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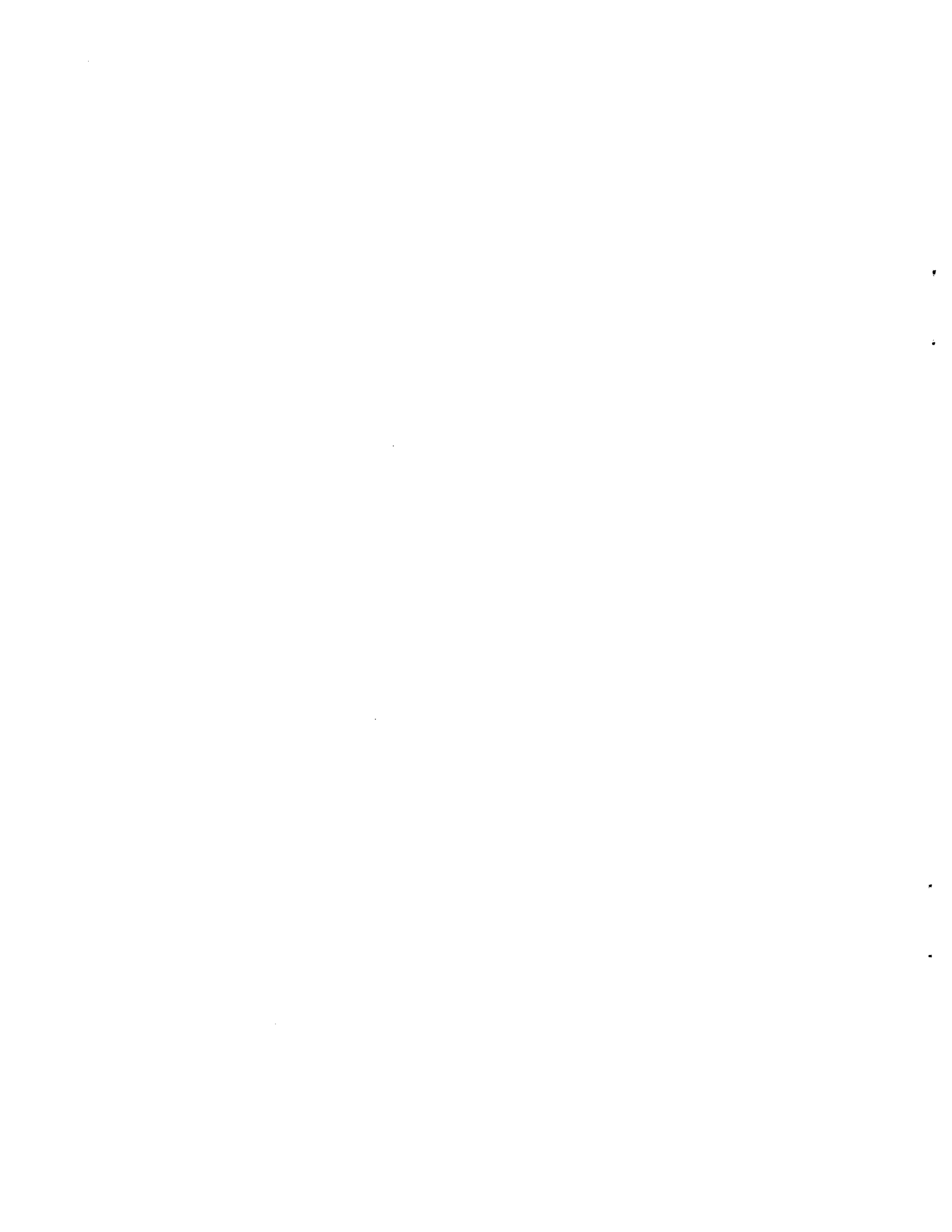
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**COPENHAGEN +5**  
**THE SPECIAL SESSION ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN 2000**  
**ISSUES OF RELEVANCE TO THE CARIBBEAN**



**UNITED NATIONS**  
**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**  
Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

**CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION COMMITTEE**



*This document has been prepared  
as a brief and guidance  
for member countries  
on the process and highlights  
of the implementation of  
Copenhagen +5*



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**THE SPECIAL SESSION ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN 2000**  
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**Introduction**

A Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly was held in Geneva, 26 June – 6 July 2000. The session, entitled "World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) and beyond: Achieving social development for all in a globalizing world", addressed the implementation of commitments made by member governments at the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen in 1995. The Copenhagen+5 Session was attended by 35 Heads of State and Government, 4,791 government delegates and 2,045 non-governmental organization (NGO) representatives. The governments of 14 Caribbean countries were represented at the Session, eight of which made opening statements that are accessible on line.

