

# COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
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## STATEMENT BY

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AMBASSADOR/PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**IN THE GENERAL DEBATE  
OF THE SIXTIETH SESSION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**New York, September 23, 2005**

Please check against delivery

Mr. President  
Mr. Secretary-General  
Distinguished Delegates,

Please allow me, on behalf of the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica to extend congratulations to you on assuming the Presidency of the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly. My delegation is confident that with your experience and diplomatic skills, you will preside over this Assembly with the efficiency and dedication required to take us through the agenda of the 60<sup>th</sup> Session.

We extend to your predecessor, Mr. Jean Ping of Gabon, our sincere appreciation for his stewardship of the 59<sup>th</sup> Session and for his tireless efforts in guiding the preparation of the Outcome Document. Our warm tribute is also due to the Secretary-General for his unqualified dedication to this institution.

**Mr. President,**

Allow me at the outset to convey our deepest sympathies and condolences to the Government and people of the United States of America in the wake of the deaths and widespread destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina. We remain concerned about the potential devastation that Hurricane Rita is likely to unleash.

**Mr. President,**

One week ago, world leaders gathered here in the historic High-level Plenary Meeting and demonstrated their collective political will to overcome the many challenges facing the world and charted a clear direction for a future of peace and prosperity for all humankind. They reaffirmed their commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), underscored the continuing relevance of the United Nations and its indispensable role in the collective management of the many problems faced by the global community, and provided clear recommendations on the reform of the Organization.

The Outcome Document, while falling short of our expectations, presents a platform for multilateral solutions to the broad range of global problems related to development, peace and security, human rights, rule of law, and the reinvigoration of the United Nations. The Commonwealth of Dominica is committed to the Millennium Development Goals, and embraces this renewed pledge to save humanity from the scourge of war, disease, famine and poverty. We will work with all member states towards ensuring a future based on hope and prosperity, rather than one of despair for the poor and marginalized of this world. We now have before us the monumental task of ensuring implementation and tangible outcomes.

Fulfilling this task, which our esteemed leaders have accorded to us, will require determined action on the part of all member states. It will also require a commitment to the collective will, and a retreat from preoccupation with self-interest and narrow national agendas. If nothing else, this 60<sup>th</sup> session should go down in history as the session at which we the member states renewed our commitment to the ideal that inspired the visionary founders, that is, the building of a peaceful and prosperous world in which all peoples live together in harmony, free from want and fear.

**Mr. President,**

Dominica, a small island developing state, welcomes the particular attention given by the Outcome Document to the special needs and vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States. It is a source of great encouragement to us that the member states of the United Nations have demonstrated an appreciation for the challenges, which confront all Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

The Mauritius Strategy for the further implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action is a realistic and attainable blueprint, which underscores the pivotal areas for interventions to build SIDS capacity to confront the various sustainable development challenges. We appreciate the support of our friends and development partners and appeal for their continuing commitment towards the proper and effective implementation of the Mauritius Strategy.

**Mr. President,**

Progress in the development arena will require strong political will for the implementation of the commitments we have undertaken, and which we reaffirmed together in the Outcome Document of the High-level Plenary Meeting, primarily the implementation of the Development Goals of the Millennium Summit, the revitalization of the international partnership for development and the attendant mobilization of financial resources, and the fulfillment of the commitment made by many developed countries to reach the target of 0.7% of their gross national income for official development assistance (ODA) by 2015. Dominica takes this opportunity to express its appreciation to those countries that affirmed the fulfillment of their obligations in this regard.

My delegation feels strongly that the consensus we reached in the High-level Plenary Meeting presents a good foundation for a greater consensus towards achieving the development priorities of the developing countries. The United Nations must play a pivotal role in ensuring that the issues of trade, debt relief, investment, and industrial modernization receive the highest priority if the global objective is to raise the standards of living of the people of the developing countries.

We congratulate the Group of Eight (G8) for the commitment adopted at the Glen Eagles Summit giving much needed debt relief to 18 heavily Indebted Poor Countries. A similar initiative is now required for the Small Island Developing States and other non-HIPC low

income and middle income developing countries which are being strangled by heavy debt burdens, and the simultaneous erosion of their preferential trading arrangements.

**Mr. President,**

South-South cooperation has been growing over the last two decades and through this mechanism, many avenues have opened up for enhanced trade relations, and cooperation in the transfer of know-how and technology.

Dominica welcomes the establishment of the South Fund for Development and the generous initial pledges of the Government of Qatar, India and China to this Fund. Equally deserving of commendation is Venezuela's initiative in the Caribbean, called PetroCaribe, which will assist Caribbean countries to respond to the challenges posed by the high price of oil.

**Mr. President,**

We are acutely aware that aid without trade cannot be a viable proposition for small island states like Dominica. We are fully cognizant that only trade can be the engine of growth and development. Dominica and other banana-producing states in the Caribbean, have had their difficulties responding to the stance of multinational corporations from the United States and allied Latin American countries, which have challenged the preferential access for our bananas in the European Union.

We hope that reason will prevail as we count on a fair resolution of the present banana trade impasse in Europe. Only a positive outcome will avert a future of persistent poverty for banana farmers and workers in the Caribbean.

