



Speech

Organization of American States



**LUIGI R. EINAUDI, ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL OF
THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
SECOND HIGH LEVEL MEETING ON THE SPECIAL
SECURITY CONCERNS OF SMALL ISLAND STATES
January 8, 2003 - St. Vincent and the Grenadines**

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On behalf of the Secretary General, César Gaviria, and on behalf of the General Secretariat of the OAS, may I express to the Government and people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines our sincere thanks and appreciation for hosting this meeting and for the warm and genuine hospitality that they have already accorded to all of us.

I should like to recognize Prime Minister Gonsalves for his political leadership in addressing the many problems that confront developing island states, such as St. Vincent and the Grenadines. As a former student leader myself, I rather suspect his activism emanates from his days at the University of the West Indies. Yet most former student activists can only aspire to subsequent intellectual contributions such as those made by the Prime Minister to the development of the Caribbean and to regional cooperation and organization. His wish to see a more united Caribbean fits easily into his concern with the Caribbean's place in the world community, a theme that runs through his two most recent books, *History and the Future: A Caribbean Perspective* and *The Politics of our Caribbean Civilisation*.

Prime Minister Gonsalves addressed a Protocolary Session of the OAS Permanent Council in October 2001. He made it clear that the priority for the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines was twofold:

- (i) the regional security of this hemisphere; and
- (ii) the economic and social stability of the nations within it.

The Prime Minister said, and I quote,

"In a fundamental sense, these twin issues constitute, in this new period, a quintessential security challenge with many-sided dimensions. . . The maintenance and promotion of regional security from the real threat of terrorism cannot be isolated from day-to-day terrors, such as child poverty, HIV/AIDS, natural disasters, illiteracy, and the trafficking in illegal drugs."

These latter issues are hardly the classic military ones, requiring intelligent yet disciplined professional military killers to resolve. To complicate matters, to raise such issues is often seen outside the Caribbean as somehow advocating military role expansion. This frightens liberals and progressives, who see in them fresh excuses for increased military budgets and political interventionism. Nor are conservatives and military professionals any happier, for in these new threats they see either dangerous distractions from the war on terrorism or the expansion of social demands on institutions not equipped to deal with them,

Yet the problem and the challenge will not go away. At the 32nd Regular Session of the General Assembly in June 2002, the Foreign Minister of St. Lucia, Julian Hunte stated that "in many ways this is now a world that no longer really needs small island states." My friend's bluntness startled many in his audience, who were accustomed to a Caribbean-centered optic, especially as the Assembly was taking place in Barbados, itself a small island state, and a country that had served as the host and inspiration for the UN's Meeting on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in 1994. But what the Minister succeeded in driving home was that evolving world conditions in recent years -- and some might say the past century -- have brought more than independence to former colonial

states — they have also brought a wide range of economic, cultural and social changes that have created major problems for small states. What was once critical to the international community — sugar, coffee, sea lines of communication, even geographic location itself — now seems to be in oversupply, secondary, or even to some irrelevant.

The topic of the special security concerns of small island states is not new. As far back as 1980, the OAS recognized the unique development problems of small states, which threatened their survival. And in this context I would like to recognize explicitly the critical support of the governments of Canada and of the United States for the financial support making this meeting administratively possible.

In the past few years the Organization and its member states have accelerated efforts to address these special concerns. There is still of course an enormity to be done, but the most recent reports on the activities of the General Secretariat contain evidence of these efforts, among them:

- Activities by the Trade Unit of the OAS to strengthen expertise within the small island states on issues of the globalized economy, thereby increasing their capacity to respond to the vicissitudes of economic fluctuations and thus lessen their vulnerability to the negative aspects of globalization while increasing ability to take advantage of new openings.
- Efforts by the Inter-Sectoral Unit for Tourism to advance multilateral projects for the development of tourism, one new opening provided by globalization and the graying of populations in the industrialized non small island states.
- Efforts to improve port security and environmental security in ports
- Projects on Environment and Natural Hazards, including an important "Caribbean Disaster Mitigation project,"
- Activities by the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy aimed at strengthening democratic institutions, providing electoral technical assistance, including a recent electoral observation mission to St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and encouraging discussions of governance issues.
- Efforts by the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, CICAD, to assist small states in their fight against drug trafficking and abuse.

The issue of the special security concerns of small island states has also been advancing in the political bodies of the OAS, including the Committee on Hemispheric Security, as well as in the Summit of the Americas Process.

The Quebec City Summit of April, 2001 recognized that "for the smallest and most vulnerable states in the Hemisphere, security is multi-dimensional in scope, involves state and non-state actors and includes political, economic, social and natural components".

The Presidents and Heads of Government explicitly took note that Small Island Developing States have concluded that among the threats to their security are "illicit drug trafficking, the illegal trade in arms, increasing levels of crime and corruption, environmental vulnerability exacerbated by susceptibility to natural disasters and the transportation of nuclear waste, economic vulnerability particularly in relation to trade, new health threats including the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) pandemic and increased levels of poverty;"

September 11 forced all the States to re-evaluate their security. For the small island states of the Caribbean, September 11, has served to reaffirm the multidimensional aspects of security.