After two Preparatory Committee sessions and several intersessional meetings which were held to achieve consensus on the substance and language of the text by governments, 40 per cent of the text remained bracketed on the eve of the Geneva Conference. The Geneva Special Session, therefore, became one hard work-through-the-early-morning-hours conference.

The atmosphere reported to have pervaded, whether in New York or in Geneva was of a heightened awareness of the divergence of interests between developing and developed countries. As one United Nations report on the outcome of the Special Session stated, "developed countries tend to stress issues such as democracy, the rule of law, human rights, good governance and good management. While developing countries do not disagree that good governance is important, they emphasize the need for a solid resource base and a level playing field in the world economy." One formal government report stated that "there was no apparent jubilation at the conclusion of the session. On the one hand, developing countries were dissatisfied because they felt they did not obtain the new and additional resources required for social development. On the other hand, the developed countries also felt that they were unable to promote a greater role by international organizations outside the United Nations system such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization, to create standards by which to measure progress towards the achievement of social development goals for countries - standards which are perceived by developing countries to be conditions for loans and development assistance."

Special mention must also go to civil society, and the active and vibrant role it played. Civil society helped to sharpen the discourse on social development and draw attention to the cutting-edge issues related to the text such as on debt and structural adjustment, on capital controls (e.g. the currency transaction tax), and on poverty-reduction strategies. While the involvement of civil society in the formulation of economic policy and the design and implementation of structural adjustment programmes was an issue all along the preparatory process, it appeared in Geneva as a legitimate player in the review, planning and implementation of the WSSD+5 process.

## **The process, statements, findings and endorsements**

The road towards this Session, now more generally known as Copenhagen+5, was paved with disagreements which needed to be resolved, broadly with regard to (a) the process, (b) the issues and (c) the focus. Agreement needed to be sought and to some extent eventually was found on whether firstly, a Preparatory Committee was required while the Commission for Social Development was the principal subsidiary organ of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for the subject, secondly, which issues were more important to be addressed, and thirdly, whether the emphasis would be on the political, on the review and assessment, or on the new initiatives. The latter entailed the mandate for the United Nations. The impasse was reported to have been aggravated by the emergence of recurrent difficulties over the accreditation and participation of NGOs.

Both the question of the mandates and the question of the NGO participation were resolved later. After much deliberation, the Session was back on track to do its work. The final decision was that the document of the Session would consist of three parts, covering each of the three matters: (1) political declaration, (2) review and assessment and (3) new initiatives. Among top issues of discussion were globalization, governance and human rights.

It was agreed that rules for managing globalization should reflect an improved approach to social cohesion and that development agendas should foster a rights-based approach. The meeting noted that poverty has gained acceptance as a central theme of social development and, in that regard, reiterated the determination and duty to eradicate poverty, promote full and productive employment, foster social integration and create an enabling environment for social development.

The Copenhagen+5 document states that

**"the goals of development are to improve living conditions and empower people to participate fully in economic, political and social arenas".**

Among the findings of the Copenhagen+5 review is the fact that

**"the welfare state in Latin America - by far the most unjust and unequal region of the world - with 25 per cent of its income going to 5 per cent of the richest segments of the population, was basically a way to redistribute some of the wealth without modifying the structures of inequality."**

(See Table I)



**Table I**  
**Inequality and poverty in Latin America**

<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>GINI x100 Calculation for the mid-80s</b>	<b>GINI x 100 most recent calculation</b>	<b>POPULATION With less than \$2 US daily</b>
Brazil	63.0	60.1	43.5
Colombia	47.0	57.2	21.7
Chile	54.0	56.5	38.5
Costa Rica	43.0	47.0	43.8
Ecuador		46.2	65.8
Mexico	52.0	53.7	40.0
Panama	43.0	57.1	46.2
Paraguay	40.4	59.1	
Peru		46.2	
Venezuela	40.0	46.8	32.2

Source: False Promises: Latin America & Geneva 2000 by Manuel Chiriboga in ICSW Social Development Review, September 2000

\* 100=absolute inequality; 0= absolute equality

Many of the Copenhagen+5 initiatives on which decisions have been taken in Geneva have been among substantive items on the agenda of the United Nations Commission for Social Development. Decisions on prioritization of themes for the next five years will be taken by the Commission at its thirty-ninth Session in February 2001.

