



PERMANENT MISSION OF SAINT LUCIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT BY

THE HONOURABLE ALVA R. BAPTISTE

MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND CIVIL
AVIATION

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Mr. President, exactly one year ago, September 30th 2013, I had the unsurpassed glory of delivering my maiden address to this august assembly, and utilised that occasion to pay homage to those great architects of world peace who fostered the birth and initial dynamics of our United Nations. In so doing, Mr. President, I used the principles contained in the UN Charter as a ready compass to set my course as I navigated the issues, which occupied the forefront of our attention at that time.

Mr. President, the issues, which commanded the attention of the International Community, then, included global terrorism and the tensions in the Middle East and the Korean peninsula. These were compounded by concerns around geopolitical conflicts and unresolved trade issues, as well as trade and macroeconomic approaches that favoured Industrialised countries to the detriment of developing nations.

Mr. President, given that in nature's irreversible onward march, unresolved problems are brought forward and compounded by succeeding problems, this year's General Assembly has convened at a time of increased turmoil. Since our discussions last September, it is undoubtedly the case that dissension and conflict has increased in the Middle East: the arena which inevitably sets the price for petroleum and its associated products, which are utilized by the peoples of the global community – rich or poor!

On the other hand, what were perceived benefits to be derived from the end of the Cold War, with the potential for normalizing relations on the European continent and in lands and regions far from that location, now seem to be doubtful of fulfillment, as signs, tensions and pressures once associated with the Cold War are evolving with renewed concerns for the international community as a whole.

When tremors of these kinds emerge, Mr. President, it is much harder for small states like ours to get the attention of the major powers, towards evaluation and discussion of our own issues and objectives. For these can only be successfully resolved, if the dominant members of the international community can relate to them, without the positions and tensions that emphasise allegiance on the part of small powers to this or that side.

It is for this reason, Mr. President, that we, from our small corner of the globe, venture to express the view, in this, the most significant of international fora, that the tensions and tendencies towards war now emerging, should be subordinated to the search for solutions in which the principles and objectives of this Organisation, particularly its preference for the negotiated resolution of disputes, are pursued as far as practicable. These escalating conflicts have negative effects on the access of small states which seek to get the attention of larger powers, and in consequence retard the positive contribution of the international community to our own concerns.

In this regard, Mr. President we have observed, with a certain disquiet, tendencies in Europe that indicate a possible resumption of the Cold War on that continent. We believe that this can only be disadvantageous to small countries like ours as, in fora such as this, we tend to find a return to demands for automatic commitment to one side or the other.

As a small country we have called for negotiation to prevail in the pursuit of the rearrangement of Continental European relations, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. Despite being a small country far away from the situation in Europe, we have long had and continue to have an integral relationship with that continent. It is particularly on that basis that we call for diplomacy to prevail, and we have been gratified to see recent signs indicating that this is likely to be the path pursued on the European continent.

Mr. President we are relieved to see that the contentions in the Middle East, specifically in respect of the Palestine issue, have returned to the negotiating table. This is in concert with earlier developments relating to contentions between the NATO powers and Iran, as the various parties were able to adopt postures of mutual discussion and engagement. This has led recently to what seem to be jointly negotiated stances to the extremely complex situation in Syria, and to the emergence of the so-called Islamic State, which has been spreading disorder and contention in the wider Middle East.

From our perspective on that region Mr. President, we can only express the wish that negotiation and cooperation among the larger powers, and between themselves and those of other Middle East countries continue, even as some members of the international community felt it necessary to resort to the use of force, in the area. We reaffirm, even in the midst of great global complexity, our country's commitment to the peaceful resolution of disputes.

POSITIVE TRENDS

Mr. President while many developments in our world contain the seeds of our region's continued marginalisation, we would also want to accentuate the more positive trends emerging in the international community, which are leading to the creation of space in our global arena.

Consequently, Saint Lucia is encouraged by the possibility of enhanced flexibility in decision-making being permitted to members of the international community via the emergence of large, developing states, in such a manner that they are now characterized as increasingly significant actors in decision-making relating to the resolution of global issues.

When, I addressed the 68th Session of this Assembly last year, I made reference to the emergence of institutions like the Union of South American States, UNASUR, which includes some members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and to the Bolivarian Alliance for Our America (ALBA). These have opened up opportunities for assisting our countries to meet the Millennium Development Goals to which we are all committed.

