



*Permanent Mission
of Barbados to
the United Nations*



STATEMENT BY

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TO THE

**GENERAL DEBATE
OF THE
65TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to address the 65th session of the United Nations General Assembly, as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Barbados. The theme of this year's Assembly, ***"The Role of the UN" Multilateralism and Global Governance***, is one that is both timely and permits an examination of the complex issues facing the global community today.

Moreover it lends itself to the exploration of solutions to these issues as well as a restoration of the centrality of the United Nations and its several organs.

One week ago leaders from every corner of the world met and confirmed that the global consensus on the United Nations Development Agenda remained intact, and pledged to spare no effort to ensure the fulfillment of our collective promise to the world's poorest and most vulnerable.

Barbados shares the view of the United Nations Secretary-General that the Millennium Development Goals must serve as "the blueprint for ending extreme poverty". These goals lie at the core of the global development agenda. They represent our common vision for a more peaceful, prosperous and just world, in which all human beings can enjoy better and safer lives. For the past decade these globally shared and endorsed set of priorities have inspired extraordinary efforts by governments and non-state actors alike.

Now is not the time for complacency. Progress towards achievement of the goals remains mixed, and while success is still within our grasp, it is by no means certain. Our common task is therefore to convert this unprecedented consensus into collective action on all fronts and immediately implement what has been agreed on to guarantee success by 2015. Failing this, the many words of the declaration we adopted a few days ago will simply serve as yet another solemn reminder of human needs neglected and promises unfulfilled.

The Role of the United Nations

This display of global solidarity in the face of unparalleled economic uncertainty reminds us that the United Nations is an invaluable and indispensable instrument for its Member States and for the world's peoples, as we seek to respond to the challenges of our times. While we might not have the same degree of consensus on every pressing global problem, Barbados cannot contemplate the prospect of a world without an Organization such as this. There is no other entity that can mobilize global political will and coordinated action around common causes, and provide a voice for the voiceless like the United Nations.

Scarred by the bitter experience of two world wars and a great depression, the founders of this organization had the foresight and wisdom to recognize that only through multilateralism and a strong and effective system of global governance, with the United Nations at its core, could lasting peace be maintained and international law upheld.

Today we bear witness to a world which is more interconnected and intertwined, yet in a real sense more deeply divided than ever. Barbados is of the view that an enhanced and renewed system of global governance must be at the top of the global agenda. In this regard, Mr. President, Barbados fully supports your initiative to address this issue during the course of this 65th session of the United Nations General Assembly. We must take stock and reflect in a holistic and comprehensive manner on the system of global governance, including the United Nations and its organs, to ensure that it truly delivers on the vision of our predecessors and serves the interests of all mankind, particularly the poor and vulnerable.

Delivering global public goods such as global economic and financial stability, ensuring the promotion and protection of human rights, maintaining international peace and security, and ensuring environmental sustainability cannot be successfully addressed by states acting on their own or even by coalitions of the willing. Finding effective solutions to these challenges and mobilizing collective action provides the most immediate and obvious reason for enhancing global governance and strengthening multilateral cooperation.

As US President Harry Truman stated in 1945 at the birth of this Organization,

“Differences between men, and between nations, will always remain. In fact, if held within reasonable limits, such disagreements are actually wholesome. All progress begins with differences of opinion and moves onward as the differences are adjusted through reason and mutual understanding.”

Renewing the vision of our predecessors must start with the United Nations and extend outwards to all organizations with a role in dispensing global governance. During this session we must finalize the decade's long project of Security Council Reform. If the Council is to retain its unique legitimacy it should be made more broadly representative of the international community as a whole, as well as of the geopolitical realities of today.

Its working methods must also be made to adhere to the highest standards of transparency, accountability and efficiency. Its outreach to non-members must be significantly improved. Barbados continues to believe that the number of permanent and non-permanent seats of the Council should be increased and that Brazil, Germany, India and Japan should join the ranks of the permanent members of the Council. Membership from the African Group must also be assured.

Mr. President,

Sustained and widespread future prosperity will require major reforms in global economic governance as well as new approaches to global economic development. The global financial and economic crisis has made clear the extent of the interconnectivity of financial markets, as well as their inherent vulnerabilities. While there is no precedent to the current level of global financial and economic integration, the policies, rules and institutions established to govern these processes are predominately national in scope, and global mechanisms highly compartmentalized.

We can no longer postpone the task of reforming the institutions responsible for global economic and financial governance. They must be better equipped to address the challenge of a globalized and highly interdependent world. In this regard, Barbados welcomes the broadening of the Group of 8 to include the participation of developing and emerging economies and the designation of the Group of 20 as the premier forum for international economic cooperation.

We also recognize the important role played by the G20 in stabilizing the global economy. We acknowledge its ambitious agenda to restore global growth and achieve needed reforms in the world's financial systems. However the Group must significantly enhance its outreach to non-members, including the smallest members of the international community, particularly when issues affecting their economic viability and survival are under discussion. Furthermore, it must also demonstrate real leadership in breaking the impasse in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and ensure a successful conclusion to the Doha Development Round, and ensure that reforms in the Bretton Woods Institutions are accelerated.

Mr. President,

Small states have traditionally played a crucial role in shaping global governance and our voice should not be diminished in efforts to reform the current system. Barbados will play its part.

The Place of Barbados in the UN Family

It is against the background of the articulation of the role and importance of multilateralism and a strong and effective UN that I will explore the response of my country to these global challenges. I will also address the strategies to be pursued by this small nation intent on playing its part in this family of nations.

