



**STATEMENT  
BY  
HONOURABLE TILLMAN THOMAS  
PRIME MINISTER OF GRENADA**

**AT**

**THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE SIXTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President,  
Heads of State and of Government,  
Excellences, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. President,

I am honoured to extend congratulations to you on your appointment as President of the 66<sup>th</sup> Regular Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

As two small countries, Qatar and Grenada share much in common. Accordingly, Excellency, we are looking forward to your leadership and stand ready to support you for the good of all the members of the General Assembly and the United Nations itself.

I also commend the outgoing President, His Excellency Joseph Deiss, for his stewardship and dedication during the past year. Grenada congratulates His Excellency Ban Ki-Moon, on his second term as Secretary-General of the United Nations and wishes him continued success.

Now in our 37th year of independence and membership in the UN, Grenada renews its commitment to the principles of the UN Charter, believing that universal adherence to those principles, provide guidance to the UN to act on what may seem intractable; for the UN is intended to lead, perhaps more so in difficult times. Grenada supports the pursuit of international peace and security. We believe firmly in the rule of law, the promotion of democracy and respect for human rights. We also support the fight against terrorism, as well as the campaign against the illicit drug trade. All these pose serious threats to the security of our changing world.

My government reiterates its commitment to the UN Charter. In support of the role of the United Nations, this year, the Government of Grenada signed three global conventions, including the Convention on Cluster Munitions, helping to bring about disarmament.

Mr. President,

We are all obliged to work selflessly to preserve our planet for future generations. The avoidance of nuclear confrontation is one sure way. We therefore, congratulate all governments which have expended much time and effort into nuclear non-proliferation. Since we met a year ago, the world and the UN itself have faced many challenges, economic, social and political, all of which undermine stability and people's survival. The economic crisis continues to weigh heavily on Grenada: our population is experiencing high food and fuel prices; national revenues have decreased and debt continues to be high.

The 'green shoots' of recovery which others experience have not reached us. For us, the economic crisis of 2008 still rages and we must find a way out of it. Social and political strife remain, if not in Grenada, but in other parts of the world. These demonstrate that the search for freedom and justice is far from over.

Human suffering and global instability, anywhere in the world, hurts us all, even in tiny Grenada, where unemployment in major capitals affects our tourism and even our remittances from abroad.

The major challenge facing Grenada as a small island developing state is how to reduce our weaknesses. How to increase our resilience. And how to pursue development for people today and for their children tomorrow. How are we to respond?

We must attempt to achieve growth with equity, especially for women and youth, and to support general improvements toward people's advancement. That is, how to create stable environments and opportunities for our

people to thrive. And, Mr. President, we must do so while contributing to a just, peaceful, democratic, global framework.

We believe, Mr. President, that whatever the challenge, our common political will for fairness and justice must remain the overarching guiding principles that guide us in matters economic, social and political.

Mr. President,

Grenada's main response so far has been to strengthen our democratic processes and to advance the Caribbean regional integration movement. At the national level, we promote social inclusion in the governance of the country which engages civil society, the media and the people as a whole.

We have instituted consultations and participation in major policy and legislative matters, including the revision of old laws and in making of new ones. At the regional level, we are working with Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM); two groupings which constitute the unbreakable link with our national undertakings and how we engage internationally.

Mr. President,

Grenada's efforts to achieve Sustainable Development, can be helped by both the December 2011 Durban conference on climate change, and the June 2012 Rio + 20 conference on the environment.

Grenada appeals to all parties, to negotiate seriously and to meet commitments at both of these conferences. These global meetings must bring added value to the ongoing efforts of Grenada and other developing countries, especially small states.

Durban 2011 and Rio+ 20 must truly deliver meaningful and attainable outcomes, including fulfilling old obligations and delivering on new ones; especially on climate financing and the broader financing for development. Developed countries, must meet their commitments to poorer nations. At COP16, in Cancun last year, we achieved some progress on climate change, and we must build on this. We welcome the establishment of the Transitional Committee of the Green Climate Fund and hope to see it capitalized and fully launched in Durban. We are deeply disappointed that some countries are blocking the mandated review of the 1.5 degrees Celsius as the potential global average temperature.

We call on those states to *withdraw* their objections and support the movement to a safe threshold for islands and for the world. We are convinced that an adequate global response to climate change must remain at the top of the global agenda. A legally binding outcome must be part of the outcome of climate negotiations.

I call on partners to hasten the disbursement of Fast-Start-Funds, especially to small island states. These disbursements must be consistent with the scale of the damage already done and the continuing threats that we face from environmental degradation. We express solidarity with our Pacific sisters and brothers who are daily losing territory to sea level rise perhaps faster than we are in the Caribbean. You have my pledge that we will continue to support you.

Naturally, Mr. President, we are taking responsibility for ourselves. This year, we are launching a sustainable energy programme for 24 small island developing states. SIDS DOCK, will provide the foundation for low carbon, economic growth and adaptation to climate change.