Saint Lucia reiterates its appreciation of the work of ALBA, an institution committing itself to assisting countries without requiring ideological commitment to this or that position; but recognizing the priority of economic and social development, and preferring the peaceful resolution of disputes, above all other concerns. In consonance with that posture, we commend the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for its contribution towards the Ebola eradication budget and for Cuba's dispatch of 156 doctors to West Africa to assist the fight against the deadly Ebola virus.

Mr. President, Saint Lucia welcomes the initiative by Brazil, India, China and South Africa along with Russia to extend and deepen the sphere of assistance available to other developing countries, thereby widening the scope for their advancement towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Specifically, we make mention of the establishment of the New Development Bank thus further facilitating the efforts of developing countries towards economic reconstruction.

Because, the establishment of the World Trade Organisation and the single-minded immediacy with which it has pursued international trade liberalisation, have threatened the very foundations of our economies – particularly in the sphere of agriculture, which has suffered sudden and certain destruction. So from our perspective, another dimension has been added to efforts of small states like Saint Lucia to navigate the consequences of sudden international economic liberalization and globalization.

RESIDUAL EFFECTS OF COLD WAR ON CUBA

It is in that context of emergence of new balances of economic and political power, and new flexibilities in the use of diplomacy, including within our Hemisphere, Mr. President, that Saint Lucia once again reiterates its plea for the removal of the blockade imposed against the Republic of Cuba.

More specifically, my government calls for the removal of Cuba from the so-called Terrorist Watch List. This is a residue of the effects of the Cold War which has disappeared, and in the face of the scourge of the traffic in narcotics in particular, we urge that cooperation among all countries in the Hemisphere and a setting aside of the old Cold War postures, as necessary conditions for balanced development and peace.

A specific example where this applies, is in relation to our efforts in pursuing collective arrangements and unimpeded cooperation against the menace of the movement of narcotics through the Caribbean Sea. The drug barons, Mr. President, make no ideological distinctions between countries as they continue to exploit weaknesses deriving from now outmoded political stances impeding effective regional cooperation. For as we all know, those pursuing the sale of narcotics make special efforts to attract the youth of our countries, compromising the essential resource base for our future economic development and social stability.

EFFECTS OF OLD COLD WAR STANCES ON TAIWAN

Mr. President, once again I draw the attention of this august body to Saint Lucia's firm and consistent belief that historical anomalies of the Cold War in our international system, should not be allowed to inhibit the contribution of countries desirous of participating in, and enhancing the advancement of developing countries because there are issues surrounding their particular status.

In this connection I refer, as I did on behalf of the Government of Saint Lucia last year, to the participation of Taiwan in international organizations, particularly in those which focus on technical arrangements or solutions of important issues that are of value to the international system as a whole, or to its member-states.

In that connection, my country therefore again makes a plea for a fuller participation of Taiwan particularly in the World Health Organisation, and the International Civil Aviation Organisation. Taiwan has the experience of engaging in a technological revolution that has enhanced its economic development and the welfare of its people; and in many respects, that State has become a viable economic development model for small states.

Hence, we believe that the government and people of Taiwan have much to offer to developing countries, and so we would support any institutional initiative that would allow that country to contribute through those mechanisms of the United Nations that are devoted to solutions related to technological, economic and social development.

Mr. President, I shall now turn to the theme of this year's General Assembly: "Delivering on and Implementing a Transformative post-2015 Development Agenda", to navigate two issues of paramount importance to Saint Lucia as a small island developing state.

At this juncture, Mr. President, I must congratulate you and your country Uganda on this theme, which is charged with invaluable significance to my region and yours; as we are challenged in building an impregnable substratum of economic and technological self-determination, to successfully deal with the development challenges of our times.

Firstly, Mr. President, speaking of Africa and the Caribbean region in this context, I come now to a matter of great historical and contemporary concern to the people of Saint Lucia and of the Caribbean Community as a whole, which I adumbrated in my address to this body last year. This is the issue of the need for the metropolitan powers to come to terms with the manner in which these Caribbean states were historically created and organized, and the consequences of this for their standing and situation in today's world.

Specifically, Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community at their meeting held in July of this year, decided that a case for Reparations should be elaborated beyond the relationship between ourselves and the relevant European Governments, and that Caribbean states should, in seeking

support for this objective, I quote: “advance the Reparations Case during the sitting of the UN General Assembly in 2014”.

I carry out this Mandate now on behalf of the Government and people of Saint Lucia who, in concordance with the peoples of other CARICOM Member States, seek the award of Reparations as a specific way in which those who, in centuries past, held the reins of power without accountability, can now, in recompense, make a further and specific contribution to the nation building programmes of our governments, beyond existing commitments.

