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UNITED NATIONS

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

OPENING SESSION

Speech delivered by His Excellency, Mr. Jean-Robert Estimé,
Minister of External Affairs of Haiti

Monsieur le Secrétaire Général,
Messieurs les Ministres et Chefs de Délégations,
Messieurs les Représentants des Institutions Internationales et Régionales,
Mesdames, Messieurs les Délégués,

Il m'est particulièrement agréable, en ma qualité de Président de la Huitième Session Ordinaire du Comité de Développement et de Coopération de la Caraïbe, d'inaugurer les travaux de cette Neuvième Session Ministérielle du CDCC.

Je me fais l'interprète des différentes délégations ici réunies en exprimant notre profonde gratitude au gouvernement trinitadien pour la cordialité et la chaleur de l'accueil dont nous sommes l'objet depuis notre arrivée dans ce beau pays, qui demeure l'un des hauts lieux de l'unité caraïbéenne.

C'est pour moi un grand honneur et un réel plaisir de saluer la présence parmi nous du Secrétaire Général des Nations Unies, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. Nous sommes particulièrement sensibles à cette marque d'attention, qui constitue indéniablement un encouragement aux nombreux efforts déployés par le CDCC. Qu'il nous soit permis de profiter de sa visite pour rendre hommage à ses prises de position et à ses multiples démarches en vue de renforcer les mécanismes de décision des Nations Unies afin de permettre à notre Organisation d'accomplir plus efficacement les grandes tâches politiques, économiques et sociales de l'heure.

Je voudrais également adresser mes sincères remerciements à Son Excellence, Monsieur Enrique Iglesias, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de la République orientale de l'Uruguay et ancien secrétaire exécutif de la CEPALC ainsi qu'à Monsieur Norberto Gonzalez, son successeur à la tête de ce prestigieux organisme, qui ont bien voulu nous honorer de leur présence et à tous ceux, qui à un titre ou à un autre ont contribué aux préparatifs de cette réunion. Je sais gré tout particulièrement à Monsieur Clyde Applewhite et à tous les membres du Secrétariat du CDCC de leur inestimable apport au bon déroulement de nos travaux.

Cette session du CDCC correspond à un anniversaire qu'on ne saurait passer sous silence et auquel il convient d'associer étroitement la mémoire d'un grand leader de la Caraïbe, je veux parler de Sir Eric Williams, ancien premier ministre de Trinidad et Tobago dont la contribution à la création du CDCC fut absolument déterminante. C'est ici, en effet, à Port-of-Spain, il y a dix ans, en mai 1975, que la Seizième Session de la CEPALC par la résolution 358, décidait de l'établissement du Comité de Développement et de Coopération de la Caraïbe avec deux objectifs primordiaux:

1. Promouvoir le développement de la sous-région;
2. Servir de mécanisme pour coordonner et harmoniser les efforts de chacun, en vue d'accroître la coopération dans la Caraïbe et entre la Caraïbe et les pays d'Amérique latine.

Cet anniversaire est d'abord pour nous l'occasion d'une réflexion collective sur le chemin parcouru, les difficultés rencontrées, les défis qui se sont posés et les obstacles qui se sont dressés sur la route de cette institution.

C'est aussi l'occasion de rappeler que la création du CDCC constitue avant tout un acte de profonde confiance dans le destin de notre région, une manifestation de notre volonté commune de multiplier les initiatives en vue de favoriser, dans le pluralisme et le respect mutuel, la coordination des politiques de développement, la croissance des échanges et la complémentarité des économies.

C'est enfin l'occasion de réaffirmer avec force notre conviction sincère que la Caraïbe avec ses trente millions d'habitants repartis sur une aire géographique de six cents milles km.² forme incontestablement, au déla de la diversité des particularismes locaux, une entité profondément homogène qui trouve son origine dans un ensemble de facteurs historiques et ethniques communs et qui représente une synthèse unique au monde des cultures africaine, européenne et américaine.

Un coup d'oeil retrospectif sur ces dix ans d'histoire nous permet de nous réjouir en constatant que nous avons tenu notre pari: La Caraïbe, de par la volonté souveraine des nations qui la composent, affirme chaque jour davantage sa détermination à assumer pleinement son identité collective et à renforcer son unité, malgré certaines barrières trop souvent artificielles que nous devons éliminer progressivement, en apprenant à mieux nous connaître et à mieux nous comprendre.

Malheureusement, à côté de ce brevet d'auto-satisfaction, que nous pouvons nous décerner d'un point de vue global, il nous faut bien admettre que les immenses possibilités de coopération horizontale dégagées lors de la première session du CDCC, à la Havane, demeurent toujours, pour une très grande part, inexploitées. La formulation et la mise en oeuvre de projets multinationaux de développement dans les domaines de l'industrie, du tourisme, des transports, de la pêche, de l'énergie ou de l'agriculture, la stimulation des échanges commerciaux, sont encore à bien des égards, au stade d'esquisses ou d'intentions.

Ainsi, le programme de travail mis en oeuvre au cours de l'exercice 1984-1985, tout en reflétant la vitalité du CDCC et le dévouement du secrétariat reste en deça de nos légitimes aspirations. Parmi les points à inscrire à notre actif, il convient de noter les actions entreprises dans le domaine de l'information, marquées par l'augmentation des réseaux sectoriels, la pleine automatiséation des activités internes et la création de nouveaux postes au Centre de documentation de la Caraïbe. Il devient impératif, de ce point de vue, de formuler une politique régionale de l'information permettant de normaliser les méthodologies

et de mieux intégrer aussi bien les différents réseaux sectoriels que les systèmes nationaux. De même, les liaisons fonctionnelles avec d'autres organismes tels que l'UNESCO, l'OLADE, l'OMPI devraient constituer une priorité appelée à se réaliser au fur et à mesure.

