

Seated at the table (from left), Bharrat Jagdeo, President of Guyana, Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General, Vijay Nambiar, Chef De Cabinet to Mr. Ban, Edwin Carrington, CARICOM Secretary General, Patrick Manning, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Camillo Gonsalves, Ambassador of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations, and Rufus Bousquet, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saint Lucia

NEW YORK, September 26, 2009: United Nations Secretary General H.E. [Ban Ki-moon](#) met with [CARICOM](#) in a special "mini summit" held in the margins of the opening of the 64th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The mini summit was attended by President Bharrat Jagdeo of Guyana, Prime Minister Denzil Douglas of St. Kitts and Nevis, Prime Minister Patrick Manning of Trinidad and Tobago and CARICOM Secretary General Edwin Carrington. All other CARICOM states were represented at the ministerial or ambassadorial level.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines was represented by Ambassador Camillo M. Gonsalves.

In his [remarks to the mini-summit](#), the UN Secretary-General threw his full support to CARICOM and all the Caribbean nations being hit hard by climate change and the global financial crisis.

"The Caribbean region is vital to the United Nations," Ban stated. "You are helping to advance our agenda. We saw that clearly at this week's summit on climate change, and the General Assembly's general debate."

Ban recognised the hardship the region has experienced due to climate change and the global financial crisis and called on leaders in the Caribbean region to stand up and let the world hear from them. "The United Nations is committed to working with you to respond to these and other challenges. I hope we can use this mini-summit to help chart the way forward," Ban said.

He commended CARICOM on their work and called the common regional approach of "a model for others." He says CARICOM members will play a key role as the negotiations continue. "I welcome the proposals you have put forward," he said, "especially on the conservation of forests and the protection of marine resources. The [AOSIS](#) [Alliance of Small Island States] [Declaration](#) adopted on Monday was an important step."

"I am well aware of the heavy toll the global economic crisis is taking on your countries. Oil prices are high, remittances are down, tourism is severely depressed and foreign direct investment has slowed."

"There is talk of recovery - but the impact of the crisis could reverberate for years. Your economies are more fragile than many others."

The UN Secretary also stated he understood the disappointment and frustration of Caribbean nations with the agreements reached by the G-20. He said he is advocating for the G-20 to uphold its past pledges of assistance and reform. "I remain committed to mobilising the entire United Nations system for initiatives that will help your region and all others: food security, trade, disaster risk management, a greener economy and the Global Jobs Pact," Ban stated.

He also offered a commitment on behalf of the UN to step up their efforts to fight crime in the region. He welcomed the cooperation between CARICOM and the [United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime](#) and committed to "provide all the expertise we can to help the Caribbean to fight and overcome this problem."

This report contains elements of a [news article](#) from the [Turks & Caicos Free Press](#)