



GRENADA

STATEMENT

BY

**THE HONORABLE ELVIN NIMROD
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

AT THE

**GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 60TH SESSION
OF
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Mr. President
Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen

Mr. President, I am honoured to join those who preceded me in congratulating you on your election *as* President of the Sixtieth Session of this Assembly. Let me assure you of Grenada's support, as you guide the deliberations in this historic year towards the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security.

My delegation would also like to extend appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Jean Ping, who laboured arduously, during his Presidency of the 59th Session and for his tireless efforts in guiding the preparatory work for the High-level Plenary Meeting.

In addition, Grenada commends the Secretary-General for his energetic pursuit of change at the United Nations. We ascribe to the Secretary-General's view that `the world cannot be a safer place without development and poverty eradication'.

Mr. President,

Permit me at this juncture, to extend, on behalf of the Government and people of Grenada, empathy and profound sympathy to the Government and people of the United States of America, particularly those of the Gulf States for the loss of life and severe destruction of property, suffered as a result of Hurricane Katrina

Mr. President,

When the Millennium Declaration was adopted, many viewed it as a landmark document containing the blueprint for the eradication of poverty, and as a vehicle to transform the condition of mankind in the 21st Century. While it did not take on the momentum that we hoped for, we have now moved to review its implementation.

This year the Outcome Document adopted by the Heads of State and Government at the conclusion of the High-level Plenary Meeting gives us another chance to address, in earnest, the commitments that were made in the Millennium Declaration and other major United Nations Conferences.

Grenada is heartened by the recent renewal of commitments to development and security, including poverty eradication and the endorsement to positively transform the world for the betterment of our peoples, and welcomes the efforts made to address the Special Needs of Africa. These are high ideals, but we are convinced that peace, security and prosperity can only be achieved globally with commitment, sacrifice and a concerted cooperative effort from all Member States.

We welcome the creation of a Peacebuilding Commission, to ensure post-conflict recovery where it is most needed, especially issues relating to women and children within this process. Grenada supports the strengthening of the Human Rights Machinery through the creation of a Human rights Council, and resolve to participate in the negotiations during the 60th session to establish a working mandate.

Grenada also welcomes the pronouncement in the Outcome Document on the strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

We regret that there has been no meaningful progress on disarmament and non-proliferation and call for continued negotiations in this regard.

Reform is vital in order for this unique organization to reflect the aspirations of its 191 Member States. It is of extreme importance for the United Nations to address the burning issues and realities that preoccupy the global community.

Grenada supports fully, the measures called for in the Secretary-General's report "In Larger Freedom" and remains convinced of the usefulness in addressing peace and security on a broad spectrum.

Mr. President,

Grenada agrees that reform of the Security Council is imperative. It must be expanded in a manner that will convince every Region of the world that they have an active voice in one of the most important and powerful Councils of this organization.

Grenada, like the other countries of the English-speaking Caribbean, places a high priority on the reorganization of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The Charter is clear that ECOSOC is designed to *address* development. In this Century, therefore, ECOSOC must have, as the High-level Report states, a more focused agenda built around the major themes contained in the Millennium Declaration.

Mr. President,

The Theme for this year's deliberations is well chosen and we accept the challenge to work towards this goal. Grenada hopes the reform of the United Nations and implementation of the Goals in the Outcome Document will come to fruition soon, for a stronger Organization and a more just world.

Mr. President

My country, Grenada, knows quite well the challenges faced by developing countries. In less than one year Grenada experienced two hurricanes, causing infrastructural damage amounting to 250 percent of GDP, crippling the tourism sector, increasing unemployment to 31 percent and impacting immeasurably on the psycho-social aspect of the population.

Prior to this, Grenada was well on track to achieving the millennium goals of universal primary education, lowering child mortality rates, and halving poverty. Also high on the country's agenda was the implementation of policies to combat diseases, including HIV/AIDS. Today, even with the most rigorous national efforts, if Grenada is to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, it would only be able to do so with substantial financial and technical assistance.

Mr. President,

Currently, countries of the Caribbean face growing unemployment and poverty because of the recent World Trade Organisation rulings, which resulted in the removal of the preferential arrangements that once facilitated their trade.

As a direct result, two of the most vital industries to the Caribbean, bananas and sugar, are rapidly declining sending thousands to the "bread line" and abject poverty.