Le Conseil des Caraïbes pour la Science et la Technologie (CCST) qui représente un des mécanismes opérationnels les plus utiles dont nous disposons, n'est pas resté inactif et présentera son rapport après sa réunion plénière prévue pour la fin de cette année. D'autre part, en matière de coordination de la planification, il y a lieu de se féliciter des études de cas réalisées et de l'assistance accordée à certains pays en liaison avec l'ILPES.

Le problème de l'élimination des barrières linguistiques, par contre, ne progresse pas aussi rapidement que nous l'aurions voulu mais demeure au centre des préoccupations de notre Comité.

En matière culturelle où les perspectives semblent illimitées et où réside certainement l'épicentre de l'unité caraïbéenne, les contraintes financières ont empêché de mener à bien de nombreux projets. Il est heureux par ailleurs, de constater l'intérêt porté par le Comité à l'intégration des femmes au développement, de relever le nombre de documents traitant de ce sujet et d'évoquer la tenue à la Havane récemment d'une réunion spéciale de la Caraïbe, préparatoire à la conférence mondiale des Nations Unies consacrée à ce thème qui aura lieu cette année à Nairobi.

Deux autres points méritent d'être retenus: d'une part la publication des guides de procédures de commerce, l'inventaire des produits exportables et la situation de la balance de paiements de la Caraïbe et d'autre part, la création de l'unité de démographie CEPALC/CELADE, ainsi que la préparation du premier programme démographique à long terme.

En résumé, l'on pourrait avancer très schématiquement que trois caractéristiques essentielles semblent marquer la performance actuelle de notre comité. D'abord, une réussite indéniable dans le domaine de la collecte, du traitement et de la diffusion de l'information dans de nombreux domaines, ce qui constitue un préalable à toute action concrète. Ensuite, un manque dramatique de financement adéquat qui bloque la majorité des initiatives, et reflète la faiblesse de nos moyens face à l'ampleur des objectifs visés. Enfin un large consensus sur une certaine orientation à donner à nos interventions futures afin de favoriser le renforcement des relations avec l'Amérique latine et d'accorder la priorité aux besoins des petits pays.

Voilà un bref bilan de nos activités récentes qui doit nous inciter à redoubler d'efforts.

Il importe surtout de ne point perdre de vue que c'est en s'efforçant de parler d'une seule voix, et en raffermissant son unité d'action que la Caraïbe sera à même de renforcer sa présence sur l'échiquier international en tant qu'entité à part entière, et d'accroître par conséquent, de manière significative, son pouvoir de négociation à l'égard des partenaires extra-régionaux.

L'unité caraïbéenne, loin d'être uniquement une fin en soi, doit donc être comprise comme un facteur irremplaçable de mobilisation conjointe de nos forces, en vue de garantir les chances d'un développement socio-économique soutenu, dans un contexte international qui continue d'inspirer à l'ensemble des pays en développement de profondes inquiétudes.

En effet, si l'optimisme semble revenu dans certains des principaux pays industrialisés, compte tenu d'une reprise assez forte, il n'en demeure pas moins que pour la plupart des nations en développement de la région, la situation actuelle se caractérise encore par une angoissante incertitude.

L'Amérique latine et la Caraïbe, dont le PIB avait connu une régression de 3.3 et de 5.3% respectivement en 1982 et 1983, enregistrent certes un regain appréciable d'activité, ayant retrouvé en 1984 le revenu réel par habitant d'il y a quatre ans et l'investissement intérieur brut, après avoir chuté de 13% en 1982, a amorcé un net redressement. Cependant, en dépit de la reprise sensible des activités touristiques, la Caraïbe continue d'affronter les difficultés traditionnelles découlant de son extrême vulnérabilité aux fluctuations des facteurs extérieurs, et de l'effondrement des cours de ses produits d'exportation, dont le sucre constitue l'exemple le plus manifesté.

Pour la plupart de nos pays, les termes de l'échange ont continué de se détériorer et, en dépit de l'essor des exportations de biens manufacturés engendré par la mise en application de l'Initiative du Bassin de la Caraïbe (CBI), les revenus du commerce extérieur demeurent encore, dans nombre de cas, largement en deça de ce qu'ils étaient en 1980. D'ailleurs, aussi performant qu'il puisse être, le modèle de croissance proposé à travers le CBI ne saurait, dans nos pays, si fortement marqués par les distorsions structurelles, induire un véritable processus de développement auto-entretenu, surtout lorsqu'il ne s'accompagne que de transferts dérisoires de ressources, comparées aux sommes énormes consacrés à d'autres régions du monde.

Les temps nous semblent venus pour une approche internationale plus ouverte des besoins de la Caraïbe, ce qui suppose, parallèlement à la stimulation des investissements privés, un courant d'aide publique accrue, sur le plan bilatéral et multilatéral, en vue de faciliter le succès des politiques d'ajustement et de permettre une relance soutenue de la croissance.

Nous avons pris note avec intérêt des déclarations récentes faite à Paris par les pays donateurs au sujet de la Caraïbe et espérons que ces engagements d'augmentation substantielle de l'aide dirigée vers cette région ne resteront pas lettre morte, comme ce fut trop souvent le cas dans le passé.

