



**STATEMENT
BY**

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AND
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OF GRENADA**

AT

**THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE SIXTY-EIGHTH REGULAR SESSION
OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Mr. President,
Secretary General,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. President,
I wish to extend my sincerest congratulations to you on your election as President of this 68th Session of the General Assembly. The fact that you were elected by consensus, speaks in unequivocal terms of the high esteem in which you are held by your colleagues and the respect, which you command in this forum. I am confident that your vast practical experience at the multilateral level would serve you in good stead as you guide this new session to a fruitful outcome.

In the same breath, I pay tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Vuk Jeremic, for his astute stewardship over the past year.

Mr President,
Allow me to begin by expressing our solidarity with the people of Kenya while condemning – *in the strongest terms* – the cowardly acts of terrorism that were seen last week.

Mr. President,
I thank you for selecting a theme for this Session, ‘The Post 2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage’, which in my delegation’s view, embodies the fundamental concerns of all countries, but will find particular resonance with Small Island Developing States (SIDS) like Grenada. This is an area where the multilateral system must demonstrate its effectiveness not only to improve the lives of ordinary citizens but also to maintain confidence in our multilateral institutions. We look forward to Key Performance Indicators linked to tangible outcomes – *rather than more analysis and more reports*

Mr. President,
Grenada endorses the call made at the Rio +20 Summit for “the future we want”. In this context, we must build on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals and Agenda 21. Indeed, for a post-2015 Development Agenda, we welcome a framework that goes “beyond GDP” and recognises the assets of Natural Capital. Grenada encourages the IFIs to go even further by also recognising the liabilities associated with natural disasters caused by climate change. These liabilities underscore the need for reassessing the basis on which SIDS are graduated to Middle Income status thereby losing access to concessionary funding that is sorely needed.

The unilateral graduation of many Small Island Developing States to Middle Income Status is premature. I therefore, reiterate the call made in Agenda 21 for a more holistic and comprehensive set of indicators for classifying States. Grenada endorses support for low-income and fragile economies. Moreover, it is clear that several of the SIDS newly promoted to middle-income status, continue to struggle with high debt burdens which are worsened by climate change and high fossil-fuel import bills. Many SIDS struggle with low productivity and low-levels of competitiveness, they struggle with severe financial constraints and, in some cases, they struggle with limited prospects for immediate growth. The point is this: Per Capita Income as a sole measure without the context of climate-vulnerability does more harm than good.

To illustrate this point, as damaging as Hurricanes Sandy and Katrina were to the US economy, these cost between 0.5% and 2% of GDP to the US. This is in sharp contrast to costs of between 20% and 200% of GDP, when hurricanes hit island economies.

Therefore, Grenada is joining with other SIDS in urging the shareholders, the donors and the boards of the IMF and the World Bank to translate this recognition of climate vulnerability amongst small island states into a meaningful package of financial and official developmental assistance (ODA) for SIDS.

Mr. President,

This issue of graduation of SIDS is an issue that is raised year after year. Let us return to the UN General Assembly next year, confident that progress on this matter has been made. In this regard, we wish to suggest for consideration during your Presidency, a call for a substantive paper and a debate on this issue. Ideally, the outcomes of this matter should be provided as an input towards the 2014 International Conference on SIDS to be hosted in Samoa and as an input to the Secretary General's debate on Climate Change scheduled for September 2014.

Mr. President,

Also contributing to the indebtedness and fiscal unsustainability of small island states is the volatility and high-prices for fossil fuel imports. On average small island developing states are paying between 20 cents and 40 cents per kilo-watt hour for electricity, some as high as one US dollar (USD 1.00). This contrasts with prices of 5 cents to 15 cents in developed countries. We welcome, therefore, the initiative of AOSIS in establishing SIDS DOCK. We also wish to express gratitude to the donors and institutions for helping to facilitate this program.

In addition, the Government of Grenada is taking major steps towards creating a green economy. One of the priorities for Grenada's Prime Minister, Dr. the Right Honorable Keith Mitchell, is the dismantling of a monopoly that is contributing to high energy costs on the island of Grenada. The Government is seeking partners to help create a level playing field that will allow many more private sector players to have a role in innovative and sustainable power-generation solutions, while positioning Grenada as an exemplar for a sustainable planet.

Mr. President,

As you have chosen this theme of sustainability for the 68th session, so too has the government of Grenada chosen sustainable development as the organising theme for the development of our island and for our engagement with international partners. Grenada is a party to over forty Multilateral Environmental Agreements. The push to harmonize local laws with these international instruments is a testament of Grenada's commitment to this agenda.

The reasons are clear, the causes of climate change and the impacts of climate change are negatively affecting Grenada's ability to fulfil its social contract with its people including its ability to fully deliver on the MDGs.

