



# SAINT LUCIA

ADDRESS BY

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TO THE 60<sup>TH</sup> SESSION  
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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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(Check against delivery)

Mr. President, Saint Lucia supported your unanimous election as President of the Sixtieth Session of the United Nations General Assembly, confident that your diplomatic skills and experience is just what we need to ensure a positive outcome of this historic Sixtieth Anniversary Session. I congratulate you and the Government and people of Sweden on behalf of the delegation of Saint Lucia and on my own behalf, and pledge our cooperation to you in our common endeavour.

My Government and delegation also extend our thanks to your predecessor in office, His Excellency Mr. Jean Ping, for his stewardship of the Fifty-ninth Session of the General Assembly, charged as it was with the preparatory work for this Sixtieth Anniversary.

Mr. President, in these times when the demands on the United Nations are significant and increasing, resources limited, and we the Member States are called upon to strengthen our cooperation and keep detractors and cynics of the organization at bay, my Government wishes to express its appreciation to the Secretary General for his continuing support for the work of the United Nations.

In this sixtieth year of the United Nations, our world is certainly not the prosperous and peaceful one built on the unity and strength of nations that the Charter envisaged. Should we conclude, therefore, that had the United Nations exerted more authoritative influence in global affairs, our twenty-first century world would be a better one? Such an assertion seems plausible in today's world, replete with poverty and hunger, disease, lack of sustainable development, human rights violations, terrorism, conflict and war, glaring inequalities and a multitude of other grave problems, including the unfinished agenda on decolonisation.

The record of the United Nations, however, does not bear out so simplistic an assertion. If we look with historical retrospection at the organisation's record, we see that it has wielded enormous influence over the years. The challenge we Member States must take up at this sixtieth anniversary is to ensure that the United Nations, the key organization in global affairs, has the authority and prestige to anticipate and meet challenges of the nature and scale we are witnessing in today's world.

Development is foremost among the challenges Member States identified for urgent attention during this sixtieth anniversary. There is logic in this approach. A significant proportion of the critical problems the world faces now, and in the future, is intrinsically linked to development. It is for this reason that Heads of State and Government, in their Millennium Declaration, defined succinctly what must be done to advance socio-economic development in areas of vital concern. As we know, this comprehensive blueprint underpins the Millennium Development Goals.

The global leadership was sufficiently confident to place their goals within specified timeframes, understanding as they did the desperate need for improvement in the socio-economic conditions in numerous developing countries. What will we, the Member States of this United Nations, say to the people of the developing world, grappling with poverty, hunger, HIV/AIDS and other deadly diseases, illiteracy, gender discrimination and other challenges if, by the dates set, we have not met the targets of the MDG's? My Government sees no merit in the discussion as to whether target dates should have been set. Our orientation should now be towards accelerating the pace of implementation, so that the goals can be accomplished within agreed time frames, or better still even earlier than the target dates.

The United Nations must also show the people of the developing world that comprehensive measures are being taken to address the environment and sustainable development. Natural disasters of phenomenal proportions, from hurricane Ivan in the Caribbean to the tsunami in Asia and now to hurricane Katrina in the Southern United States, have brought death and destruction to developing and developed countries alike. I take this opportunity, on behalf of the Government and people of St Lucia, to extend our sympathy to the Government of the United States for the tragedy still unfolding in the Gulf States.

Resource rich developed countries are better positioned to mitigate the impact of natural disasters, although they, too, are not without their challenges. For developing countries however, including St Lucia and other Small Island Developing States in the Caribbean and Pacific, decades of progress can be obliterated in the course of a few hours, by one hurricane or typhoon. Beyond doubt, the environment is a critical element of the United Nations development agenda. It is a compelling reason for all to sign on to the Kyoto Protocol.

It is also in our common interest to meet all the commitments made in the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development. In many instances, however, expectations are not being realized. Developing countries still cannot rely on wide-ranging development cooperation and assistance and debt reduction responses that are predictable and reliable. Needless to say my Government joins in urging the developed countries that have not already done so to meet the 0.7% target. We recognize the G-8 initiative to take enhanced measures for Africa's development, and hope that initiative would be speedily implemented.

Related to concern for the development and well-being of all the world's people, the government of St. Lucia commends the establishment of the one billion dollar emergency fund to be finalised later this year which will enable the organization to more quickly and effectively respond to humanitarian crises.

This sixtieth anniversary provides us with yet another opportunity — to give impetus to initiatives to spread the benefits of globalisation and trade liberalization more widely.

