



STATEMENT

BY

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GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA  
SECOND SOUTH SUMMIT

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PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chairman  
Your Royal Highnesses  
Colleague Heads of State and Government  
Ministers  
Excellencies  
Ladies and Gentlemen

I am delighted to be in this beautiful and progressive city of Doha.

Mr. Chairman,

Permit me to express my sincere appreciation for your kind invitation to participate in this the Second South Summit of the Group of 77 and China. May I join my colleagues in extending my thanks to the Emir, his Government and the People of the State of Qatar, for the warm welcome granted to my delegation and the excellent arrangements made for the Summit.

This Second South Summit has given me a feeling of expectation. The expectation that we will take advantage of the renewed energy that now exists at the United Nations. This energy was brought on by a series of events, particularly the proposed reform of the United Nations. The G77 and China must embrace this new fervor wholeheartedly and join the momentum now existing at the United Nations.

Mr. Chairman,

The South still has a multiplicity of goals to achieve, including, but not limited to; improved technology, disaster mitigation, relief from heavy debt burden, poverty reduction and the ability to attract greater foreign direct investment.

The Plan of Action and Declaration which will emerge from the Doha Summit will articulate many of our aims and goals. But, we must offer a focused approach for implementation within the UN system.

In this respect, I am going to outline, succinctly, the areas of focus that I wish to see. Our countries of the south need to have better access to information technology and to work constantly at improving our capabilities in this dynamic area.

Our government and private sector also need to make better use of information technology to improve efficiency in the delivery of their services and improved competitiveness and share in the global market. We cannot do it alone. We need the developed world to give recognition that developing countries need the policy space and more market access for their products, in the countries of the North. This is an issue that we must stress during the international meetings at the United Nations. Countries of the South must be consistent and persistent in making our voices heard.

Mr. Chairman,

Grenada, as a member of the Group of small island developing nations with common goals and ideals is conscious of the need to strengthen our efforts to improve the lives of our peoples. We need now, more than ever, to meet the development needs of our peoples and regions as outlined in the Mauritius Declaration and the Millennium Goals, among others.

In this regard, up to September, last year, our economy recorded a positive growth of 5 percent in GDP with tourism, agriculture, manufacturing, telecommunication and services being the main contributors in this performance. On the fiscal side we had achieved current account surpluses in excess of 2 percent of GDP and a sustainable level of debt servicing to cover the country's capital development programme. Inflation had in fact remained low with unemployment at manageable levels.

All of our progress was reversed and our developmental priorities reorganized by the onset of one natural disaster.

Each year the Caribbean experiences a number of Hurricanes. Last year was particularly devastating and we sought to raise awareness at the United Nations, that disasters were threatening economic and social advancement and needed to be addressed. The situation was then compounded at an international level when the societies and economies of some Asian countries were devastated by a killer Tsunami. Grenada understands, fully, the plight of countries visited by natural phenomenon.

Mr. Chairman,

It is well known that on September 7, 2004 Hurricane Ivan passed through Grenada and left a trail of death and destruction. No part of the island was spared and the main growth sectors were destroyed. Over 90 percent of our housing stock was damaged or destroyed. In addition, our country's social infrastructure, roads, buildings and forest reserves were decimated. The total cost of the damage was estimated at US\$1.4 billion or 200 percent of the country's GDP.

We are now faced with the major task of rebuilding the country, following successful rehabilitation efforts shortly after the hurricane. In this regard we have put together a reconstruction programme of US\$350 million over the next three years and established an Agency for Reconstruction and Development to coordinate this effort.

We have mobilized all our people at home and abroad to work together to rebuild the country. Notwithstanding our efforts, we are aware that we cannot do it by ourselves and have in fact called on the international community for its support. We are very grateful for the generous support received so far to meet rehabilitation and reconstruction needs. However, our agriculture sector still remains battered, the tourism industry is at a

standstill, our social and economic sectors need attention and revenue collection is well below normal levels. So, we cannot rebuild and reconstruct Grenada's economy without the help of our friends and partners.

The IMF in its last report on Grenada applauded the efforts of the Government and its people in getting their lives back together; however, it has reported that the economic and fiscal situation of the country remains challenging. Large financing gaps in excess of 3% of GDP exist for 2005 and beyond. The IMF has therefore called on the international community and donor agencies to provide grant financing and technical assistance to support the country's reconstruction efforts. I, therefore, take this opportunity to thank the international community and in particular those in the Group of 77 and China who have generously supported our efforts. As I indicated before, a lot more needs to be done, so I am making a special call for support to help Grenada on its road to recovery. I am also hopeful that Grenada could achieve increased South-South cooperation.

Our experience in Grenada as well as the experience of countries affected by last December's Tsunami clearly indicate that there is need for the international community, including the United Nations the G77 and China to pay very close attention to the development agenda of small island developing states given that they are vulnerable to external shocks and natural disasters.

In terms of disaster mitigation, I would like to see the United Nations put in place disaster mitigation measures to assist poor countries that have been affected by natural disasters.

Mr. Chairman,

In closing, let me applaud the work of the Group of 77 and China in fostering cooperation and growth among developing countries. I am fully confident that through meaningful cooperation and by speaking with one voice we can be a powerful organization working for the advancement of our peoples and regions in this world. Grenada remains committed to this effort and notwithstanding our limited financial resources; we will do all in our power to ensure the continuation of our organization so that the dreams of our peoples can be realized.

I also look forward to positive debate and results at the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly in September.

Mr. Chairman,

I thank you.