



29

The Government of Barbados

Statement on Inter-linkages, Cross Cutting Issues and Means of Implementation

To the

**Inter-governmental Preparatory Meeting
For the 17th Session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD)**

27 February 2009

Madame Chair,

Barbados has established a National Strategic Plan, one of the major tenets of which is the building of a Green Economy by strengthening the physical infrastructure and preserving the environment. In pursuit of this goal we have initiated steps to develop Indicators of the Green Economy, monitor and adapt as necessary our consumption and production patterns and build partnerships with non- traditional sectors such as the banking and financial sector as well as industry and manufacturing. Government is also a key advocate of corporate social responsibility.

Madame Chair

Barbados' economy relies on a number of service based industries which have provided infrastructural growth and development. Indeed, the development of a relatively strong tourism industry is one of the successes of the post independence period. The people of Barbados are cognisant however, of the erratic nature of international travel and trade as demonstrated by recent global events. We have always endeavoured to maintain a strong agricultural sector in order to ensure a measure of food security, provide traditional foods for our citizens, prevent land degradation, generate commercial activity in the rural space, and maintain the aesthetic beauty of the countryside. As it is with many of our neighbours, our culture has been inextricably linked with agriculture.

The linkage between agriculture and the type of tourism which is promoted in Barbados is very strong. We encourage our visitors to share in our rich heritage, eat our traditional foods and enjoy our coastline.

In order to maintain this balance the Ministry of Agriculture has to constantly deal with a number of issues which challenge our technical expertise and are also very costly to manage.

These issues include constant landslides and erosion in the Scotland District which represents one-seventh of the total land area of the country. Such occurrences threaten agriculture in those areas as well as the associated housing and road network of rural people.

Another is the high cost of maintaining surveillance units and laboratories to protect animal health and to assure food quality for both nationals and visitors as well as to provide services to neighbouring countries. Labs must also maintain a stringent Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) system with a view to meeting international standards.

Other areas of concern include the maintenance and restoration of near-shore reefs subject to damage as a result of soil and chemical pollution, the control of invasive species of pests and the harvesting and storage of water in a densely populated and water scarce country.

Madame Chair

Barbados anticipates that CSD 17 will provide a platform for us to have meaningful dialogue with other governments, civil society and major groups including research institutions, universities and the like which can benefit from our experiences and at the same time allow us to find solutions to those key issues that confront us. We believe that it is only through the establishment of such partnerships that we will achieve sustainable growth.

Thank you Madame Chair.