Priority must be given to ensuring that all developing countries benefit from freer world trade; that the decline in their trade sector be halted and reversed, and that the competition they face in the world economy be on a level playing field — **One size cannot fit all —an indisputable fact which the WTO stubbornly refuses to acknowledge with respect to Bananas and Sugar in CARICOM and SIDS, among other things.** Indeed, the cause of development would be greatly enhanced by a positive outcome from the next round of the Doha trade negotiations scheduled for Hong Kong, China, in December 2005, and an early and successful conclusion of the round overall.

Developing countries must be equal partners in this process, and together with the developed countries take the decisive action required at the World Trade Organization.

What my Government seeks to emphasise by drawing attention to the development imperative is that the time has come for a paradigm shift in the United Nations approach to development.

For more than a decade we have, through a series of United Nations summits and conferences in the economic and social fields, formulated and agreed the framework of a United Nations development agenda, which includes the MDGs. To these, we have now added the Outcome Document of the Sixtieth Anniversary Summit.

Are these courses of action which we have agreed, to be regarded as mere platitudes, destined to be relegated to the archives of the United Nations?

The developing countries have communicated through the Group of 77 and China that the partnership and cooperation of the countries of the developed world are urgently needed to accelerate action and implementation of the United Nations development agenda. This sixtieth anniversary, we believe, has a responsibility to launch this process afresh, and to carry out the commitments that we have made in this development agenda.

A more influential Economic and Social Council and a United Nations development system that is strong and cohesive would ensure that the organization implements its development mandate effectively.

Making the United Nations responses equal to its challenges through reform and revitalization was an important element of our deliberations in the preparatory process for this sixtieth anniversary.

Let me say that my Government is prepared to actively work together with other Member States to set precise and unambiguous mandates for new or reconstituted bodies including a Peace Commission and Human Rights Council, on the basis of consensus. It is our considered opinion, however, that a credible process of United Nations reform must result in a strong General Assembly, the organization's sole universal organ, from which no Member State can be, or is excluded.

We can ill afford to further erode the General Assembly's role and authority, since the Charter confirms in a practical sense the importance of the Assembly by the expansive mandate it has been given in areas that include the maintenance of international peace and security. No other organ has been given such broad responsibilities, nor has the potential to deliver over such a wide range of Charter ideals. We are also convinced that a strong General Assembly would enhance the credibility and standing of the United Nations as a whole.

Therefore, the momentum of General Assembly revitalization must be maintained, and our efforts in this area must be as dynamic and flexible as are the forces shaping today's world.

Reform of the Security Council has also been a major preoccupation in the lead up to this sixtieth anniversary, as it has been for some twelve years. An indisputable case has been made for the expansion of the Council to reflect the exponential growth of the United Nations membership from 51 in 1945 to 191 today.

We all know that the obstacle to moving beyond this point is the diverging, and strongly held views about whether an expanded membership should include new permanent members. This is an issue my Government would wish to see resolved by consensus.

Perhaps this matter might be put in better perspective if we were to reflect on the role and function of the United Nations as a whole.

Within the broad range of human endeavours entrusted to the organization, the Charter gives the Security Council one specific, albeit critical mandate — the maintenance of international peace and security. My government is of the view that it was not intended for this collective security mandate to be carried out by the Security Council functioning as an independent and separate entity. Rather, it is intended to be carried out in cooperation with the United Nations as a whole, and certainly in tandem with the General Assembly, where the Member States of this organisation, that have delegated authority to the Security Council, all have voice and vote. After all, global peace and security concern all citizens of the world, not just the citizens of those countries who happen at any given time to hold seats on the Security Council. For the present, war and conflict loom large, and this must be of concern to the Council. But we must hold out hope

that we, the Member States of this organization, can make its constituent parts, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the development system, other organs and agencies and particularly the Security Council, work **together** to substantially reduce, if not eliminate war, conflict and crises.

We must also ask ourselves, what is the nature of the membership the Council requires to implement its mandate? Far more than any other consideration, it is the commitment of the Council's membership, permanent or non-permanent, to enforcing its decisions, all of them, to responding to situations that threaten international peace and security, wherever they may arise, and to combating the insidious spread of international terrorism that determines the success of the Council's work.

Mr. President, we can no longer posture and bicker while the people of the world, and particularly those of the developing world, who so desperately need the United Nations, wait. We must take the historic opportunity this sixtieth anniversary presents to set our sights on a 21<sup>st</sup> Century world framed in the ideals enshrined in the Charter, a world of prosperity, peace and security, with a strong United Nations at its core. We need the United Nations; it has the unmitigated support of the Government and people of St Lucia.

I thank you.