Here, I make reference to the Statement made yesterday by the distinguished Prime Minister of St. Kitts and Nevis, which confirmed the effects the demise of the sugar industry is having on his country.

Mr. President,

Counties of the Caribbean require more than just aid; for aid alone cannot eradicate poverty. What Caribbean countries desire most fervently are trading opportunities. We crave opportunities that will recognize the diversities and disparities in the economic world. Given our diseconomies of scale, limited land mass and late admission into the international economic order, it is impossible to make progress without special concessions.

Grenada has no desire to see future generations as mendicant people, seized by poverty and limited by opportunities.

Mr. President,

The Millennium Development Goals, as well as other United Nations declarations, constitute a global partnership for development. Both the developed and developing worlds are called upon to implement changes and adjust their *modus operandi* to advance a more secure and just world.

We applaud the European Union for its decision to increase overseas development assistance to the recommended .07 percent of their GDP. However, we urge them and other developed countries, to continue to provide freedom in trade for developing countries, in order to facilitate the transfer of technology and to assist with our environmental protection.

Those of us in the developing world have also given our commitment to devise national policies to improve the standard of living of our people, to promote education, to practice good governance and to strive for better health care for our people. This however, is almost virtually impossible in the current international economic climate, as some international regimes seem committed to crippling the economies of developing countries, in particular those of the Caribbean.

Mr. President,

Hurricanes and other natural disasters add to the Caribbean region's challenges and remain a very real and formidable force. Grenada acknowledges that natural disasters are unavoidable phenomena, which cannot be stopped. However, we can mitigate their effects, ease human suffering with sound measures, and speed up recovery by designing mechanisms conducive to quick responses, particularly from the international community.

From hurricanes to Tsunamis, from floods to droughts, we have come to the realization that natural disasters know no bounds and does not differentiate between developed and developing countries.

In light of scientific predictions on natural disasters, which indicate an increase in frequency and intensity, we must address this matter and place disaster mitigation as a high priority on our agenda.

Mr. President,

recall, during his address to the Millennium Summit five years ago, the Prime Minister of Grenada had joined his colleagues in making a clarion call for the establishment of a Disaster Relief Fund, which, he said, should be able to facilitate quick responses for victims of hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanoes and other natural disasters that strike us with such frequency and ferocity.

Mr. President,

I wish to echo that call today in light of the realities which now surround us.

Mr. President,

Countries, particularly Small Island Developing States, are extremely vulnerable and can experience a complete reversal of economic, social, cultural and infrastructural progress by the passage of one natural disaster, as was evident when Grenada was struck by Hurricane Ivan in September of 2004. For small islands it is exceedingly difficult to stop the downward spiral that disasters can cause, and generally, recovery is virtually impossible without major international assistance.

Grenada welcomes the reference made to the vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States and look forward to the effective implementation of the Mauritius Strategy in the very near future.

Grenada implores Member States of the United Nations to support the call of Small Island Developing States for special recognition of their vulnerabilities.

Mr. President,

In the same vein I now turn to the issue of the Caribbean Sea.

Our economies derive tremendous benefits from the resources of the Caribbean Sea. In fact, the annual estimate of the economic value to Grenada of the production from the sea is over EC \$30 million. This is a contribution that we, as a people, feel strongly must be conserved, preserved, maintained and protected; not merely for this generation, but for future generations.

I refer, specifically to the transhipment of radioactive materials through our waters which continue to pose a tremendous threat to human health, marine life, eco-systems, tourism and economies of the Region. As has been repeatedly voiced by Grenada and other Caribbean Community Member States, this practice must stop. Grenada, once again, calls on those concerned to desist from such activity.

We welcome the reference made in the Outcome Document in this regard, and further urge the International Community to be more cognizant of the situation and its impact on our economies and peoples.

Since this matter is of grave importance to the Caribbean Region, we will continue our efforts to have the Caribbean Sea designated as a special area in the context of Sustainable Development.

Finally, Mr. President,

Judging from the commitments made over the past few days, it is clearly evident that Member States are willing to take up the challenge to implement the necessary reforms necessary to strengthen this august body.

We too pledge our full support to this process, despite the bleak economic realities we currently face.

I thank you.