

**ST. KITTS AND NEVIS**  
**NATIONAL STATEMENT**

**UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – RIO+20**  
**RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL**  
**20-22 JUNE, 2012**

**DELIVERED BY THE RT. HONOURABLE DR. DENZIL L. DOUGLAS**  
**PRIME MINISTER OF ST. KITTS AND NEVIS**

**MR. PRESIDENT**  
**COLLEAGUE HEADS**  
**EXCELLENCIES**  
**DISTINGUISHED GUESTS**  
**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

**IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE THAT I ADDRESS THIS AUGUST BODY AND BRING WARM GREETINGS FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF THE FEDERATION OF ST. KITTS & NEVIS. I AM INDEED GRATEFUL FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO REPRESENT MY SMALL CARIBBEAN ISLAND STATE, WHICH HAS A COMBINED LAND MASS OF ROUGHLY 105 SQUARE MILES AND A POPULATION OF APPROXIMATELY 50,000 PEOPLE. THIS UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT REPRESENTS A CRITICAL JUNCTURE ALONG THE CONTINUUM OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND I CONGRATULATE THE GOVERNMENT OF BRAZIL NOT ONLY FOR ITS WARMTH OF WELCOME AND HOSPITALITY AT THIS CONFERENCE BUT FOR THE INITIATIVE THEY SO CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED A FEW YEARS**

PAST, WHICH HAS CULMINATED IN OUR BEING GATHERED HERE TODAY. THE MATTERS TO BE ADDRESSED ARE URGENT INDEED, AND St. Kitts-Nevis WELCOMES THESE VERY IMPORTANT DELIBERATIONS.

In terms of size, St. Kitts & Nevis would be a mere fragment of even the smallest cities of the world. Indeed, we are the tiniest nation in the entire western hemisphere. Yet we are stable, well-run, and a people who have long adhered to the highest standards of democratic governance, national development, and the rule of law. You can understand the sense of urgency that we feel, then, due to the fact that our island nation is so disproportionately affected by precisely those economic, social and environmental threats to our development that have brought us here today. It is therefore both out of concern for the community of nations at large, and also most pressingly for the well-being of my own nation, and other vulnerable nations of the Caribbean and other regions, that I urge we rise to the challenge and make a significant changes in our *modus operandi* without delay – if we are to have any chance of reversing the troubling effects that

**ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS HAVE HAD, ARE HAVING, AND WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE ON SMALL COUNTRIES AND ECONOMIES LIKE MINE.**

**MR. PRESIDENT, OVER THE YEARS, WE HAVE SEEN OUR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUFFER DUE TO GLOBAL POLITICAL INERTIA. TODAY WE ARE IN GENUINE NEED OF A NEW APPROACH. WE ARE IN GENUINE NEED OF RELIEF FROM THE *STATUS QUO*. FOR COUNTRIES LIKE St. Kitts and Nevis, RE-ENERGIZING THE POLITICAL WILL TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN ACTION PLAN IS NOT SIMPLY PREDICTABLE SEMANTICS. IT MUST ADDRESS OUR UNIQUE VULNERABILITIES TO NATIONAL DISASTERS, INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS FOR HIGHLY INDEBTED MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES. IT MUST ADDRESS HIGH LEVELS OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND POCKETS OF POVERTY THAT CAN PERPETUATE CRIME AND VIOLENCE IN OUR REGION. THIS PLAN OF ACTION MUST SPEAK TO OUR SECURITY.....OUR STABILITY.....INDEED, OUR VERY SURVIVAL. AND SO WE URGE THAT APPROPRIATE ACTION BE TAKEN TO ENSURE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THOSE COMMITMENTS THAT HAVE ALREADY BEEN MADE BY DEVELOPED NATIONS - TAKING INTO ACCOUNT, OF COURSE, THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND ENVIRONMENT IMPERATIVES, CARRIED OUT IN CONFORMITY WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF COMMON BUT DIFFERENTIATED RESPONSIBILITIES.**

**MR. PRESIDENT, ENSURING GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY IS THE INESCAPABLE RESPONSIBILITY OF EVERYONE GATHERED HERE TODAY. AND PREVAILING MODELS OF PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION ARE NO-ONE'S FRIEND. THE TIME HAS COME, THEREFORE, FOR US TO GARNER THE MULTIFACETED WHEREWITHAL TO ADVANCE ALTERNATE MODELS THAT MAKE SUSTAINABLE HUMAN SETTLEMENTS POSSIBLE; CONSERVE NATURE AND OUR ENVIRONMENT; AND REIN IN CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS TROUBLING CONSEQUENCES.**

**MR. PRESIDENT, IT IS MOST APPROPRIATE THAT WE WOULD BE FOCUSING, DURING THIS CONFERENCE, ON THE GREEN ECONOMY AND POVERTY ERADICATION. AND WE ALL AGREE THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A LOW CARBON DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY IS ESSENTIAL – FOR NATIONS LARGE AND SMALL, AS WE ALL STRIVE TO ERADICATE POVERTY, INCREASE EMPLOYMENT, ENHANCE FOOD SECURITY, MANAGE FRESHWATER RESOURCES, AND INCREASE ENERGY EFFICIENCY ON BEHALF OF OUR RESPECTIVE PEOPLES. THE TRANSITION TO A GREEN ECONOMY WILL, HOWEVER, PRODUCE ITS OWN CHALLENGES, AND SO APPROPRIATE ALLOWANCES WILL ALSO HAVE TO BE MADE TO SMALL NATIONS THAT DO DECIDE TO VENTURE DOWN THIS PATH. St. Kitts-Nevis, FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD BE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TO THE ASSOCIATED SHOCKS, AND SO COMPENSATORY PROVISIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE PUT IN PLACE PRIOR TO OUR IMPOSING THE ASSOCIATED SOCIAL HURDLES ON OUR**

POPULATION. In summary, a green economy is of critical importance to St. Kitts-Nevis – as it is to our CARICOM region as a whole, and so St. Kitts-Nevis stands ready to engage in the full sustainable development agenda.

