



Press Release



Antigua and Barbuda – The Bahamas – Barbados – Belize – Dominica – Grenada – Guyana – Haiti – Jamaica – Montserrat – St. Kitts and Nevis – Saint Lucia – St. Vincent and the Grenadines – Suriname – Trinidad and Tobago

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(CARICOM Secretariat, Georgetown, Guyana) Attached is a Joint Communiqué issued at the conclusion of the III Summit of Heads of State and Government of the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Guadalajara, Mexico 29 May 2004.

**Meeting Between the Troika of the European Union
and CARIFORUM Heads of State and of Government**

Guadalajara, Mexico 29 May 2004

Joint Communiqué

The Heads of State and of Government of Caribbean ACP States (CARIFORUM) and the European Union represented by the Troika, met in Guadalajara Mexico on 29 May 2004, on the occasion of the III Summit of Heads of State and of Government of the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean. They reaffirmed their commitment to the principles and priorities established by previous summits held in Rio de Janeiro 1999, Madrid in 2002, and the recently concluded Summit held in Guadalajara.

Leaders also reaffirmed their commitment to the shared values of respect for the rule of law, democracy and human rights and to people-centred development. They further reaffirmed their commitment to the global fight against all forms of terrorism and to the promotion of international peace and security, in accordance with the UN Charter and international law.

They noted that the relationship between the European Union and CARIFORUM, in the context of the Cotonou Agreement, is based on partnership, mutual respect and cooperation, with the aim of promoting sustainable development, the eradication of poverty and the integration of the CARIFORUM countries into the world economy.

Leaders recognised the value of the bi-regional strategic partnership between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean and the role of the CARIFORUM countries in the development of that relationship.

They discussed the enlargement of the European Union which took place on 1st May 2004 and welcomed it as an opportunity to expand and deepen economic, political, social and cultural relations between the regions.

They underscored the value of a successful conclusion of an Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and CARIFORUM, negotiations for which were launched in Kingston Jamaica 16th April 2004. They emphasised that this Agreement will be primarily an effective tool for sustainable development, taking into account the special characteristics of the CARIFORUM countries.

Leaders noted the advancement of the process for the establishment of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy as an integral step towards deeper and more effective integration of the region.

They discussed the challenges faced in global markets by commodity exporters of the CARIFORUM, in particular the problems of unstable markets and declining prices and recognised the need to support the adjustment process being undertaken in order to ensure their smooth integration into the world economy.

Leaders reiterated support for the multilateral trading system which is responsive to the development needs and conditions of developing countries, such as those in the Caribbean. In this regard they emphasized the need for the conclusion of the ongoing multilateral trade negotiations within the WTO in a manner which will facilitate the effective integration of developing countries, such as those of the Caribbean, into the liberalised global economy.

Both sides reaffirmed their strong commitment to cooperate in the fight against poverty, the spread of HIV/AIDS and poverty related diseases, illegal trafficking in drugs and arms, and related crimes.

Leaders expressed their deepest sympathy and solidarity with the victims of the recent floods in Haiti and the Dominican Republic and they call upon the international community to provide emergency and humanitarian aid. The European Union side undertook to continue to work in close cooperation with the national authorities in the two countries and their other Latin American and Caribbean partners in order to ensure an effective response to the disaster. The European Union also indicated it would continue its cooperation with the two countries with a view to assisting their recovery and improving their capacity in disaster prevention and preparedness.

Leaders recognised the need for effective solutions to confront the challenges faced by the fragile ecosystems of the Caribbean and agreed to work towards a constructive and action-oriented outcome of the UN Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), to be held in Mauritius in 2005. They acknowledged the call by the Caribbean to have the Caribbean Sea declared as a special area in the context of sustainable development, in accordance with the UN Resolution 54/225. They reiterated their commitment to cooperation in the areas of disaster management, preparedness and mitigation.

They underscored the need for effective follow-up to the aforementioned deliberations and agreed to further meetings in the framework of the EU-LAC Bi-regional Strategic Partnership.

Guadalajara, Mexico
29 May 2004