Mr. President,

So far I have spoken about economic sustainability and environmental sustainability. The third pillar of sustainable development relates to social sustainability. Grenada is a society in which

social development is given equal weighting with the importance of investment and economic growth driven by the private sector.

On May 13, 2013, a mere three months after assuming office, my government ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination. We are proceeding apace to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, demonstrating thus: That Grenada is committed to the removal of All forms of discrimination.

Mr. President,

Grenada associates itself with the pursuit of the Caribbean region to contribute to the development of humanity. We acknowledge that through the ages, the Arab World has contributed enormously to the world of Science and Mathematics including the very numerals we use today. We see a modern Arab world taking positive steps to lead on breakthroughs on key issues that confront our planet. We very much welcome initiatives like Masdar City and the hosting of IRENA by the United Arab Emirates. The role of Qatar in hosting COP-18 on Climate Change is also noteworthy. Grenada joins with other countries in deepening our relationship with the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council and places a high degree of importance on the peace and security of the region.

Mr. President,

We are mindful that the region, and the entire UN body, have been seized with issues of Peace and Security during UN week. Grenada and many countries in Latin America and the Caribbean are home to a vibrant and entrepreneurial diaspora of the Middle East, including those from Syria and Lebanon. As such, Grenadian citizens are very concerned about the prospects for peace in Syria and the wider Middle East.

Mr. President,

Grenada condemns, in the most vehement terms, atrocities and crimes against humanity. As such, we believe that those responsible for the recent deadly use of chemical weapons in Syria must be held accountable by the international community. Moreover, Grenada welcomes the Security Council Resolution to destroy Syria's chemical weapons and is encouraged by the commitment of the Syrian government to comply with the resolution. More importantly, my delegation hopes that this breakthrough could be a stepping stone to the resolution of the already brutal and bloody civil war in Syria, which has been fuelled by conventional weapons.

Mr. President,

On June 3, 2013, Grenada joined 83 States in signing the Arms Trade Treaty, on the very first morning the Treaty was opened for signature. Work is already under way at the national level for the ratification of the Treaty as yet another signal of Grenada's commitment to peace and security. Moreover, being the first country ever to accede to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, Grenada intends to use its experience to raise awareness on this particular matter, especially in the Americas.

On the question of Israeli-Palestinian relations, Grenada remains convinced that a two-state solution is essential to ending this conflict and urges both parties to conduct the present round of negotiations in good faith. Grenada has good relations with the government and peoples of Israel

and is a strong advocate for Israel's right to coexist in peace with its neighbours. Furthermore, Mr. President, Grenada has long been a supporter of the people of Palestine. And Grenada is proud to have joined with neighbouring countries in recognising the state of Palestine and in signing a memorandum of understanding, based upon friendship and upon an understanding of a two-state solution.

As with most of the world, Grenada looked on at the Arab Spring with great interest. The use of social media underscored the rise of technology as a tool for democracy on a 24/7 basis and my Prime Minister places great importance on the use of ICT as a way to engage our youth. As Egypt goes through its transition and as the people's call for freedom, dignity and social justice is heard, we encourage the leaders to learn the lessons of the recent past and respond to the will of the people in moving forward to a system of true democracy, respect for human rights and inclusive processes for nation building.

Finally, Mr. President,

My delegation uses this occasion to once more express our solidarity with the Cuban people who continue to suffer from an unnecessary economic, commercial and financial embargo that is a relic of the cold war.

Grenada once again calls on the United States of America to respect the views of the overwhelming majority of humanity and lift the onerous measures imposed over five decades now.

Mr. President,

We support your theme for this 68th session and wish to ensure our partners that they can count on Grenada to be an active participant in these deliberations and in the implementation of outcomes.

Mr. President,

Grenada is open for business. My Government recognizes that a tried and tested route to sustainable development involves a significant component of foreign direct investment. As such, Grenada reaches out and seeks new friendships; while maintaining and building upon its existing and long standing relations with many member states of this august body.

Mr. President,

In 2014 Grenada marks its 40th anniversary of Independence and we invite each and every one of you to celebrate with us on February 7th. We also see our 40th year as a milestone that recognizes 40 years of struggle and 40 years of development. But also, *more importantly*, it marks 40 years of expectations *yet to be fully delivered upon*. As such my government, *under the leadership of our Prime Minister*, sees this year as the year of less talk and more action, the year of tangible deliverables, and the year that great socio-economic strides are made. We have a young vibrant population that cannot wait anymore, that should not wait any more and with the help and cooperation of our friends *new and old*, we will deliver. They will not wait anymore.

I THANK YOU