- (a) Ways and means of integrating social and economic policies;
- (b) Development of pro-poor growth strategies;
- (c) Ideas for the generation of additional financial resources.

The Session brought fresh prominence to issues which have new urgency in this era of globalization, increased independence and rapid technological change. The fulfilment of goals and commitments at national levels has often been jeopardized by the simultaneously accelerated process of globalization of which the current patterns have contributed to a sense of insecurity for many. Growing interdependence of nations often causes transmission of economic shocks across borders. The Session reiterated the importance of promoting growth through free trade and increased access to markets. There was a recognition of the social implications of this. But the need to balance these offsets with strengthened social policies and mechanisms that ensure equal distribution of the benefits of growth was emphasized.

In this regard, the Copenhagen+5 Session endorsed a call to:

- (a) Reduce the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by half by the year 2015, establish a global campaign for poverty eradication, and encourage governments to implement pro-poor growth strategies.
- (b) See social integration not as an attempt to make people adjust to society, but as an attempt to make society accept all of its people.

- (c) Exchange best practices in the field of employment policies and ensure social dialogue through inclusion of workers and employers in the development of social policies.
- (d) Assess the social impact of macroeconomic policies.
- (e) Assess the social and economic cost of unemployment and poverty, based on broad definitions of efficiency and productivity.
- (f) Enhance prevention and protection against HIV/AIDS.
- (g) Address mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS.
- (h) Analyze its political, social and economic aspects.
- (i) Provide social and educational support to affected groups.

The following section of this document includes highlights from various sources, relevant to the three major chapters of the Copenhagen+5 Report on the Geneva Special Session. Special highlights on the Caribbean implementation at national levels, as reported at the Session, have been included in Chapter II.

## **I. The Political Declaration**

In its political declaration the Meeting acknowledged the obstacles which globalization and rapid technological advances posed to many developing countries in terms of their achievement of goals of social development set by the Summit five years ago. The Declaration reiterates governments' determination and duty to eradicate poverty and promote full and productive employment. It notes that the maintenance of peace and security within and among nations, democracy, the rule of law, the promotion of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, effective, transparent and accountable governance, gender equality, full respect for fundamental principles and rights at work and the rights of migrant workers were some of the essential elements for the realization of social and people-centred sustainable development.

The Declaration notes that excessive debt-servicing has severely constrained the capacity of many developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition to promote social development. It also recognizes the efforts being made by indebted developing countries to fulfil their debt-servicing commitments despite the high social costs incurred. In the Declaration, governments reaffirm their pledge to find effective, equitable, development-oriented and durable solutions to the external debt-servicing burdens of developing countries. Governments agree to strive to fulfil the yet-to-be-attained internationally agreed target of 0.7 per cent of the GNP of developed countries for overall official development assistance (ODA) as soon as possible.

With regard to the related need for additional financial resources, the Special Session called for deeper and improved debt relief and for greater technical and financial assistance for developing countries.

It also reaffirmed the position that active participation of civil society, which is required, would be enhanced by the provision of education which includes opportunities for the acquisition of skills required in the knowledge-based economy and social services. A strong commitment was made for social development in a globalizing world.

## **II. The Review and Assessment**

Globalization was the overarching theme of the session and several speakers referred to its negative impact on the economic and social development of developing countries. There was a concern that, as a result, people were being marginalized by the experiences of the global economy.

The review and assessment of the Session gave a sharp and compelling analysis of worsening global poverty and inequity, and mentioned some important barriers to overcoming these, such as inadequate resources for social development. Clear gains of the Special Session would be unequivocal demonstrations of political will from governments to express their desire to overcome these and set measurable targets and timetables for action plans and by committing new and additional resources for social development.

Among several actions targeted to take place by 2015 are:

- (a) Reduce the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by one half as noted earlier.
- (b) Develop sustainable and effectively managed pro-poor health systems.
- (c) Calls for all children to have access to complete compulsory primary education of good quality and 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy.

Actions targeted to take place by 2005 include:

- (a) Reduce female illiteracy rates by at least half of the 2000 level.
- (b) Reduce infection level in young people by 25 per cent.

The review and assessment of the 1995 Copenhagen Programme of Action implementation globally was undertaken by the United Nations Commission for Social Development, as mandated.