Il nous semble important, par dessus tout, que les grandes nations industrialisées, celles qui sont plus particulièrement concernées par le devenir de cette région, se pénétrant de l'absolue nécessité de répondre, par des programmes plus ambitieux, mieux articulés, aux exigences de la promotion économique et du progrès social de la région. Car, en définitive, si pour ce petit groupe de pays, dans cette zone stratégique les mantis se révèlent incapables de prouver durant les années à venir, qu'ils sont en mesure de répondre aux défis de notre époque il y a lieu de se demander où et quant ils pourront jamais le faire.

Par ailleurs, il est indispensable que la coopération sud-sud retrouve un second souffle au niveau de la région. Certains faits récemment enregistrés témoignent à cet égard d'une volonté accrue de renverser les tendances négatives ayant affecté, à la faveur de la crise, le développement des échanges intra-régionaux. Je soulignerai tout particulièrement le processus d'élargissement de la Communauté des Caraïbes (CARICOM) à trois nouveaux pays à titre d'observateur, Suriname, la République dominicaine et Haïti.

Il y a lieu, également, en cette Année Internationale de la Jeunesse, de porter l'accent sur les initiatives propres à stimuler les échanges culturels entre jeunes de nos différents pays, suivant les mots d'ordre "paix, participation et développement" retenus pour commémorer cet événement. La République d'Haïti souhaiterait que cette question fasse l'objet d'une réflexion approfondie au cours de la présente session.

Par dessus tout, la coïncidence entre le dixième anniversaire du CDCC et le quarantième anniversaire de l'Organisation des Nations Unies nous amène tout naturellement à évoquer les grands problèmes qui entravent de nos jours, l'instauration d'un ordre international fondé sur le respect des règles du droit et des trois principes d'égalité, de justice et de souveraineté universellement admis.

Pour nous, parmi les situations qui constituent les violations les plus flagrantes des droits fondamentaux et de la dignité de la personne humaine, le système de l'apartheid est certainement la pire de toutes. La République d'Haïti, qui dénonçait déjà voilà cinquante ans le scandale du massacre des Hottentots dans le sud-est Africain, souhaite ardemment que la Caraïbe tout entière prenne une résolution solennelle appelant la Communauté internationale à renforcer les pressions susceptibles de porter le régime de Prétoria à mettre un terme à cet état de fait dont la honte réjaillit sur l'humanité toute entière.

Pour sa part, la République d'Haïti est décidée plus que jamais à oeuvrer en faveur d'une coopération régionale dynamique et efficace basée sur la compréhension réciproque, le respect mutuel et la solidarité et visant principalement à stimuler les échanges culturels, économiques et commerciaux. Elle est également engagée, avec la même conviction, dans la poursuite d'un processus de démocratisation, qui rentre aujourd'hui dans une étape décisive, puisqu'au moment où je vous parle le Gouvernement haïtien présente à la Chambre législative, à Port-au-Prince un amendement constitutionnel visant à créer un poste de premier ministre ainsi qu'un projet de loi portant réglementation du fonctionnement des partis politiques de manière à asseoir définitivement les bases d'une démocratie pluraliste, représentative et libérale.

L'Article 5 du Règlement Intérieur prévoit que "le Président du Comité est le Ministre désigné, par le pays hôte et élu par le Comité" comme vous le savez, Trinidad et Tobago a été élu à la présidence du Comité au niveau technique. Je voudrais par conséquent féliciter Son Excellence, Monsieur Errol Mahabir, Ministre des Affaires étrangères de la République de Trinidad et Tobago, pour sa brillante élection à la présidence de la Neuvième Session du CDCC, où il ne manquera pas de mettre en valeur les éminentes qualités qui lui ont valu cette distinction. Nous sommes certains que sous son habile direction ce dixième anniversaire du CDCC restera à jamais gravé dans nos mémoires.

C'est pour moi un grand honneur, Monsieur le Ministre, de vous inviter à prendre place en tant que Président de la Neuvième Session du CDCC.

Address by the Honourable Errol Mahabir,
Minister of External Affairs of
the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

I wish to join in extending a very warm welcome to you all to this inaugural ceremony of the tenth anniversary session of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee.

I thank the members most sincerely for the honour which they have bestowed upon me and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in electing me to preside over this session of the Committee. I wish to assure you that with your assistance and advice I will strive to achieve a successful conclusion to our common deliberations.

I pay tribute to the outgoing Chairman, the Foreign Minister of Haiti, Mr. Jean-Robert Estimé, for his guidance and leadership over the eighth session of our Committee.

The Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee was conceived as a mechanism for the fulfilment of a policy designed to achieve the optimum utilization of the resources available to our subregion and to promote social and economic development in member countries.

It is therefore appropriate, as we meet ten years after its establishment, to review its work and to examine its performance as an institution for co-operation and co-ordination within the regional framework: to address the need for a more co-ordinated and integrated approach to activities in the region; and to seek to ensure that the Caribbean subregion be given adequate and priority attention in any policy of resource allocation.

We are particularly honoured today to have with us the distinguished Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, the Honourable George Chambers, and the distinguished Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, both of whom have played an important role in the work and progress of the Committee.

We are also honoured by the presence of the Executive Secretary of ECLAC, Mr. Norberto Gonzalez and the Foreign Minister of Uruguay, Mr. Enrique Iglesias, who for some 18 years served as Executive Secretary of ECLAC during which period the CDCC was established.

