



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/43/399
10 June 1988

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-third session
Items 4, 22, 29, 35, 36, 37, 40, 48,
63, 64, 70, 82, 83, 86, 103 and
137 of the preliminary list*

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DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF GOOD-NEIGHBOURLINESS
BETWEEN STATES

Letter dated 9 June 1988 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the
Permanent Mission of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of the Communiqué of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee of Ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs of the Caribbean Community, held at Port of Spain on 20 and 21 May 1988, with the request that it be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under items 4, 22, 29, 35, 36, 37, 40, 48, 63, 64, 70, 82, 83, 86, 103 and 137 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Deryck Lance MURRAY
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

ANNEX

Communiqué of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee
of Ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs of the Caribbean
Community, held at Port of Spain on 20 and 21 May 1988

The Standing Committee of Ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) held its Fourteenth Meeting at Port of Spain on 20 and 21 May 1988. The Meeting was preceded by a Preparatory Meeting of Officials on 17 and 18 May 1988. The Meeting was attended, for the first time, by the 12 Member States comprising membership of the Standing Committee. The Heads of Delegation were: Hon. Lester Bird, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Antigua and Barbuda; Hon. James Moultrie, Junior Minister in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Bahamas; Sir James Tudor, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Barbados; Hon. Dean Barrow, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Economic Development, Belize; H.E. Mr. Franklin Baron, High Commissioner, Dominica; Mr. Kenneth Modeste, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Grenada; Cde. Rashleigh Jackson, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Guyana; Senator the Hon. Jeanette Grant-Woodham, Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Industry, Jamaica; Mr. Calvin Farier, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, St. Kitts and Nevis; Hon. Neville Cenac, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Saint Lucia; Senator the Hon. Stuart Nanton, Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister, St. Vincent and the Grenadines; and Senator the Hon. Dr. Sahadeo Basdeo, Minister of External Affairs and International Trade, Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Roderick Rainford, Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community, declared the Meeting open.

The Meeting was addressed by Cde. Rashleigh Jackson, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guyana, as outgoing Chairman of the Standing Committee. Senator the Hon. Dr. Sahadeo Basdeo, Minister of External Affairs and International Trade of Trinidad and Tobago, delivered the inaugural address.

Minister Basdeo, in welcoming delegates to Trinidad and Tobago, commended to his colleagues the idea that the Community should make a concerted effort to project a united front internationally during 1988, the Fifteenth Anniversary Year of the Community. He asserted that the profile resulting from such a united front would enable the Community to take its rightful place in the international arena.

Minister Basdeo said: "We need to guard against permitting our spirit of individualism and independence to stand in the way of all we can achieve through commonality of purpose. Let us profit from the example of other regional groupings, most of which comprise larger and more powerful States than ourselves, and which have found the truth of the old adage that in unity lies strength".

Senator the Hon. Stuart Nanton, Parliamentary Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, replied on behalf of visiting delegations.

Senator the Hon. Dr. Sahadeo Basdeo was elected Chairman of the Meeting and the new Chairman in Office of the Standing Committee.

INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SITUATION

Disarmament

The Ministers expressed satisfaction at the signing of the Treaty between the Soviet Union and the United States, banning all intermediate-range nuclear missiles from Europe. The Ministers noted that the ratification and strict implementation of this Treaty would remove from Europe a whole class of dangerous weaponry.

They remained seized, however, of the need for advances made in the INF Treaty to be expanded in terms of its geographical scope as well as in the number of weapons systems encompassed. In this regard, they took account of efforts being made in other forums to conclude additional disarmament agreements, including agreements on chemical, conventional and long-range nuclear weapons.

The Standing Committee recognized the possible positive impact of these and other examples of the relaxation in East-West tension for global peace and security and agreed to keep under review the possible implications of these changes for the Caribbean Community.

The Ministers noted with satisfaction the convening of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development under the auspices of the United Nations in New York from 24 August to 11 September 1987.

They commended the adoption by consensus of the final document which underlined the multidimensional links between disarmament and development. They expressed the hope that it would be possible to build on the foundation in the Action Programme.

The Meeting emphasized the importance of the forthcoming fifteenth special session of the General Assembly, the third special session devoted to disarmament.

They expressed the hope that the session would be successful and would thereby contribute to the halting and reversing of the nuclear arms race and to the promotion of disarmament generally.