Barbados is a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), classified as a middle income developing country. It faces significant vulnerabilities made real by the spectre of climate change and the associated natural disasters, the consequences of the recent financial and economic crises, and the threat posed by transnational criminal networks. My country has sought to take its place in a world, characterised by increasing economic, environmental and social complexities.

We take our place in a world in which the United Nations family continues to witness increasing economic interdependence and globalisation, both posing challenges to national sovereignty.

Barbados' Response

Barbados shares the UN's vision for a world able to achieve and surpass the Millennium Development Goals. We are committed to the fight against the ravages of HIV-AIDS and other infectious diseases. As a natural resources-poor SIDS, we have achieved much on the basis of our investment in human development, primarily in the areas of education and health.

We have thus prioritised our responses to these global challenges, in a manner which put our people first. Our successes to date have been due to our investment in our key resource – our people. Given the emphasis on our people's development, and the dangers posed to our population, we have supported the Resolution, ***“Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases”***, introduced by CARICOM to the 64th session of the General assembly in 2009.

Our responses are captured in our efforts to achieve our ultimate goal of crafting a Green Economy. We see the Green Economy as a tool for transforming our economy to achieve sustainable development. At the heart of this economic and social model is a commitment to people-centred development. Aligning our development strategy along this particular trajectory ensures a consistency not only with our global obligations but also and more importantly to our national values and the best interests of all our citizens.

Mr. President,

Even as the international community searches for a definition of the Green Economy, Barbados has simply defined this model as:

“an integrated production, distribution, consumption, and waste assimilation system that, at its core, reflects the fragility of our small island ecosystems as the basis for natural resource protection policy intervention, business and investment choice, human

development programming, and the facilitation of export market development strategies.....”

In pursuit of the Green Economy the Government of Barbados has undertaken an assessment of the opportunities and challenges of a green economy transition. Our focus is on the priority sectors of tourism, agriculture, transport, and housing; along with cross-sectoral issues of water resources, energy, and waste. In addition we have partnered with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to promote a transition to a green economy, building on Barbados' existing initiatives in the area of resource efficiency and the promotion of sustainable consumption and production.

We believe that our experience in transitioning to a green economy will serve as a useful model for other SIDS and small economies and we intend to share our unique perspective with the international community in the preparatory process for the Rio +20 summit in 2012.

Barbados' efforts to transform its economy into a green economy and achieve sustainable development will be undermined without ambitious and urgent global action to address climate change. The challenge of climate change remains one of the greatest threats to the survival and viability of Barbados and other Small Island Developing States. Even as the science points to a worsening situation, global emissions continue to rise, and the prospects dim of arriving at an agreement to provide legal certainty in the fight against climate change.

It is clear that the objective of an ambitious and comprehensive legally binding outcome will not be achieved in Cancun, Mexico in December this year. Barbados nevertheless believes that the substantive outcomes at the 16th Session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change must demonstrate that the international community remains committed to addressing the defining challenge of our time. In this regard COP-16 should deliver outcomes that:

- a. Prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable particularly in the area of adaptation and finance.
- b. Finalize issues on which there is a broad agreement and provide guidance and clarity on the difficult issues.

- c. Demonstrate progress on the delivery of the US\$ 30 billion fast start financing pledged at Copenhagen.

Critical to success at Cancun is arriving at a common understanding of how, when and where an ambitious and legally binding international climate agreement will be finalized.

Mr. President,

In 1994 Barbados had the distinct honour of hosting the First Global Conference on The Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation remain the essential blueprints for the sustainable development of SIDS. Barbados welcomes the recently adopted outcome of the five year review of the MSI and hopes that this results in a renewal of the commitment of the international community to support the sustainable development of SIDS.

It is of great concern to Barbados that eighteen years after the international recognition of the special case of SIDS at Rio that our unique and particular vulnerability is being challenged. Barbados is not prepared to re-negotiate the special case of SIDS, but urges the international community to focus on the delivery of tangible and concrete actions to build resilience and promote sustainable development in SIDS.

The January 2010 earthquake that devastated Haiti serves as a grim reminder of the fragility of island states to natural disasters. In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, the Government of Barbados provided financial assistance, relief supplies and deployed a contingent of medical and security personnel as part of a CARICOM relief team.

Mr. President,

If Haiti is to realize its full potential, the international community must remain fully engaged in Haiti and the many pledges of financial and technical support must be delivered on time. The Government and people of Haiti can be assured that Barbados will continue to be a partner in this rebuilding and reconstruction phase.

Our commitment remains strong, and we will play our part in Haiti's long-term development. We call on all who have mobilised resources in the name of Haiti, to work with countries like Barbados, and in collaboration with the Government and people of Haiti to rebuild that country.

Mr. President,

There is a very definite role for a reformed United Nations to assist countries like Barbados. The model economy being pursued by Barbados cannot be achieved by unilateral action. As stated previously, the role for the United Nations is clear. It must generate the templates to be adopted and serve as a catalyst for action:

- it must seek to mediate where conflicts arise.
- It must work to ensure that there are reforms of the global economic and financial system to make it inclusive, transparent and supportive of the development aspirations of LDCs, and MDCs.
- It must facilitate South-South cooperation, supporting the efforts of these countries to share appropriate experiences and indigenous solutions.

Mr. President,

Barbados shares your vision for a “***strong, inclusive and open United Nations as the guarantor of global governance***”. Barbados maintains the strong position that the responsibility for the setting of rules and the making of core decisions on matters of a global nature rightfully belong within the ambit of the United Nations, given its primacy as the only legitimate forum for global action.

I thank you.