



# SAINT LUCIA

STATEMENT DELIVERED

BY

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*Please check against delivery*

## INTRODUCTION

Mr. President

Not since the prelude to the two world wars has there been so much anxiety and uncertainty within the international system. The sands are indeed shifting, Mr. President, as you stressed at the opening of this 66<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly.

Shifts in the struggles for freedom, struggles for rights, some of which we in Saint Lucia take for granted, shifts in the number of natural disasters that devastate country after country, financial meltdowns, increases in the price of energy and food, food shortages, all converge and meet us at a moment where the challenge to cope weighs down on us all.

## VULNERABILITY OF SIDS

But the weight carried by a small island state bears down like an elephant on an ant, and though the ant is cable of carrying many times its own weight, it will never choose to carry an elephant. The current world economic and financial situations are not of our making but the impact on us is tremendous. It continues to confound how the member states of the Caribbean Community with the exception of Haiti, small island states with limited resources, population, land mass, and economies, can be classified as middle income and therefore not eligible for special arrangements in finance and trade.

Mr. President

We continue to argue that the methodology employed for such categorization puts SIDS at a great disadvantage in terms of receiving favorable aid and trade packages, thereby adversely affecting our development aspirations.

## TRADE

The continued attrition of trade preferences at the multilateral level challenges our small vulnerable economies, and necessitates our governments to employ creative structural adjustments and fiscal exercises to keep our economies afloat. The present application of the terms of trade and conditions of aid are unfavorable to us.

Emphasis has to be placed on the consideration for a balanced approach to foreign investment and environmental integrity, and that investors must not place undue pressure on small states; but rather there should be an understanding of our challenges and our willingness to work towards a win-win situation.

Mr. President,

Favorable mechanisms for finance and technology transfer will enable small island states to take advantage of the benefits that these offer as pre-requisites for sustainable development.

Mr. President,

We stress our vulnerability to natural disasters, and the disproportionate effect that these natural catastrophes have on small state economies, and seek rapid and meaningful response mechanisms to be employed at the regional and international levels in order to enable these vulnerable states to recover as quickly as possible. Almost every year, gains made during the first half of the year are eroded in the last quarter by weather related phenomenon.

Saint Lucia is still recovering from Hurricane Tomas which struck the island last October. Let me take this opportunity to thank those who contributed to our recovery.

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Mr. President, Saint Lucia, like other (SIDS), recognizes the vital role that oceans play in national and global economic development. In light of this, the Government remains committed to ensuring the sustainable development of both coastal and marine resources. Saint Lucia has had for a number of years legislation that speaks to effective fisheries management, laws concerning open and closed seasons for certain fisheries such as lobsters,; mesh size limits for nets and fish trap (pot) fisheries in order to avoid the capture of juvenile fish. The Government is also targeting large pelagics and other species, not traditionally targeted by local fishers, in order to reduce pressure on coastal and coral reef fishery.

In addition, a number of marine reserves and marine management areas have been established, with the most well known of these being the Soufriere Marine Management Association (SMMA), which has been used to inform the establishment of other marine parks within the Caribbean and globally.

The Government of Saint Lucia has adopted an institutional framework for Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and is working towards ensuring the successful implementation of this framework, through the Coastal Zone Management Unit and a Coastal Zone Management Advisory Committee.

Mr. President,

The impacts of climate change and sea level rise are real to SIDS, and Saint Lucia. through a number of projects and programmes, is seeking to build the island's resilience to these impacts through the formal adoption of a National Building Code and the development of Environmental Impact and Physical Planning and Development Regulations. Notwithstanding, Mr. President, Saint Lucia has recognized the importance of having access to data and models at the national and local level in defining and informing the country's response to climate change, and in this regard, is taking a number of steps to build the requisite database by working with a various national, regional and global organizations.

Mr. President, the Caribbean Sea, an important international shipping route both for trade and tourism, and considered by the United Nations Environment Programme as a biodiversity hotspot is our livelihood. It needs special attention, and the Government is "promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development." We therefore support the work of the Caribbean Environment Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme.

Mr. President, for all of the above, Saint Lucia would like to call on the international community to ensure that, in the preparations for upcoming the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, there is a strong focus on oceans in the negotiations. We cannot

forget the importance of oceans to SIDS in providing energy and food security, and to the globe as a whole in regulating our climate.

Mr. President, as countries worldwide prepare for the RIO+20 Earth Summit, we note that the Green Economy is a major theme for discussion. Renewable energy and Energy Efficiency are at the heart of the Green Economy.