Mr. President, the challenge of environmental governance is a truly global one, requiring the contribution of all. In this regard, the Government of St. Kitts & Nevis wishes to bring to your attention the exclusion of the Republic of China (Taiwan) and to strongly urge that they be afforded the opportunity to participate in global mechanisms, negotiations, and other activities aimed at procuring increased viable options for sustainable development. Sustainable development is important to all. Environmental threats are not governed by political boundaries. We should, therefore, make a concerted effort to ensure that our approach is more inclusive.

Permit me, now, to applaud the commitment to SIDS, as evident in the support expressed for the convening of a third United Nations Conference for the Sustainable Development of SIDS. In keeping with the Rio+20 commitments, I

am confident that we can make the Third SIDS Conference key to the future development of SIDS, particularly in the post 2015 development framework; and I hereby pledge the full support of St. Kitts-Nevis for this initiative.

As we assume our responsibilities here at Rio+20, Mr. President, let us ensure that the eventual outcome of our deliberations is both integrated and balanced. And let us strive to ensure that we have not only tangible objectives, but indeed tangible results as well. And so, as we reflect on the essence of sustainable development, let us make a point of including in our thought processes the devastating impact of non-communicable diseases on nations large and small, across the globe. Indeed, the World Health Organization has confirmed that this spectrum of diseases now constitute the number one cause of all deaths worldwide. As a result, therefore, this issue should no longer be viewed as a narrow health issue *per se*, but as a troubling phenomenon with direct and far-reaching implications where sustainable development itself is concerned.

Mr. President, achieving sustainable development will require a renewed commitment from developed partner countries, and there is a clear need for

DEVELOPED NATIONS TO PROVIDE NEW, SUPPLEMENTARY AND CONCRETE FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. THIS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IN LIGHT OF THE VOLATILE GLOBAL ECONOMY AND OUR NATIONS' ONGOING VULNERABILITY TO CLIMATE CHANGE, NATURAL DISASTERS, AND SEA-LEVEL RISE. DEVELOPED NATIONS HAVE ALREADY MADE SPECIFIC PLEDGES IN TERMS OF FINANCE, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER, AND CAPACITY BUILDING, AND IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THESE PLEDGES NOW BE HONORED. OUR IMPLEMENTATION OF ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION ACTIONS, OUR QUEST FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, AND OTHER KEY PRIORITIES DEPEND ON IT. IN ADDITION, IN ORDER TO MAXIMIZE THE IMPACT OF THIS CONFERENCE, MR. PRESIDENT, I WISH TO URGE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF EFFECTIVE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS AT ALL LEVELS TO FACILITATE THE IMPLEMENTATION COMMITMENTS THAT WE MAKE HERE. WE STRONGLY ENCOURAGE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS, AND WE URGE THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN, YOUTH, AND OTHER GROUPS IN ORDER TO ENHANCE EFFECTIVE ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE, AND IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR COORDINATED RESPONSES TO EVOLVING THREATS.

IN CLOSING MR. PRESIDENT, I ASK, HOW ARE SIDS TO MEET THE ADVERSE IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS THAT ARE NOT OF THEIR MAKING? INTERNATIONAL LEGAL

INSTRUMENTS, FOR EXAMPLE, MUST BE TRANSLATED INTO DOMESTIC LAWS. THE PUBLIC'S CAPACITY TO PARTICIPATE IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DECISION-MAKING MUST BE STRENGTHENED. THERE ARE OTHER CRUCIAL ASPECTS OF CAPACITY BUILDING THAT MUST BE ATTENDED TO. AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY MEETING COMMITMENTS PREVIOUSLY MADE, AND WHICH ARE KEY TO SIDS' ABILITY TO FACE ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS, WOULD BE INDEED WELCOME.

MR. PRESIDENT, WE HERE ASSEMBLED CAN AND MUST DEMONSTRATE NOT ONLY SERIOUSNESS OF INTENT. WE MUST ALSO DEMONSTRATE THE CAPACITY FOR SERIOUS AND SUBSTANTIVE ACTION. THE CONSEQUENCES OF INACTION FOR NATIONS LIKE MINE AS I HAVE STATED, WOULD BE MULTI-FACETED, FAR-REACHING, COSTLY, AND TRAGIC. THIS WE CANNOT AFFORD. LET US TOGETHER, THEN, ENSURE THAT RIO+20 SETS THAT STANDARD FOR MULTILATERAL VISION FOR ENLIGHTENED SELF-INTEREST, AND ACTION -ON BEHALF NOT MERELY OF ONE OR TWO NATIONS, BUT IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS AND AT THE END OF THE DAY, ON BEHALF OF THE WORLD. LET THIS BE THE BLUEPRINT FOR THE "FUTURE WE WANT!"

THANK YOU.