Mr. Chambers has kindly consented to introduce the Secretary-General who will give the inaugural address. Before he does so, I wish to announce the Bureau of our Committee which has been constituted after appropriate consultations. In addition to the Chairman, they are:

First Vice Chairman:	The Foreign Minister of Cuba, His Excellency, Mr. Isidoro Malmierca Peoli
Second Vice Chairman:	The Representative of the Governor for External Relations - U.S. Virgin Islands, Mr. Carlyle Corbin
Rapporteur:	The Foreign Minister of Barbados, His Excellency, Mr. Louis Tull

Statement by the Honourable George Chambers,
Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Mr. Secretary-General,
Honourable Prime Minister,
Honourable Ministers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with immense pleasure that I extend a formal welcome to you on behalf of the Government and people of Trinidad and Tobago.

We in the Caribbean have great admiration for the advocacy which you, Mr. Secretary-General, have demonstrated for the causes of the developing world and your determined search for solutions to global and regional conflicts in the interest of peace and stability in the world. We wish to assure you of our continued support in your discharge of the onerous duties and myriad complex assignments of your office.

Your visit to Trinidad and Tobago to formally open this tenth anniversary session of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC) is, in our view, a clear indication of the importance which you attach to the efforts of Governments in the Caribbean region at socio-economic advancement. Your distinguished presence here is a source of encouragement to us all and can only serve to strengthen our resolve to pursue the developmental objectives which we have set ourselves.

As you are no doubt aware, the CDCC came into being largely through the instrumentality of my predecessor, the late Dr. Eric Williams, and in direct response to his persistent quest for co-ordinated regional approaches to the solution of our economic and social ills. I consider it fitting that while in Trinidad and Tobago you will join with us in honouring the memory of the man through whose initiative the CDCC was born. I refer to the fact that you will deliver the third Eric Williams memorial lecture this evening.

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the formation of the CDCC, it is only appropriate that we collectively pause and reflect. We should ask some pertinent questions about our achievements to date, our shortcomings and the directions which we should take in the future. More importantly, we should remind ourselves of the vision which inspired the founding of the organisation. I respectfully submit that it was the perception of the uniqueness of the Caribbean condition - related to, yet separate and distinct from, the global Latin American experience. I call on members of CDCC to rededicate themselves to keeping that vision alive within the international community.

No one will gainsay that the world economic environment has been particularly harsh since our institution was founded here in Port-of-Spain. The realities of economic survival highlight the profound desirability of a greater degree of regional co-operation but, ironically, also pose a serious threat to achieving that objective. The experience of the Caribbean Community well illustrates this dilemma.

We cannot take comfort from any prospect that in the foreseeable future there will be an easing of world economic conditions to our advantage. Against this background, therefore, it would seem desirable for the ministerial meeting to focus on identifying a limited number of critical activities on which the resources available to the CDCC will be concentrated over the next few years. While not losing sight of the guiding principles contained in the Constituent Declaration, this strategy may produce more meaningful results than an approach which is less discriminating.

Despite the fact that progress may have been slower than we expected, I feel reasonably confident that the CDCC has helped to sustain the spirit of co-operation in the region, even in these difficult times. It is not without significance that the name of the United Nations Economic Commission for this region was recently changed to specifically identify the Caribbean. It should be our aim to build on these advances through more active co-operation in the years ahead as we seek to achieve those ideals enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, namely:

- to promote social progress and better standards of living;
- to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours;
- to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security.

Be assured, Mr. Secretary-General, that in this endeavour we look forward to your much valued advice.

I wish to extend to all of you my best wishes for an enjoyable stay in Trinidad and Tobago.

Speech delivered by His Excellency, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar,
Secretary-General of the United Nations

Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me, as Secretary-General of the United Nations, to address this session of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee. The pleasure is enhanced by the fact that we are celebrating the tenth anniversary of a unique international body which brings together all the countries of the Caribbean in their effort to improve the well-being of their peoples through international co-operation.

This anniversary is, in fact, a testimonial to the vision and statesmanship of Dr. Eric Williams, who saw clearly the need for a co-operation mechanism encompassing the entire Caribbean region. It was here in Trinidad that the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America called for the establishment of the CDCC ten years ago. The venue chosen for the observance of the conclusion of the first decade of CDCC is, therefore, most apposite. I would like to express the gratitude of the United Nations to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago for hosting the Secretariat of CDCC and for providing it invaluable material support. The augmentation of this Secretariat during the last ten years is indicative of the special importance which the United Nations attaches to the Caribbean region.

The United Nations has been closely involved in the political and economic development of the Caribbean countries and it shares their pride in the establishment and maintenance of their democratic institutions. When the Economic Commission for Latin America was established in 1948. Only three of its original 25 members were from the Caribbean. Today, with the name of the Commission having been changed from ECLA to ECLAC - the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean - 16 of its 40 members are from this region as well as all four of its associate members. In connection with the important

status of this subregion, may I also mention here with great appreciation the active role which Caribbean countries have played and the respect your delegates have won in the principal organs of the United Nations. As it happens, Trinidad and Tobago currently holds the Presidency of the Security Council.

Co-operation at the regional and subregional level is one of the essentials for the solution of international social and economic problems: it is this principle which is the basis of the establishment of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean as of the other four regional commissions. The General Assembly has consistently expressed its wish that the regional commissions should function as the main economic and social development centres within the United Nations system for their respective regions. Their task is to assist developing countries at the request of the governments concerned in identifying projects and preparing programmes for the common benefit of those countries. They are required to exercise team leadership and responsibility for co-ordination and co-operation at the regional level.

