

Mr. President,
Heads of State,
Heads of Government,
Distinguished delegates:

There are defining moments in human affairs when differences dividing countries and cultures are laid aside in pursuit of a higher common purpose, that of benefitting all humanity. Our modern era has witnessed two such moments: the Millennium Development Declaration in 2000 and now the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

The gathering of world leaders to adopt eight international development goals some 15 years ago, represented unprecedented hope at the dawn of a new millennium. That initiative highlighted the intention of the global community to promote the eradication of poverty and hunger, sustained economic growth, and sustainable development.

Successive administrations in Barbados have pursued the goal of eradicating many of the social and economic contradictions which we inherited from our colonial past. In that connection, the administration over which I have the honour to preside has crafted the vision of

creating “*a Barbados that is socially balanced, economically viable, environmentally sound and characterised by good governance.*” That vision brings us squarely in line with the ideals embodied in the international development agenda which this special session of the United Nations has been convened to endorse. I am pleased to report, therefore, that we have, in most cases met the targets of which the MDGs are so precise and so humanitarian an expression.

In CARICOM, also, we developed a set of region-specific MDGs to cater to the unique realities of our region. We sought to provide greater relevance to the needs of our member states incorporating certain issues relating to gender; by specifying also targets on violence; and by including indicators on chronic non-communicable diseases. Our progress in achieving the MDGs while being buttressed by our dreams was, understandably, limited by our capacity to finance our developmental objectives.

Mr. President,

Sad to say, as has been the case in other parts of the world, the transformative promise of the MDGs was not fully realized for our

region. The progress achieved though commendable, has been uneven and we are still a long way from achieving sustainable development.

The issue which faces us now is to effect the transition from the MDGs to the SDGs. With the citizens in our respective countries impatient for progress, we here must invest our collective intellectual capital, and the technology at our disposal, to design the tools and devise the mechanisms to realize the promise of our stated goals.

Our outcome document “***Transforming our World by 2030: A new Agenda for Global Action***”, provides us with the blueprint to achieve this transformation. But that blueprint must be translated into reality, and take us seamlessly from the 8 Goals and 18 targets of the MDGs to the 17 Goals and 169 targets of the SDGs.

The unprecedented scope of **Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development** rises to the challenge of today's interconnected world, and is firmly rooted in the three dimensions of sustainable development - the economic, the environmental and the social. Importantly, it is undergirded by a people-centred and planet-sensitive ethos with People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership at its core.

Mr. President,

The Third International Conference on Financing for Development, **the Addis Ababa Action Agenda**, specifies the policies and actions to finance the sustainable development of our countries. Now is the time for us to address frontally the need to develop transparent measurements of progress that reach far beyond the narrow scope of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita. Small Island Developing States like ours should not be punished for the limited development that we have been able to achieve, very often against stubborn and unyielding odds.

The Third International Conference of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), held last year in Samoa, built on the platforms of the prior Barbados Programme of Action (1994) and the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation (2005). It reinforced unequivocally the status of SIDS as a special case for sustainable development in view of their unique and particular vulnerabilities.

These vulnerabilities range from the long term effects of climate change to the ravages of more frequent, intense and destructive natural disasters. The recent devastation in Dominica on a national scale, left in the wake of the passage of Tropical Storm Erika, reminds us starkly of the serious recurring challenges that our small islands face, not only in the Caribbean, but also in the Pacific and elsewhere where Small Island States can be found.

Barbados and other CARICOM countries are firmly of the view that the existential threat posed to SIDS by climate change can only be tackled by a comprehensive international effort grounded in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). For us sustainable development and climate change are inextricably linked. We are looking forward, therefore, to an ambitious outcome from the 21st Conference of the Parties in December. Let us use the momentum of this Summit to ensure the adoption of a meaningful Accord in Paris.

In addition, our region desperately requires a strategy of debt relief in order to create more fiscal space and engineer much needed economic development. I urge, in this regard, consideration of a suite of proposals by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

(ECLAC) as we seek to realise the SDGs set out in Agenda 2030. A re-examination of the bases for graduation from access to concessional finance for the countries of our region remains an urgent necessity. As we look towards the future, it is important, indeed necessary, for previously agreed commitments to be kept, and for programmes and actions to be executed.

I am heartened that the United Nations, on the strength of its universal membership, legitimacy and comprehensive mandate, is poised to play a pivotal role over the next fifteen years in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet.

But we cannot put new wine into old wineskins. As we consider the post-2015 development agenda, adequate, consistent and predictable financial support must be mobilised and allocated for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The acid test of the value of these Goals will be their impact on the quality of life of ordinary men, women and children, everywhere.

Mr. President,

The United Nations was created at a time when the world was grappling with the political and economic consequences of a global war. Seventy years later, though much has changed, the achievement of world peace is still a challenge. Development needs peace. The Post-2015 Development Agenda is our compass as we embark on this new phase of the journey towards a better world for all. With political will and dedicated action, **Agenda 2030** will ensure a safe and secure future for current and future generations. Let us not let this historic opportunity slip from our grasp.

I thank you.