This review revealed that increased priority has been given to social development in national and international policy objectives and that many new national policies and programmes

had been initiated. A new impact on the United Nations system has led to a refocusing of this organization's activities and galvanized transparency in decision-making. Advances have been made in gender equality and while a close interaction of economic and social development is not yet a reality, the interest to foster such interaction has increased.

On the other hand, there has been little progress in areas such as collective action and tolerance and respect for cultural differences. In fact, regress is evident in, for example, the level of concessional financial resources, equality within and among States and in the sense of security in some countries which have been strained in their capacity to manage beneficial opportunities of globalization.

With regard to the core issues of commitments made at the Summit, i.e., poverty eradication, full employment and social integration, the review and assessment arrived at the conclusion that many governments have set national poverty reduction targets and formulated poverty eradication plans and strategies, while microcredit and other financial instruments have received increasing attention as effective means of empowering the poor, and many countries have expanded access to such programmes. In addition, education, vocational and skills training to promote employment is increasingly recognized, while employment promotion has increasingly been put at the centre of socio-economic development. Efforts have also been made towards social integration of marginalized and vulnerable groups in society. This has been promoted through the protection of all human rights in many countries.

Regrettably, however, social service provision has deteriorated, leaving many without access to basic social services; demographic changes have led to new challenges and caused new obstacles in eradicating poverty while feminization of poverty has been exacerbated by persistent discrimination against women in the labour market. Besides, mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes aimed at eradicating poverty and the empowerment of women, has lagged behind.

The review and assessment furthermore revealed that no universal measurement tools have been developed to evaluate women's unpaid work, that women and girls still face particular disadvantages, owing to continued discrimination and exclusion in society. Special notice was taken of the fact that the protection of immigrants and migrant workers requires the adoption of a broad range of targeted policies.

### **Highlights of Caribbean implementation**

Action taken at national level in Caribbean countries, or remaining obstacles, as the case may be, as reported by their delegations in Geneva include:

#### *The Bahamas*

- (a) The opening of polyclinics with competent staff in rural communities
- (b) Reporting on increased incidence of HIV/AIDS in the 15-44 age group
- (c) Improved and special care afforded to AIDS patients

*Barbados*

- (a) Establishment of poverty eradication fund
- (b) Measures taken to boost entrepreneurial activities for women and youth
- (c) Establishment of a Social Investment Fund (SIF) for disadvantaged persons
- (d) Introduction of Relief 2000 Programme
- (e) Creation of a Labour Market Information System for public access
- (f) Establishment of a National AIDS Committee to confront the HIV pandemic

*Belize*

- (a) Development of a National Poverty Elimination Strategy and Action Plan
- (b) Improved scope of autonomy for local government bodies
- (c) Building homes and conserving the environment
- (d) Enactment of legislation to protect women from abuse and blazing the trail in the region in gender mainstreaming
- (e) Establishment of a National AIDS Committee aimed at reducing incidence of HIV/AIDS
- (f) Encouraging self-employment through access to credit and training
- (g) Encouraging inclusion of community-based ecotourism facilities in tourism policies
- (h) Successful immigrant assimilation and legalization of displaced and illegal immigrants
- (i) Establishment of a Ministry of Civil Society

*Guyana*

- (a) Development of Poverty Strategy Paper aimed at stimulating economic growth
- (b) Improvement in social infrastructure
- (c) Increase in violence and crime
- (d) Youth involvement in the drug trade
- (e) Mass deportation of criminals
- (f) Hostile competition through globalization

*Haiti*

- (a) Priority to social justice and public security
- (b) Implementation of the universal schooling programme for children age 3-12
- (c) Enlarged credit facilities for farmers and women traders and artisans
- (d) Mechanized agriculture and modernized public transport

*Jamaica*

- (a) Outlining of efforts undertaken towards social development
- (b) Establishment of an integrated system of social policy planning
- (c) Emphasizing the importance of education within the context of globalization

- (d) Adoption of a National Poverty Eradication Policy and Programme
- (e) Decision that the community is the central focus of efforts towards poverty eradication
- (f) Adoption of strategic policies to expand employment and reduce unemployment
- (g) Implementation a Reform and Social Investment programme in education, and health