In this regard, we make a case for Reparations as a matter of principle.

Secondly, Mr. President, Saint Lucia has welcomed the deliberations of the Third International Conference on the specific concerns of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), held in Samoa earlier this month, and the efforts made in that regard by the United Nations.

The recent Samoa Pathway Conclusions, have reemphasized the persistent and peculiar problems inhibiting the development of Small Island States. And, in the words of the recent SIDS Declaration, there is an insistence that “small island developing states remain a special case for sustainable development”, without which “success will remain difficult”.

For, as the Commonwealth Secretariat has recently pointed out, “research has shown that countries most exposed to preference loss are mainly SIDS such as Saint Lucia, St Kitts and Nevis, Dominica, Jamaica and St Vincent & the Grenadines”, and from our regional point of view, included in that list were the Caribbean Community's continental states of Belize and Guyana.

The Commonwealth Secretariat has also shown that while the annual compound growth rate of per capita income of SIDS between 1970 and 2000 was 0.73%, that of the world economy was almost 4 times higher at 2.70%; and that in the period 2000-2012, “SIDS had one of the lowest annual compound growth rates at 1.23% compared to 4.9% for developing countries, 4.0% for LDCs and 3.23% for Sub-Saharan Africa.

The Saint Lucia government needs the recommendations of the Samoa Conference to be given the international attention that they deserve. This is critical, considering the fact that along with the specific problems that have been identified as continuing to inhibit sustainable development, the instability of the present international economic system only serves to aggravate the precarious position of small states.

In that connection too, Mr. President we stress, as we did in last year's proceedings, on the importance of assistance arrangements, including the further development of the Adaptation Fund so that our countries can cope with the negative effects of sea-level rise. And in respect of Saint Lucia's urgent requirements, we also emphasise assistance for construction of facilities that can

protect our countries against untimely natural disasters due to climate change. Losses from disasters in SIDS continue unabated and continue to outstrip our capacity to cope.

Over the past decade, many SIDS have lost considerable momentum in their development progress by having to contend with post-disaster, rehabilitation and reconstruction costs, which invariably have brought increased debt. The Caribbean has been a particular victim of these events since I spoke here last year, and we hope that following the recent SIDS Conference in Samoa, a certain urgency will be attached to this matter.

SAINT LUCIA's CENTRAL POSITIONS

Mr. President, for the sake of recapitulation Saint Lucia wishes to state the following:

1. That we emphasise the persistent use of diplomacy as a prime instrument for the pursuit of normalised relations among all states;
2. That the rapidly changing nature of International Relations mandates the need for us to subject the UN system to new levels of critical examination, with the central objective of strengthening the internal machinery of our Organisation and reforming it to truly reflect today's geopolitical reality;
3. That we must as an International Community do all within our powers to ensure that there is no resumption of the Cold War even though the "Post-Cold war dividends" have not yet materialised for much of humanity. Now is an excellent time to divest ourselves of any residual effects of the Cold War, such as the blockade imposed on our sister island of Cuba as well as to remove Cuba, from the so-called Terrorist Watch List.
4. That we make a case for Reparations as a matter of principle;
5. That we must take advantage of new, meaningful opportunities for cooperation and partnership not only with traditional partners but also, setting aside long standing geopolitical contentions, with a range of non-traditional partners such as Taiwan.
6. That we must determine a clear and effective strategy by which SIDS can translate the outcomes of the Samoa Conference into concrete results; one that builds on existing international commitments and include the means of implementation to support the national and regional development efforts of SIDS; If not the Samoa Conference could be construed, in the words of the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., *"as a meaningless drama on the stage of history, shrouded with the ugly garments of shame"*.

7. That Saint Lucia stands for freedom, democracy, non-discrimination, sustainable development, poverty eradication and special and differential treatment for SIDS: all of which are important ingredients of our most precious pursuits and aspirations—peace and prosperity for our people, recovery and resilience of our Caribbean region, and stability and security in our World.

CONCLUSION

Mr. President, as I prepare to close, it is fitting and opportune that as we ponder the possibilities of *"Delivering on and Implementing a Transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda,"* we deliberate carefully on the opportunities and alternatives to the current world order.

Mr. President, we must look to our past to understand our present and we must plan our future by analyzing our present and applying the lessons of our past.

It is in this regard, that I feel compelled to close by inviting your careful consideration of the words of the late US President Woodrow Wilson, who asserted America's historical leadership and commitment to international democracy and freedom in these words: *"We shall fight...for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations."*

Mr. President, I thank you.