In accord with this mandate, ECLAC has contributed significantly and imaginatively to a fuller understanding of the underdevelopment of the Latin American region and its underlying structural causes. This analysis has led to the definition of policy guidelines that have been developed through the years by means of a continuous exchange of ideas with governments and experts of the region. Although this approach puts much emphasis on industrialization and regional integration, it should be noted that regional integration was never regarded as a substitute for the increase and diversification of exports to world markets. On the contrary, the industrialization process and the intensification of intra-regional trade were perceived as complementary to the efforts to reach extra-regional markets.

The considerations which led to the creation of the regional commissions also underlay the establishment of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee. When Dr. Eric Williams, as Prime Minister, addressed the sixteenth session of ECLA in 1975, he stated that he intended "to pursue at all appropriate levels, the establishment of a Caribbean Council of the Economic Commission for Latin America, to deal specifically with Caribbean issues and circumstances and to embrace all Caribbean governmental entities from Belize to Cayenne irrespective of political status". This perspective was widely supported by other members of the Commission, from the Caribbean, from Central and South America and from outside the region. Without prejudice to the strengthening of Latin American co-ordination, the Commission recognized that special attention must be paid to the needs of the Caribbean countries in the light of their own situation and considering their historical, geographical and cultural identity. Dr. Williams himself stated that the separate recognition of the identity of the Caribbean should not encourage the disruption or fragmentation of the solidarity of the hemisphere.

During its first decade, the CDCC has evolved and adapted its priorities to changing circumstances. Its objectives and functions do not exclude any area of interest to its members. It is a truly multidisciplinary body with a unique vantage point to carry out projects and programmes embracing the entire Caribbean region. Countries of this region require such a comprehensive forum to reinforce their identity, to foster co-operation among themselves, to strengthen regional unity and to forge common positions in their international relations. It offers them a valid corrective to the operation of centrifugal forces which can create tensions and distract progress. The CDCC is a good example of how a large number of relatively small countries can practically attain multilateral co-operation.

The evolution of the CDCC over the decade has been accompanied by important changes in the budgetary and administrative aspects of its secretariat. Its human and material resources have grown significantly through increased appropriations from the United Nations General Assembly and redeployments within the ECLAC system. Moreover, the Port-of-Spain Office has requested and received increasing responsibility for the management of its own affairs. There is always room, of course, for improving the efficiency of an organization and I trust that will remain a constant objective. However, we should not lose sight of the important progress which has been made in providing the CDCC with the secretariat support which it requires to meet its goals.

The United Nations will maintain the focus on providing support to the promotion of co-operation among the Caribbean countries as agreed upon by themselves. While it stands ready to render as best as its resources permit the assistance that is requested by the member countries. The governments of the subregion also have to demonstrate their willingness to co-operate and take the necessary initiatives in this regard. It is for the Governments to make a better and fuller utilization of the United Nations and other international organizations in their collective endeavour to promote the development of this subregion.

The CDCC is one organization among several and hence must carefully determine what activities are best carried out within its framework, and what should be left to other regional or international organizations. The resources available to the United Nations as well as those which can be mobilized within each of the Caribbean countries are far too meagre to permit the luxury of competition between organizations or the duplication of efforts. I believe that more can be done to improve collaboration and co-ordination among the organizations of the United Nations system in the challenging tasks of development and international economic co-operation.

I would like to urge the member Governments of the CDCC to continue and intensify their active support of this common regional body, so that it can fulfil more effectively the role they have assigned to it. I repeat that regional co-operation and integration, despite all the difficulties involved, are essential conditions for economic development in the Caribbean.

Speech delivered by the Honourable James P. Mitchell,
Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

It is with much pleasure, speaking on behalf of the Organisation of the Eastern Caribbean States, that I associate myself and the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines with the words of welcome already addressed to you, distinguished Secretary-General, on this your first visit to the Caribbean.

I wish to thank the Government and people of Trinidad and Tobago for the warm hospitality extended in hosting this ninth session of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

The occasion is most appropriate in that the CDCC was born here in Trinidad, out of an initiative asserted by the late Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago.

Your visit, Mr. Secretary-General, focuses attention on the work of the CDCC and on your own efforts to solve the historical dispute that exists between Guyana and Venezuela. I wish to state that OECS Governments support you in the application of your good offices in seeking to resolve this territorial dispute.

The CDCC is an acknowledgement of the Caribbean today as a group of people that shared a common historical experience, irrespective of the language or culture of the metropolitan power that happened to administer its separate parts.

That Caribbean has now evolved into the group of independent states which in the Constituent Declaration of the CDCC identified the scope for activities which could be pursued jointly, for the mutual advantage, and with respect for the principles of national sovereignty.

It is worth recalling on this occasion the Constituent Declaration adopted in the first session of CDCC. We find in it the sentiments, and I quote:

"Determined to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of their peoples for development and progress declare their political will and their resolution to carry out a policy for the optimum utilization of the available resources of the subregion, thus promoting its economic and social development, and advancing progressively towards better co-ordination of their countries economies in the future".

It is significant that in pursuing that objective the participating countries would "observe the principles of sovereignty, self-determination, national independence, mutual benefit, solidarity and non-discrimination on account of differing social, political and economic systems, in all co-operation activities undertaken among the countries of the Caribbean".

Strict observance of these principles constitutes the foundation of the Organization and provides the basis for its continued existence.