It will facilitate energy efficiency and provide renewable energy to 24 small islands, developing states.

On behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, AOSIS, I thank the Government and people of Denmark for making the first contribution of an initial US\$14.5 million to SIDS DOCK. We also thank our partners, the World Bank and the UNDP, for facilitating the programme. We invite the international community to join Denmark in financing this effort.

Mr. President,

In a similar vein to our climate change efforts, we look to the Rio+20 meeting to advance our path to sustainability. One of the key outcomes for Grenada and other SIDS must be the development of a green economy, one that combines investments, jobs and livelihoods with environmental resources; and a blue economy, one that takes into account, coastal and ocean-based income generation. For indeed, peoples' livelihoods are largely based on environmental resources and services - including agriculture, agro-industries, forestry, mining and tourism. The Rio+20 meeting can, and must be, a turning point for political commitment and financing for development.

Mr. President,

We know that the United Nations is capable of leadership; however it can be more effective if it anticipates and responds to twenty-first century challenges. This includes recognizing the fact that dozens of mature states - many in the developing world - are ready and able to take responsibility for the management of the global agenda.

The United Nations must be reformed. How else will it support its growing agenda? How else can it manage this new global agenda for global sustainability, peace and peace-keeping and disaster response within a democratic multilateral system that is constantly evolving? What worked for 65 years must be reshaped for today. That is why we call for reform of the Security Council to make it more representative and inclusive. Failure to do this will deny this body the political legitimacy it needs to maintain and indeed enhance its leadership role in the world and to make the best decisions. Grenada joins with other member states in the Caribbean Community and calls for expansion of the Security Council, in both its permanent and non-permanent categories and more openness in its working methods.

We call for a Security Council seat for small island states, within a reasonable time frame and we also call for stronger and more enhanced UN-CARICOM relations to benefit the people of our Caribbean region.

Grenada welcomes the formation and launch of UN WOMEN aimed at promoting the rights of women and girls, and equality between the sexes. This is an early success of UN reform.

Mr. President,

Grenada is firmly committed to the principle of self-determination. On July 14th, Grenada joined with other member states in welcoming the Republic of South Sudan as the 193rd member of the United Nations. We salute the efforts of its people to usher in peace at home and within the region.

Turning now to the seemingly intractable problem of moving Palestine from a state-in-waiting to an internationally recognized state. This cannot be separated from the international clamor for democratic rights, now led by the "Arab spring". The just aspirations of the people of Palestine must be addressed and Palestine must not be left behind in the historical sweep toward open and sustainable democracies. Equally, the Arab Spring should also be the occasion for the renewal of commitment to Israel's security. Peace depends on viable democracies and sustained security. That is why Grenada is disappointed that the Palestinians and Israelis have not concluded talks over their long-standing dispute. We urge a return to these talks and look forward to the peaceful co-existence of these two states.

Mr. President,

It is quite obvious that the world continues to experience the wrath of nature. We grieve at the waste of human life and the environmental destruction caused by disasters worldwide. We express our solidarity to the member countries

which have experienced floods, earthquakes, tsunami and droughts in the past months. Grenada calls for a strong global response especially for the humanitarian crisis now unfolding in the Horn of Africa.

Mr. President,

Grenada welcomes the new President of the sister CARICOM state of Haiti and wish him and his team success as they rebuild Haiti after the devastation of the earthquake. While we thank all those who have helped, much still remains to be done. We call on all who have pledged to help Haiti to deliver on their pledges and support the efforts of the Haitian people.

Turning now to another Caribbean concern, Grenada again urges the United States of America to completely lift the harsh economic embargo against the people of Cuba. All but a handful of the UN membership have consistently voted for the removal of this embargo.

We acknowledge that responding to the complex and interconnected issues on the UN agenda is a major task even for the United Nations. Nevertheless, responding must be at the top of the UN Agenda. We maintain support for sustainable development; action on climate change, and support for justice and peace.

Grenada commends the Secretary General, for organizing a number of high level meetings on important topics. We are moved to single out the High level Meeting on Non-Communicable Diseases. This is a scourge that is negatively affecting not just developing countries, but, many developed countries, as well. The proliferation of NCD's pose a very serious challenge to small island states like Grenada because of its effect on the labour force. And because of its demands on the shrinking finances of the country. We, therefore welcome the outcome of this High level Meeting and we pledge to implement its recommendations.

Finally, Mr. President, last year, building on the conclusion that the United Nations is a real force for good in the world, I challenged this organization to harness its strength to better achieve that purpose.

This year, drawing on the message of the youth to make the world a better place, I repeat this call. It is my hope that under your stewardship, the UN will continue to be the main global force for the good of humanity. Grenada will do its part to advance this singular and inspiring goal.

I thank you, Mr. President.