

UNITED NATIONS



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**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

**MESSAGE TO THE 26<sup>TH</sup> REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF GOVERNMENT  
OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)**

St. Lucia, 3-6 July 2005

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I send my greetings to the Heads of Government of the Member States of CARICOM, and I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your work to deepen integration in this region. In April, the Caribbean Court of Justice was inaugurated at St. Ann in Trinidad and Tobago, and by the end of this year, you will have in place the requirements to convene a single market from January 2006 and establish a single economy by 2008. These are important steps forward for CARICOM, which is a vital partner for the United Nations in strengthening international cooperation and furthering peace, stability, unity and progress in this region.

You meet at a time of great importance for the future of the United Nations. In two and a half months, world leaders will meet in New York for the 2005 World Summit to review implementation of the goals set and commitments made five years ago in the Millennium Declaration, including the Millennium Development Goals. In preparation for the Summit I put forward a comprehensive set of proposals for change in my March report: "In larger freedom". The President of the General Assembly has now issued a draft political outcome document for the Summit. The consultations on it are taking place with a view to producing a set of actionable decisions for world leaders in September, so that development receives a major boost, important progress is made on security and human rights, and the institutions of the United Nations are updated to reflect better the world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I believe the Member States of CARICOM have much to contribute to, and to gain from, such an outcome.

Development must be the number one priority. Important steps have already been announced by the EU, the US and the G-8. More is expected in the coming days. All countries need to do their part to ensure that, between now and the year 2015, the fight against poverty and disease is taken to a hitherto unseen level. Each developing country should adopt and begin to implement, by next year, a comprehensive national strategy bold enough to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. And each developed country should support these efforts with action on aid, trade, and debt relief.

We must also take action to minimize the adverse effects of natural disasters on countries, economies and individuals. Your region has suffered from several such disasters, particularly in recent years. A global commitment to a worldwide early warning system for all natural hazards would be a major step forward, as would the full implementation of the Hyogo Declaration and Hyogo Framework for Action adopted in Kobe last January. These issues are squarely on the World Summit agenda, along with improved financing and deployment arrangements for international humanitarian response capacities.

High risk of natural disasters is one of many particular development challenges faced by Small Island Developing States. Others are isolation from global markets and high costs for energy and transport. It is important that the Mauritius Strategy for the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States be mainstreamed and implemented, including the need for special and differential treatment for commodities of specific interest to the Caribbean region.

September's Summit is also an opportunity for institutional revitalization. The creation of a Peacebuilding Commission would bring together all relevant actors, including regional organizations and neighbouring countries, to forge a more integrated approach when the United Nations seeks to help countries move from violence to lasting peace, as we are doing in Haiti. In this context, allow me to appeal to CARICOM for its strong support of the work of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti. MINUSTAH has maintained contacts with all of Haiti's regional partners since it was deployed, and we all know the enormity of the challenges ahead. I welcome CARICOM's decision to provide electoral support to MINUSTAH, and your support for the normalization of relations with Haiti would also be an important contribution to the process of political transition.

UN renewal should also include the establishment of a Human Rights Council, or else the elevation of the current Commission to a Council. This would help to restore the credibility of the international human rights machinery and give human rights the full place intended for them by the United Nations Charter. This is a change that cannot wait. Given the Caribbean's strong tradition in the rule of law, I look to you to help ensure that this crucial innovation is accomplished by September.

I also believe the time has come to strengthen the impact of the work of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, by making those bodies more strategic and better able to focus on the pressing challenges facing the world's peoples. Security Council reform is also long overdue, and must be addressed in a way that recognizes its basic importance while not overshadowing the rest of the reform effort.

To make sure that the intergovernmental machinery has the support it deserves, we must also make sure that the United Nations Secretariat is much more nimble and responsive to changing needs. This is doubly important given the questioning that we have been facing. I am doing what I can under my authority, but I need the support of Member States to undertake more far-reaching reforms. What is required is a Secretariat that is more empowered and flexible, and at the same time more transparent and accountable.

These important issues are now on the table. So are several others, including stronger multilateral responses to terrorism, nuclear proliferation, small arms and mass violations of human rights. I invite all the Member States of CARICOM to engage actively, constructively and creatively in the reform effort. Let us make sure that, when world leaders meet in New York, they will set our world decisively on the path of collective action on development, security and human rights for all, with a rejuvenated United Nations as the effective instrument of their common purpose.

In that spirit, I wish you a successful conference, and I look forward to seeing you in New York in September.