*Trinidad and Tobago*

- (a) Establishment of a Change Management Unit for Poverty Eradication and Equity Building
- (b) Creation of partnerships between business organizations and poor communities, the successful programme 'Adopt a Community'
- (c) Establishment of the Community Development Fund
- (d) Establishment of a National Distance Learning System Secretariat for distance education
- (e) Expanded productive employment through investment in the non-petroleum sector
- (f) Establishment of a Disability Unit and a Social Displacement Unit for social integration

### III. New Initiatives

The General Assembly recommended the following initiatives to implement the commitments made at the Summit:

1. Stronger commitments should be made to transparent and accountable governance.
2. The social impact of economic policies should be monitored continuously and instruments should be instituted to ensure that this takes place.
3. Social development is the responsibility of each country and should take into account the diverse economic, social and environmental conditions in each country, with full respect for the various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of its people.
4. Access of products and services to international markets should be increased and improved through, inter alia, the negotiated reduction of tariff barriers and the elimination of non-tariff barriers which unjustifiably hinder trade of developing countries, according to the multilateral trading system.
5. The relevant bodies of the United Nations system should be encouraged to address the issue of corruption that undermines efforts made for efficient use of resources for social development.

6. **Consensus building should take place on policies and strategies to reduce the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by one half by the year 2015.**
7. **Priority should be given to investments in education and health, social protection and basic social services, in order to help empower people living in poverty.**
8. **Governments should re-evaluate their national fiscal policies, including progressive tax mechanisms, with the aim of reducing income inequalities and promoting social equity.**
9. **Ways and means should be found to allow for better acknowledgement of the nature of the informal sector to facilitate its eventual integration into the formal economy.**
10. **Institutional capacities should be developed and promoted.**
11. **Participatory poverty assessments as well as social impact assessments should be undertaken and should include sex, age and relevant socio-economic categories.**
12. **The extent and localization of poverty and the groups most severely affected, inter alia, should be defined.**
13. **The special needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups should be targeted.**
14. **Community participation should be ensured in the formulation and implementation of poverty reduction strategies.**
15. **Access for all to basic social services should be ensured, even during financial crises.**
16. **Sustainable pro-poor health systems, which focus on the major diseases and health problems affecting the poor, should be developed.**
17. **The private sector should be encouraged to respect basic worker rights as reaffirmed in the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.**
18. **Methods for collection and analysis of basic employment data should be improved and with regard to the informal sector, mechanisms should be improved to measure unremunerated work.**
19. **Concrete and effective measures should be taken against the exploitation of migrant workers.**
20. **Specific employment issues of youth, ageing workers, persons with disabilities, single parents and the long-term unemployed should be addressed.**

21. The contribution that voluntarism can make to the creation of caring societies should be promoted. The Commission for Social Development is invited to consider the issue in 2001, the International Year of Volunteers.
22. Action to combat all forms of gender-based violence should be continued and intensified.
23. Views and information should be exchanged on national experience and best practices in designing and implementing policies and programmes on ageing.
24. Research on the actual and projected situation of older persons should be supported on an urgent basis.
25. Persons with disabilities should be ensured access to employment through the organization and design of the workplace environment.
26. Schools and the media should be encouraged to provide young people with information on the dangers of substance abuse and addiction and on how to seek help.
27. Multisectoral measures should be taken at the national level to enable all women and men, including young people, to protect themselves and others against and be protected from HIV infection to counteract the devastating impact of the epidemic on personal, social and economic development.
28. International financial institutions and national governments should be encouraged to adopt the principle of integration of social, as well as economic, aspects in the design of structural adjustment as well as reform programmes.
29. The high-level intergovernmental event on financing for development to be held in 2001 should be recommended, and consideration should be given to the mobilization of national and international resources for social development.
30. Systems to produce reliable and disaggregated statistics on social development should be strengthened.

No reference to environmental protection appears anywhere in Chapter III of the final United Nations report, for the following reasons, as reported:

1. It could be used as a prerequisite/conditionality to aid by developed countries, and
2. Some country delegations feel they cannot totally afford to provide full protection to their environment as their nations struggle to achieve social and economic development.