The programme that has been pursued within the CDCC is reflective of the realization by its members of the commonality and magnitude of the problems engendered by a similar historical past and of a mutual commitment and resolve to address the problems and assail the barriers constructed by the past.

But this edifice of the CDCC rests on foundations that are the countries comprising the CDCC - some quite large, others very small. So that in looking at the CDCC, it is also very necessary to consider its constituents. And although it is often reiterated that all the countries comprising the CDCC have common problems, it is a fact of life that these problems are more harsh and more intractable the smaller the country. What is more, the particular problems that derive from smallness variously emanated as small internal markets, diseconomies of scale, and narrow range of resources are combined with other

problems that are specifically related to our countries' characteristics as islands, especially problems of transport, problems of the environment related to fragility of the eco-systems, and the lack of opportunity to take advantage of external economies like linking with the service networks of neighbouring states (as is often done by small continental countries) thereby reducing the relative costs for basic infrastructure. Added to this is that the natural disasters to which island-states are prone tend to destroy whole economies in an extremely short period of time.

There is, therefore, a strong case for devising a particular programme addressed to the problems of small island developing countries, and as you know, the countries on whose behalf I speak, typically have populations about 100,000 and land areas in the range of 100 to 700 square kilometres.

In addition to these problems I have already mentioned, it must be taken into account that there also are special problems of our development. There are the inherent constraints of limited resources and capital, deriving from small size and small populations in relative terms. And indeed, small as our populations may be, their density exerts great pressure on their limited resources, and consequently there is little opportunity for the creation of domestic savings.

The small-island developing countries have now been artificially graduated into a GDP income per capita bracket which threatens to disqualify them from further access to concessionary resources of international funding agencies. The graduation is based on statistical concepts rather than the actual productive capability of the islands. It does not take into account their special developmental circumstances and infrastructural needs which are a sine qua non of their further development and future stability.

It might be thought that our islands might be able to base development on a relatively plentiful supply of labour. Indeed at first sight there does seem to be plentiful supplies of labour. However, this advantage is vitiated by a combination of high rates of population increase together with high emigration rates which yield a growing but young population. It is those with education, skills and experience who can most easily emigrate, leaving behind a population with relatively large numbers under twenty and over fifty years of age. A seemingly paradoxical situation of high unemployment combined with shortages of managerial and technical personnel results.

And then there are difficulties in transportation and communication. Physical isolation means that every island requires a harbour and airport plus suitable communication facilities. For islands that must encourage tourism or export of perishable products, the standards of these facilities must be quite high. But achieving economies of scale with low levels of population is very difficult.

The particular situation of island developing countries is emphasised by the several General Assembly resolutions which accord with the creation within CDCC of a special programme of support to the OECS group.

This programme, in addition to facilitating access by these countries to technical expertise within the ECLAC and United Nations System, would also serve the purpose of achieving close co-operation between our countries and the countries of Latin America.

But this by itself is not enough to address the situation. What is required is for the United Nations itself and the United Nations System at large to establish within its budgetary provisions and operational activities a specific set of programmes defined and oriented to the problems of the small island developing countries.

In respect of the problems which the island communities in the Caribbean face on graduation from entitlement to concessionary aid, I wish to draw attention that it was the United Nations and its decolonization thrust which created opportunities for independence and the creation of small island nations. The development of these island communities cannot be left in limbo by international agencies. A special responsibility is therefore placed on the United Nations system to assist in ensuring that this does not occur.

May I suggest that as the workload of the Decolonization Committee lessens, funds at its disposal should now be used to address the problems of small island developing nations which this committee has helped to create.

I wish again to thank you, Secretary-General, for being our guest in the Caribbean at this meeting directed to the economic and social development of our countries.

CLOSING CEREMONY

Address by the Honourable Errol Mahabir,
Minister of External Affairs of
the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Mr. Applewhite,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have come to the end of the tenth anniversary session and I wish, first of all, to thank all my colleagues for the effort which they made to ensure that this meeting has come to a successful conclusion. At the opening session, I indicated that I hoped that with your advice and assistance I'd be able to bring it to a successful conclusion and this assistance and advice was forthcoming in large measure, and I want to thank those members upon whose vast experience I was able to draw over the past two days. Of course, I was able to rely on some of the training I had in dealing with intractable labour problems, dealing with some of the issues, but I want to thank you all very sincerely for the advice and assistance which you gave during the course of our deliberations. We have come to the end of - or we have reached an important milestone in the life of our organisation. We have, at this meeting, examined our performance and we have determined what of the past is relevant for the future; we are now seeking to establish guidelines in areas of weakness; and in this regard, I attach great importance to the work of the review committee, which is going to report to the tenth session, hopefully to ensure the foundations upon which the CDCC has been built will be strengthened and that the committee will play a more meaningful role in the economic and social development in the region.

I also wish to take this opportunity to thank the secretariat for the quality of work which it did to ensure the success of this conference. I wish to convey through the secretariat our deep appreciation to all members of the staff who worked long hours to ensure that the documents were prepared in time. I also wish to thank the personnel who provided all the services which made this conference possible. We have an important year ahead of us and we all look forward to the tenth session in Cuba, when all of us will be there to ensure that the CDCC remains a focal point in regional co-operation and development.

So I thank you members once more; I wish you a very safe journey back home and I hope that in the period that you have left here, you will do those things that you are accustomed doing when you visit foreign countries.

Thank you very much.