Petroleum giants like British Petroleum and Shell are now turning to investments in solar and wind energy. Countries such as Germany, the Netherlands and Brazil have positioned themselves as strong proponents of renewable energy. Sustainable energy technologies have been, and continue to be, a subject of significant research and development, with very promising results. At the policy level, a number of countries, including my own, have articulated noble and ambitious energy policies to steer us into the future. In the negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, climate change mitigation which is inextricably linked to sustainable energy development continues to generate much debate as country parties seek to find lasting solutions to curb greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr. President, whilst the United Nations endeavours to promote equity and equality, as individual countries, our capacities are not the same. Countries like ours yearn to enjoy the benefits of sustainable renewable energy sources, but despite having significant potential for renewable energy, we have not yet been able to meaningfully develop these resources. It is imperative therefore, that the international community take decisive action in assisting small isolated island states like Saint Lucia in achieving energy security through renewable energy and energy efficiency programmes. So far, the SIDS have been largely overlooked, as investments go into larger economies where greater economies of scale and profits beckon. Even with the existence of avenues such as the Clean Development Mechanism, that should also promote sustainable energy projects, the results have not been encouraging for SIDS

## AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

Mr. President,

We applaud the efforts and resources put in the conservation and preservation of the World's forests to reverse desertification.

We think though that consideration should also be given to small 'tree stands' in SIDS as these are crucial to soil fertility and therefore guarantee production and productivity in agriculture to food security and the alleviation of poverty.

In this same vein, Saint Lucia welcomes the adoption of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing and is grateful to the Government of Japan for providing an implementation fund for developing countries. We see this as a great opportunity to help our communities to benefit from their biological resources and the traditional knowledge associated therewith. With the declaration of 2011-2020 as the Decade of Biological Diversity, we urge all countries to work closely together to conserve our biological resources for our present-day well-being and for posterity.

## NCDS

Mr. President,s

The recently concluded High Level Meeting on NCDs provided an opportunity to deepen dialogue and collaboration with Member States, regional and international agencies and development partners, to share technical expertise, best practices and resources as we continue to strive to meet clearly defined goals and objectives.

As a member of the CARICOM Community that spearheaded this initiative, Saint Lucia wishes to place on record its appreciation for the commitment of all Member States and UN agencies particularly the World Health Organization and other interested groups in addressing non-communicable diseases. We need though to set targets, implement programmes and measure success if we are to make progress beyond just a meeting.

### SMALL ARMS

Mr. President,

Saint Lucia, like all of the other CARICOM member states is grappling with security threats engendered by the illicit trade in firearms and narcotics. The associated rise in crime and violence, involving the use of firearms, has had a significant adverse impact on the socio-economic and human development of our countries.

Saint Lucia will spare no effort in working towards an Arms Trade Treaty which is legally binding, robust and comprehensive, and contains the highest possible standard for the transfer of conventional arms – including small arms, light weapons and ammunition, that is effective in regulating the arms trade –particularly in preventing diversion, and universal in subscription.

### SOUTH SUDAN

Mr. President,

Saint Lucia welcomes the Republic of South Sudan as the most recent member of our Community and wishes it progress, peace and prosperity. We look forward to welcoming the State of Palestine in this august body after successful negotiations have been concluded.

### CUBA

Mr. President,

The anachronistic half century old blockade imposed on the people of our neighbor, Cuba, suffocates the people's right to prosperity and progress, the outdated mechanism's illogical application no longer fits into 21st century geopolitics, economics or humanitarianism. It is here in this community of nations that we lend our voice to the others who have spoken before, to call for an end to this embargo, and end to all limitations on the rights of the Cuban people to progress and prosper.

TAIWAN

Mr. President,

In the spirit of the greater good, we are pleased that since 2009 Taiwan has been able to participate in the World Health Association, in recognition of the fact that global health issues require universal participation and cooperation to overcome those major issues that affect the peoples of every corner of the globe.

Sustainable development, like health, is a global issue that requires participation and cooperation among all international partners. Taiwan, as a leading economic and technological powerhouse, can contribute substantially not only to health but to a range of global issues. We urge the United Nations to find suitable means to permit Taiwan to participate in its specialized agencies and mechanisms, including the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) all of which have worldwide implications, along the lines of the "WHA model". Surely, Twenty five million people living on planet earth can contribute to this body's peoples.

Mr. President

The shifting sands are revealing an international system on the brink of change, we are at a moment where, a decision taken here in this great assembly will reverberate throughout history, decisions taken here can create a state, divide a state, bring peace or bring renewed conflict. Mr. President you chose well your theme for this session of the General Assembly, "the role of mediation in the settlement of disputes by peaceful means", let it guide our work this year and beyond.

Thank You.