Let me reiterate that small vulnerable island states like Dominica need time to adjust to the transition to a fully liberalized global trading regime. Dominica has made admirable progress towards realization of the Millennium Development Goals, but such gains could simply vanish like a thief in the night if we lose the preferential access to the European market for our bananas in 2006.

For this reason, we appeal to the international community to demonstrate the necessary political will to ensure that the Doha Development Round takes into account these concerns in the quest for a fair and equitable trading system for the benefit of all our people.

**Mr. President,**

The frequency of devastating storms in Asia, the Caribbean, the Southern United States, and long periods of drought in Africa requires a more coordinated and organized international response. The United Nations needs to significantly enhance its capacity to respond in timely manner to disasters in the more vulnerable developing countries. Last

year, many Caribbean countries were battered by hurricanes and the Eastern Caribbean nation of Grenada had the unfortunate situation of facing the onslaught of two major hurricanes in one calendar year; Grenada still needs additional assistance from the international community, and we appeal to the international community to render further assistance.

Dominica has had its share of hurricane devastation and late last year we experienced devastation from a series of earthquakes, which inflicted significant damage to our fragile infrastructure. We continue to be vigilant, and we have put in place a national disaster strategy to mitigate the adverse effects of such disasters on our population.

My delegation once again echoes the appeal, made last year in this chamber by Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit, for the creation of a global insurance fund to assist countries devastated by natural disasters. We call on the international community to fully implement the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 adopted at this year's World Conference on Disaster Reduction.

Climate change is wreaking havoc on small island states. It is time that all member states accept that climate change and global warming are real and that they are caused by human activity. Most importantly, all member states must implement the provisions of the Kyoto Protocol.

**Mr. President,**

My delegation is concerned about the continuing instability to Haiti. We support the role of MINUSTAH in Haiti but appreciate that its limited size and resource endowment is inadequate to respond to the complicated political equation in which Haiti finds itself entangled. CARICOM states have already committed technical assistance for the elections, and are cognizant that elections alone will not bring stability to Haiti. It will need the accelerated disbursement of pledged financial resources, more rapid implementation of social and economic project activities, and peace-building initiatives.

**Mr. President,**

Terrorism remains a great threat to peace and security at national, regional and international levels. Dominica condemns all acts, methods and practices of terrorism. The recent attacks in London and Egypt underscore the danger of terrorism, which transcends national boundaries, and does not distinguish between peoples, cultures or religions. Dominica is making great effort to comply with the obligations of the various counter-terrorism conventions, and pledges its support for conclusion of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

**Mr. President,**

My delegation regrets the failure of the Outcome Document to address non-proliferation and disarmament of weapons of mass destruction. Relative stability in today's world

should not make us complacent and lead us to compromise on the need for total disarmament. Our continuing lack of action on this issue has not served the enhancement of global security from the threat posed by these weapons.

The availability of small arms and light weapons pose great challenge to the maintenance of peace and security in the Caribbean Region. The trafficking of narcotics has brought with it increasing circulation of small arms and light weapons, which have sharply increased crime and the number of fatal injuries. Dominica therefore, welcomes the agreement on an international instrument that would enable States to identify and trace illicit small arms and light weapons in a timely and reliable manner. What is still needed however, is a legally binding international instrument that will regulate, control, and monitor the illicit trade in small arms, including their transfer to non-state actors.

**Mr. President,**

Dominica is appreciative of the recognition accorded to indigenous people in the Outcome Document. As part of our commitment to the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, my delegation will work with other member states towards the tabling of a Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the General Assembly.

**Mr. President,**

The future of the United Nations depends on full implementation of an institutional reform agenda, which addresses revitalization of the General Assembly, reform in the Security Council and improved governance at the Secretariat.

General Assembly revitalization must result in the strengthening of its vital role as the chief deliberative, policy-making, and implementation monitoring body of the United Nations.

The Secretariat needs to urgently address the eroding public confidence through timely implementation of the proposals for improvement in management, and oversight.

Reform of the Security Council must be pursued to enhance its accountability, transparency and efficiency. This reform must at a minimum achieve two important objectives, namely, ensuring that its membership is more representative, and remedying the continuing imbalance in the representation of Africa in the permanent membership.

We welcome the initiative to establish a Democracy Fund, which has great potential to contribute to consolidation of democratic governance in various regions of the world. Consistent with our support for the promotion of fundamental human freedoms and values, we support the revitalization of the human rights machinery, and the establishment of the Human Rights Council.

Our appreciation of the link between security and development in addressing the situations in countries emerging from conflict provides a sound basis for Dominica's support of the proposed Peacebuilding Commission, as an advisory body. We call for a leading role for the both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, together with the Security Council, in the work of the Commission.

**Mr. President,**

We have a loaded agenda for the next decade, and there are numerous challenges ahead. We wish to emphasize that this agenda can only be realized through multilateral action.

As we look to 2015, we have the honourable duty now to make the United Nations truly serve the people of this global village. We have the obligation to ensure that, "we the peoples of the United Nations" can truly live our lives in larger freedom.

**I thank you.**