Working Translation of Speech delivered by His Excellency,
Mr. Jean-Robert Estimé, Minister of External Affairs, Haiti
which was undertaken for ease of reference

Mr. Secretary-General,
Messieurs Ministers and Heads of Delegations,
The Representatives of International and Regional Institutions,
Mesdames and Messieurs Delegates,

It is a great pleasure for me in my capacity of President of the Eighth Regular Session of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee to inaugurate the work of this Ninth Ministerial Session of CDCC.

I speak for the different delegations reunited here, in expressing our profound gratitude to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago for the warmth and friendliness of their welcome which has been extended to us since our arrival in this beautiful country, which represents one of the highest virtues of Caribbean unity.

It is my greatest honour and a real pleasure to welcome in our presence the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. We are particularly conscious of this recognition, which is undeniably encouraging for the numerous efforts made by the CDCC. We wish to take the opportunity of his visit to praise him for his stance and his many efforts displayed in reinforcing the decision-making mechanisms of the United Nations with the aim of allowing our Organisation to accomplish in an efficient manner the great political, economic and social tasks of the time.

I would equally like to thank His Excellency, Mr. Enrique Iglesias, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uruguay and the former Executive Secretary of ECLAC as well as Mr. Norberto González, his successor and head of this prestigious organisation, who have honoured us with their presence and to all those who in one way or another have contributed to the preparation of this meeting. The same sentiments are extended to Mr. Clyde Applewhite, in particular, and all the members of the CDCC Secretariat for their unending support in the execution of our work.

This session of the CDCC corresponds to an anniversary that must not pass without mention and which must be closely associated with the memory of a great leader of the Caribbean, I speak of Sir Eric Williams, former Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago whose contribution was a determining factor in the creation of the CDCC. In fact, it is here in Port-of-Spain, 10 years ago, in May 1975 at the Sixteenth Session of ECLA, that the decision was taken, by resolution 358, to establish the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee with two main objectives:

1. To promote the development of the subregion;
2. To serve as a mechanism for co-ordinating and harmonising the efforts of each country, with a view to increasing co-operation within the Caribbean and between the Caribbean and Latin America.

This anniversary is above all, an occasion for us to reflect on the past, the difficulties encountered, the shortcomings experienced and the obstacles which have confronted this institution.

It is also an occasion to recall that the CDCC constitutes above all, an act of profound confidence in the destiny of our region, a manifestation of our common willingness to multiply the initiatives in order to foster, in pluralism and mutual respect, the co-ordination of development policies, the growth of exchanges and the complementarity of economies.

Finally, it is a time to reaffirm forcefully our sincere conviction that the Caribbean with its thirty million inhabitants distributed over a geographic area of 600 thousand square kilometres unquestionably forms, beyond their particular local differences, a profoundly homogeneous entity which has its origin in a grouping of historical and common ethnic factors and which represents a unique synthesis of African, European and American cultures.

A retrospective view of these last ten years convinces us that we have been successful: The Caribbean, through the sovereign will of the nations of which it is composed, affirms more and more each day its determination to fully assume its collective identity and to reinforce its unity, despite certain sometimes artificial barriers which we are gradually forced to overcome, by knowing and understanding each other better.

Unfortunately, alongside this self-satisfaction discernable from a global point of view, we ought to admit that the immense possibilities of horizontal co-operation revealed at the first session of CDCC in Havana still remain largely unexplored. The formulation and execution of multinational development projects in the spheres of industry, tourism, transport, fishing, energy or agriculture, the stimulation of trade, are still in the planning stages.

Thus the work programme implemented during 1984-85, while reflecting the vitality of CDCC and the devotion of the secretariat, falls short of our legitimate aspirations. Among the points to be considered, it is important to note the work undertaken in the area of information, marked by the increase in sectoral networks, the automation of internal activities and the creation of new posts in the Caribbean Documentation Centre. It becomes imperative, from this point of view, to formulate a regional information policy which will allow the standardization of methodologies and the better integration of different sectoral networks as well as national systems. Likewise, functional relations with other bodies such as UNESCO, OLADE, WIPO should constitute a priority to be developed as we go along.

The Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST), which represents one of the most useful operational mechanisms at our disposal, has not been inactive over the years and will present its report after its plenary session scheduled for the end of this year. On the other hand with respect to co-ordination in planning, we must express appreciation for case studies undertaken and assistance provided to certain countries in collaboration with ILPES.

The problem of the removal of language barriers, on the other hand, is not progressing as rapidly as we would have hoped, but remains one of the main concerns of our Committee.

On cultural affairs where the perspectives seem unlimited and where without doubt lies the epicentre of Caribbean unity, financial constraints have prevented the implementation of numerous projects. Besides it is gratifying to observe the interest of the Committee in the integration of women in development, to take cognizance of the number of documents dealing with the subject, and to mention the holding in Havana within recent times

of a special meeting of the Caribbean preparatory to the world conference of the United Nations devoted to this theme which is to take place in Nairobi this year.

Two other points ought to be remembered: On the one hand the publication of trade procedure guides, the inventory of exportable products and the situation of the balance of payments of Caribbean countries, and on the other hand the creation of the ECLAC/CELADE Demographic Unit as well as the preparation of the first long term demographic programme.

In brief, one can advance very schematically that three essential characteristics seem to mark the present performance of our Committee. First, an undeniable success in the area of collection, processing and dissemination of information in several subject matter areas, which constitutes the basis to any concrete action. Then a dramatic lack of adequate financing which blocks the majority of initiatives and reflects the weakness of our means in the face of the large number of objectives envisaged. Then, a large consensus as regards a certain orientation that ought to be given to our future interventions so as to favour the strengthening of relations with Latin America and to accord priority to the needs of small countries.