**Table II**  
**Human development indices and rankings for**  
**selected countries in the Caribbean**

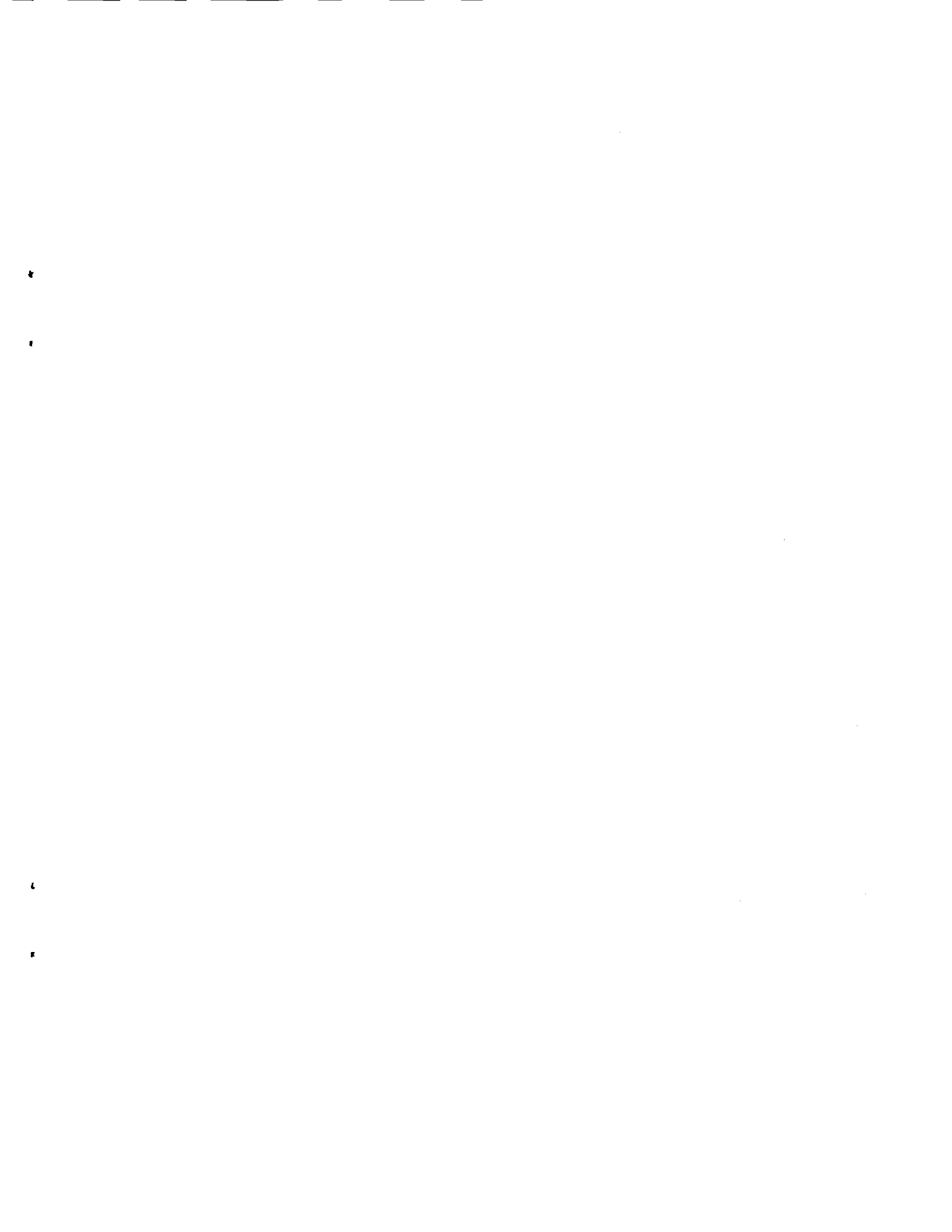
Human development index (HDI) rank	Name of Country	Human development index (HDI) value
29	Barbados	0.858
31	Bahamas	0.844
46	Trinidad and Tobago	0.793
38	Antigua and Barbuda	0.833
51	Saint Kitts and Nevis	0.798
53	Dominica	0.793
83	Belize	0.777
75	Saint Vincent	0.738
64	Suriname	0.766
81	Saint Lucia	0.728
52	Grenada	0.785
58	Cuba	0.783
82	Jamaica	0.735
88	Dominican Republic	0.729
99	Guyana	0.709
152	Haiti	0.440

Source: UNDP Human Development Report 2000

The above table gives the ranking and the value of the human development index of the Caribbean countries in the year 2000 based on data of 1998. Barbados, Bahamas and Antigua and Barbuda are the three Caribbean countries with the highest HDI value. They are also the only three Caribbean countries that have been categorized as "High Human Development" countries in the UNDP Human Development Report of the year 2000.

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