Southern Africa

The Ministers noted the intensification of the struggle against apartheid within South Africa as well as the continued acts of aggression by the racist régime against the front-line States of southern Africa.

In particular, they deplored the banning of anti-apartheid organizations within South Africa, the proposed judicial murder of the Sharpeville Six and the recent political assassination of ANC Representative Dulcie September in Paris.

Note was taken of the diplomatic initiatives aimed at bringing the war in southern Angola to an end. The Ministers hoped for a speedy end to the illegal occupation of Namibia by South Africa, and for Namibia's early attainment of independence on the basis of Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

The Ministers took note of the fact that States members of CARICOM were also participating in other initiatives - including those undertaken by the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States and the Commonwealth - to help eradicate the scourge of apartheid.

The Ministers also noted the failure of certain Western Powers to implement fully trade and economic sanctions against South Africa and urged those States to cease providing comfort to the Pretoria régime and to support the oppressed people of South Africa and Namibia in their just struggle against racist minority rule.

On behalf of the Governments and peoples of the CARICOM States, the Ministers reaffirmed solidarity with the struggle of the peoples of South Africa and Namibia for justice, freedom and peace.

Apartheid in sport

The Ministers reviewed the current status of the International Convention against Apartheid in Sport having regard to the major role that CARICOM countries had played in the discussions leading up to the adoption of the Convention by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1985.

They noted with satisfaction the entry into force on 3 April 1988 of the Convention, which they viewed as yet another international instrument to bring about the isolation of the apartheid régime.

They urged all States that had not yet done so to take the necessary steps, at the earliest opportunity, to become Parties to the Convention.

The Middle East

The Standing Committee considered the current situation in the Middle East and expressed concern at the loss of life and human rights abuses which continue to take place during the current upheavals in the Occupied Territories. The Ministers viewed these developments as further evidence of the centrality of the Palestinian question in the Middle East crisis. They called for urgent steps to establish peace in the Middle East within the framework of a recognition of the rights of Palestinians to their own homeland, Israel's withdrawal from Occupied Arab lands and the acceptance of the right of all States in the region, including Israel, to live in peace within recognized and secure borders.

The Ministers also expressed regret at the worsening conflict between Iran and Iraq, and their abhorrence at the use of chemical weapons. They reiterated their call to both parties to seek a negotiated settlement of the conflict.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HEMISPHERE

Belize

The Standing Committee reaffirmed its unwavering support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Belize.

The Ministers welcomed the resumption of the negotiating process between Belize and Guatemala, and hoped that the negotiations would produce a solution by which Guatemala recognized Belize's sovereignty and respected its historical and constitutional borders.

Guyana/Venezuela relations

The Ministers noted that relations between Guyana and Venezuela continued to improve, as demonstrated in the expanding and deepening network of bilateral co-operation.

With regard to the controversy between the two countries, the Ministers also noted the reiteration by the Presidents of Guyana and Venezuela of their determination to co-operate fully with the Secretary-General of the United Nations in the fulfilment of the mandate given by article IV (2) of the Geneva Agreement.

Central America

The Ministers reviewed recent developments in Central America and welcomed the significant advances in the peace process since the signing of the Esquipulas II accord.

They commended both the efforts being made by the Central American Governments to achieve national reconciliation and reconstruction and the international political and economic support that Esquipulas II had so far attracted. They also called upon all parties concerned to continue to work consistently towards the final resolution of the conflict.

The Ministers stressed the significance of a number of developments in respect of that subregion, as in other parts of the wider region, which indicated a growing demonstration by regional States of their capacity and determination to find solutions to their own problems. They viewed this phenomenon as a positive development, particularly when seen in the context of external attempts to circumscribe the independence and sovereignty of these States by the imposition of solutions to the region's problems.

The Standing Committee especially commended the initiative of the United Nations in the preparation and approval of a special plan of economic co-operation for Central America, and noted with satisfaction the inclusion of Belize in the plan.

The situation in Panama

The Ministers discussed the recent developments in Panama and reaffirmed the sovereign right of the Panamanian people to determine their own destiny free from external pressures.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS OF THE COMMUNITY

Suriname

The Ministers expressed satisfaction at the restoration of representative democracy in Suriname, following the successful conduct of general elections in November 1987. They looked forward to the strengthening of functional co-operation between the Community and Suriname.

