international partners to reach the Millennium Development Goals, and we have taken the necessary steps to set up a network of state and non-state actors to monitor the national implementation of our international commitments.

My Government is aware of its own responsibility in the development process. However, like most other developing countries we have encountered some serious obstacles, such as unfair trade and high debts that have a negative influence on this process.

A particularly important long standing undertaking which is yet to be realized, relates to the issue of Official Development Assistance. With the exception of a few, the developed countries have not yet met the target of their commitments. On the contrary, ODA has declined.

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM), a region of small and vulnerable economies, has experienced this significant decrease in ODA. It is to be hoped that the appeal of the UN Secretary General's Report will be heeded, which calls on those developed countries that have not yet established a timetable to achieve the 0.7% of the GDP for ODA to do so starting with significant increases no later than 2006, reaching 0.5% by 2009, and 0.7% no later than 2015.

Mr. President,

Suriname agrees that there can be no development without security, and no security without development. Neither can there be sustainable development if human rights are not respected.

Reform of the Human Rights machinery, as is the case for many reforms in the United Nations is now long overdue. The Government of Suriname can generally accept the creation of a Human Rights Council. We support the view that the open-ended working group, which will be set up, should embark on an elaborate discussion on modalities, mandate, review process and composition of such a Council.

The international community has witnessed noticeable setbacks with regard to disarmament and non-proliferation. It is therefore regrettable that this important issue is not mentioned in the outcome document we are about to adopt.

Mr. President,

In closing, I would like to stress that the situation in the world can only improve if we all live up to our commitments. Our people depend on us to lead them on the path towards a decent life for each human being, in a peaceful world, free of famine, free of poverty.

Thank you Mr. President!