That is, therefore a brief inventory of our recent activities which ought to incite us to redouble our efforts.

Above all, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that it is seeking to speak with one single voice and reaffirming its unity of action that the Caribbean would at the same time reinforce its presence on the international chess-board as a whole and consequently to increase significantly its negotiating strength vis-à-vis extra-regional partners.

Caribbean unity, far from being uniquely an end in itself, ought then to be understood as being an irreplaceable factor of the joint mobilisation of our strengths with a view to guaranteeing the chance of a sustained socio-economic development in an international context that continues to instil in the group of developing countries some serious misgivings.

In effect if optimism seems to have returned in certain of the main industrialized countries, taking into account a strong recovery, it does not lessen the fact that for most of the developing nations of the region their present situation is one characterized by grave uncertainty.

Latin America and the Caribbean whose GDP had fallen by 3.3 and 5.3% in 1982 and 1983 respectively experienced an appreciable increase in economic activity, regaining in 1984 a real income per capita of the level it experienced four years ago and the gross domestic investment, after having fallen sharply by 13% in 1982, has served as the basis of a net correction of that direction. Meanwhile, in spite of the delicate recovery of tourism activities, the Caribbean continues to face the traditional difficulties that derive from its extreme vulnerability to the vagueries of external factors, the demise of the markets for its export products of which sugar constitutes the best example.

For most of our countries, the terms of trade have continued to deteriorate and in spite of the attempt to promote the export of manufactured goods brought about by the implementation of the Caribbean Basin Initiative, the revenues from foreign trade still remain in a large number of cases below the levels of 1980. Besides, no matter how feasible it may be, the model of growth proposed by the CBI would not be able to induce a true process of self-sustained development in our countries so strongly characterized by structural imbalances, above all, since it is accompanied by only a few insignificant transfers of resources, as compared with the enormous sums committed to other regions of the world.

It seems to us that the time has come for a more open international approach to the needs of the Caribbean, which assumes in parallel with the stimulation of private investments a flow of public aid both bilaterally and multilaterally with a view to facilitating the success of adjustment policies and to permitting a sustained take off into growth.

We have noted with interest recent declarations made in Paris by the donor countries on the subject of the Caribbean and we hope that these promises of substantial increase in aid directed towards this region would not remain as a dead letter as has too often been the case in the past.

It seems important to us above all, that the large industrialized nations, which are more particularly concerned for the future of this region, should out of the absolute necessity to respond, make an impact through more ambitious and better articulated programmes on the demands of economic growth and social progress of the region. This is so because definitely if for this small group of countries in this strategic zone the donors show themselves incapable of proving in the years to come that they are responsive to the challenges of our time one would be entitled to ask where and when they will ever be able to do so.

In addition it is indispensable that South-South co-operation should receive a second lease on life at the regional level. Certain facts recently registered bear testimony in this respect of a growing will to reverse the negative trends having affected through the crisis the development of intraregional exchanges. More particularly, I should stress the process of widening of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to include three new countries in an observer capacity. These countries are: Suriname, the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

Equally in this International Year of Youth, it is relevant to stress the initiatives necessary to stimulate cultural exchanges among the youths of our different countries, following the watch words of "peace, participation and development" that have been adopted to commemorate this event. The Republic of Haiti would wish this matter to be the subject of an in-depth discussion during the course of the present session.

Above all, the coincidence between the Tenth Anniversary of the CDCC and the Fortieth Anniversary of the Organization of the United Nations leads us naturally to evoke the great problems of these days, the establishment of an international order founded on respect of law and the three principles of equality, justice and sovereignty. These principles are accepted universally.

For us, among the situations which constitute the most flagrant violations of fundamental rights and of human dignity, the system of apartheid is certainly the worst of all. The Republic of Haiti, which fifty years ago, had denounced the scandal of the massacre of the Hottentots in South-East Africa wishes sincerely that the entire Caribbean would adopt a solemn resolution calling on the international community to strengthen the sanctions capable of forcing the regime of Pretoria to put an end to this state of affairs which is a cause of shame to all humanity.

For its part, the Republic of Haiti is resolved more than ever to do all in its power to foster a dynamic and effective regional co-operation based on reciprocal understanding, mutual respect and solidarity, and with a view mainly to stimulating cultural exchanges as well as economic and trade exchanges. The Republic of Haiti is equally engaged with the same conviction in the pursuit of a process of democratization which is presently entering a decisive stage, since at the time of speaking, the Haitian Government is presenting to the Legislative Chamber in Port-au-Prince a constitutional amendment creating the post of Prime Minister as well as an initiative of law regulating the functioning of political parties in such a manner as to establish definitively the bases of a pluralist, representative and liberal democracy.

Article 5 of the Constituent Declaration dictates "that the President of the Committee is the Minister designated, by the host country and elected by the Committee". As you know, Trinidad and Tobago has been elected to the presidency of the Technical Level Meeting. Consequently, I would like to congratulate His Excellency, Mr. Errol Mahabir, Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, on his election to the presidency of the Ninth Session of the CDCC, where I am sure he will graciously do justice to the distinction bestowed on him. We are certain that under his competent leadership this Tenth Anniversary of the CDCC will always be engraved in our memories.

It is my honour, Mr. Minister, to invite you to take up your position as President of the Ninth Session of the CDCC.