Of these multidimensional aspects, economic vulnerability has emerged as a central issue. The global economic downturn, which began before September 11, but which was accelerated by the terrorist attacks on the United States, has devastated many economies, particularly the smaller and modernizing tourism-based economies of the Caribbean. I say modernizing in the same breath as

tourism, not because I believe tourism is the key to modernity, but rather out of recognition that the development of the tourist industry has been an important creative adaptation by many small island states to the reduced importance of traditional crops and strategic concepts. And to underscore the tragedy that it is precisely this creative adaptation that was hit hardest by 9/11.

In October of 2001 the Permanent Council developed a consensus that the attacks impacted adversely on the economies of member states and that the continuing threats of global terrorism discouraged economic activity, consumption, investment, air travel and tourism and created dislocations in the financial markets in the hemisphere and reverberations worldwide. The Council concluded that the development prospects of member states, especially those of smaller size and relatively greater economic dependence and vulnerability, had been severely affected.

The Council requested the Inter-American Council for Integral Development, within the Strategic Plan for Partnership for Development for 2002-2005, to intensify efforts to assist member states in confronting the adverse economic effects of the terrorist acts of September 11, 2001. It recommended that CEPAC direct the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD) to present proposals to create economic opportunities, reduce poverty and provide quality education throughout the Americas.

The General Assembly, meeting in Bridgetown, Barbados, took some important new steps in this direction when it approved the Declaration of Bridgetown, which endorsed this multidimensional concept.

Among other points, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs recognized:

- That the security of the Hemisphere encompasses political, economic, social, health, and environmental factors;
- That many of the new threats, concerns and other challenges to hemispheric security are transnational in nature and require appropriate hemispheric cooperation; and that Member States should seek to enhance and develop appropriate and relevant mechanisms to deepen co-operation and co-ordination.
- That new threats, concerns, and other challenges are cross-cutting problems that require multifaceted responses by different national organizations, all acting appropriately in accordance with democratic norms and principles;
- That the process of evaluating the new hemispheric security aspects should take into account regional differences and characteristics;

This last point on regional differences leads into a second key document adopted at Bridgetown: General Assembly Resolution 1886, entitled the Special Security Concerns of Small Island States of the Caribbean, instructed the Permanent Council to organize the second high level meeting.

The Agenda for our meeting, derived largely from Resolution 1886, includes five major objectives:

- Assessing the implementation of the recommendations of the First High-Level Meeting on the Special Security Concerns of Small Island States;
- Identifying and discussing the special security threats and concerns of small island states; including discussion of defense and security planning to respond to an incident or terrorist attack on nuclear waste bearing ships crossing the Caribbean Sea; and discussion of possible confidence and security building measures to be adopted by small island states;
- Considering appropriate multilateral strategies to address the special security threats and concerns of small island states;
- Adopting a security management model;
- And, adopting recommendations to be forwarded for consideration at the Special Conference on Security to be held in Mexico in May.

The post September 11, climate, and the upcoming Special Conference on Security in Mexico next May, offer new opportunities for the issues central to the small island states.

I would encourage delegations to address each of the multidimensional aspects of security in light of the geographic, political, economic, social and natural factors that make these uniquely applicable to small island states. This could include separate discussions on:

- Terrorism.
- Drug trafficking.
- Corruption.
- The illegal trade in arms, and how to eliminate the proliferation of small arms, for instance through disarmament programs, such as the one the Government of Haiti has pledged to undertake with our help.
- The rise in common crime, stemming from the evils of drugs and arms, but also fighting such things as domestic violence, which, it should be said firmly, is a crime – not a private family matter. Problems stemming from the deportation of criminals also need to be addressed.
- Poverty and lack of opportunity.
- As do environmental vulnerability.
- Natural disasters.
- Economic vulnerability.
- Health threats, particularly HIV – AIDS.

Discussions should, I believe, focus also on how the issues relate to the security concerns of the rest of the states in our hemisphere, particularly, how they are related in a post September 11 climate. Identifying concerns in ways that are externally recognizable is critical to mobilizing external support.

The Security Management Model is a creative way to begin addressing coordination. Its comprehensiveness is a great virtue, for it makes clear that no single-issue approach that does not factor in multiple interests and actors can hope to succeed in today's democratic Caribbean societies.

I believe the Model can be strengthened by considering how to address specific concerns. Delegations might consider developing a set of possible actions appropriate to each of their special security concerns. A document could be prepared that would include concrete goals and objectives, which could in turn be accompanied by timelines, and even projected costs.

Such a document should include coordination with subregional organizations such as CARICOM, particularly with its Task Force on Crime and Security, headed by Lancelot Selman; the ACS; the OECS; region-wide bodies of the Inter-American System, including the OAS, the Pan-American Health Organization, the Inter-American Defense Board, the Inter-American Development Bank, as well as global multilateral organizations, such as the UN and the World Bank. Technical and material assistance will be needed to address the list of topics I mentioned, from drug-trafficking to health threats to environmental vulnerability.

Should delegations wish to pursue the development of such a document, I would suggest that it be discussed at this high-level meeting. The purpose would not be to draft a document at this time, but to determine who might write it, what issues it might contain, and how to ensure appropriate follow-up at the Miami Meeting of Experts on Confidence and Security-Building Measures and at the Special Conference on Security to be held in Mexico in May.

We are on the threshold of a reevaluation of the entire regional security system; small island state concerns must be fully represented in both Miami and Mexico.

Thank you.