Haiti

The Ministers discussed the situation in Haiti since the January 1988 elections and expressed deep concern that democratic norms had not been respected. They urged that there be a redoubling of efforts towards the democratization of Haiti and the fulfilment of the aspirations of the Haitian people for economic development and respect for human rights.

The Ministers were of the view that Haiti should not be isolated by the international community at such an historical moment but instead should be encouraged to emerge from the economic and political regression of past years.

They reaffirmed their solidarity with the Haitian people in the search for a better future where political and economic rights are duly respected.

The Standing Committee agreed to continue to monitor closely developments in this neighbouring Caribbean country.

Organization of American States

The Ministers reviewed the present position of the Protocol of Cartagena to the Charter of the Organization of American States, and noted that all CARICOM States members of the OAS had ratified the Protocol. They stressed the importance of its early ratification by those OAS member States which have not done so.

The Ministers discussed the administrative and financial situation of the OAS and the need to strengthen OAS technical assistance capabilities.

PRESIDENCY OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Standing Committee of Minister responsible for Foreign Affairs of the Caribbean Community reiterated its endorsement of Dame Nita Barrow as the CARICOM candidate for election to the presidency of the forty-third session of the United

Nations General Assembly. The Ministers noted that while the presidency had been held on nine occasions by the Latin American and Caribbean Group, no CARICOM country had ever had the privilege of representing the region in that capacity.

The Ministers stressed that their current candidature was therefore justly based on the principle of equitable geographical distribution and the strong desire of all CARICOM countries to play their rightful part in the United Nations system within an integrated and cohesive regional grouping. They expressed the hope that consensus on this matter could be achieved within the Latin American and Caribbean Group, and that, in the interest of future regional relations, solidarity would be shown with this legitimate Caribbean aspiration.

ISLAND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The Standing Committee reviewed progress made towards developing a plan of action to deal with the special problems of island developing countries. In this context, the Committee noted the efforts of ECLAC/CDCC and the CARICOM Secretariat and the work being undertaken towards the finalization of a programme which would place emphasis on the following specific characteristics of small island developing countries: their marine space, vulnerability to natural disasters, remoteness and institutional problems of management, and administration.

The Committee noted the need for continued diplomatic efforts to promote increased awareness within the international community of the special problems and needs of the small island developing countries.

CONTROL OF DRUG ABUSE AND TRAFFICKING

The Standing Committee took note of developments in the campaign against drug trafficking and drug abuse in the region.

The Standing Committee noted with concern the tendency on the part of bilateral and multilateral donors to focus on law enforcement and the suppression of trafficking while de-emphasizing strategies to reduce demand and to improve facilities for treatment and rehabilitation.

The Standing Committee reaffirmed the need for the Community to intensify its efforts to tackle the problem at all levels and stressed the importance of the early implementation of the regional drug programme.

LAW OF THE SEA

Ministers reviewed the progress being made by the Preparatory Commission for the International Sea-Bed Authority and for the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, and noted with satisfaction that France, India, Japan and the Soviet Union had been registered as pioneer investors. They considered this action an important step towards the establishment of the Enterprise - the sea-bed-mining arm of the Authority.

They agreed, particularly in the light of the registration, to continue their efforts to encourage all States that have not yet done so to ratify the Convention in order to ensure its entry into force at an early date.

ANTARCTICA

The Ministers received with satisfaction an up-to-date report in relation to Antarctica and agreed to continue to co-ordinate their efforts to ensure that the resources of Antarctica are developed for the benefit of all mankind.

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS

The Ministers noted the continued economic interdependence of States and the impact of developments and policies in the developed countries on the economic, social and political well-being of the developing countries.

The Ministers further noted that growth, development and relief from the debt burden were very dependent on growth and trade liberalization in the developed countries, as well as on financial flows from those countries. This was especially true for such small developing countries as those of the Caribbean Community. They welcomed the initiatives being taken by certain countries and agencies to increase the resources of multilateral institutions and to use the available resources of the surplus generating countries to the benefit of the developing countries.

The Standing Committee stressed, however, that much more needed to be done. It reiterated the call to the international community to increase its support for the efforts being made by the developing countries to generate enough growth to meet both the social and economic needs of their people and their financial commitments to the international community.

DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

An offer by the Government of Saint Lucia to host the Fifteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee of Ministers Responsible for Foreign Affairs from 4 to 9 May 1989 was warmly accepted by the Standing Committee.

The Committee also agreed to hold its sixteenth meeting in St. Vincent and the Grenadines in 1990.
