

**XIII CONFERENCE OF THE HEADS OF STATE OR
GOVERNMENT OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT,
KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA,
24 – 25 FEBRUARY 2003.**

STATEMENT BY BELIZE

**CHAIRMAN,
EXCELLENCIES,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

I WANT TO JOIN THOSE WHO SPOKE BEFORE ME IN THANKING PRIME MINISTER DR. MOHATIR MOHAMAD, HIS GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF MALAYSIA, FOR THE WARM RECEPTION AND HOSPITALITY THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED IN THIS BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY.

THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT HAS BEEN CROWNED WITH MUCH SUCCESS OVER THE YEARS. WE SUCCESSFULLY FOUGHT APARTHEID AND SAW IT ABOLISHED IN SOUTH AFRICA. THE INDEPENDENCE OF MY COUNTRY BELIZE, AND INDEED THE INDEPENDENCE OF MANY OF OUR MEMBERS, IS TESTAMENT TO THIS MOVEMENT'S SUCCESS.

EVERY TIME WE CELEBRATE OUR NATIONAL DAY OF INDEPENDENCE WE CELEBRATE THE VICTORY OF THE STRUGGLES FOR SELF-DETERMINATION, INDEPENDENCE, SOVEREIGNTY, AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF STATES, THE NON-INTERVENTION IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF STATES, THE NON USE OF FORCE, THE COMMITMENT TO PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES, AND THE SOVEREIGN EQUALITY OF STATES - THE CORE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH OUR MOVEMENT IS FOUNDED.

MY DELEGATION HAS COME TO KUALA LUMPUR, TO THIS OUR FIRST SUMMIT OF THE NEW MILLENIUM, TO CELEBRATE THE IMPORTANCE AND VALUE OF NAM, AND TO WORK IN THE RE-POSITIONING OF THE MOVEMENT IN TUNE WITH THE TIMES. TODAY WE CELEBRATE THIS MOVEMENT FOR ALL IT HAS ACHIEVED AS THE INTERNATIONAL VOICE OF THE POOR, THE POWERLESS AND DISPOSSESSED.

WE ALSO COME TO CELEBRATE WHAT THE MOVEMENT HAS YET TO ACHIEVE, FOR THE CHALLENGES SET OUT BY ITS FOUNDERS HAVE NOT YET BEEN ACHIEVED. THERE IS STILL MUCH MORE TO BE DONE. BUT AS LONG AS OUR STRUGGLE CONTINUES THERE WILL ALWAYS BE HOPE FOR A BETTER TOMORROW. LITTLE WONDER THAT OUR MEMBERSHIP CONTINUES TO GROW.

IN THIS REGARD, IT IS AN HONOUR FOR ME TO WELCOME ON BEHALF OF MY COUNTRY OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS FROM TIMOR

LESTE AND ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES AS THEY BECOME MEMBERS OF THIS MOVEMENT. BELIZE HAS SHARED IN THE STRUGGLES OF BOTH NATIONS AND WE WILL CONTINUE DOING SO WITHIN THIS MOVEMENT.

MY COUNTRY IS HERE TODAY TO JOIN IN REAFFIRMING COMMITMENT TO THE FOUNDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT. THESE SHOULD ALWAYS GUIDE US EVEN AS WE RE-PRIORITISE OUR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES TO ENSURE THAT OUR MOVEMENT CONTINUES TO EMBODY THE ASPIRATIONS OF OUR PEOPLE TO LIVE IN A WORLD OF PEACE, JUSTICE, SECURITY AND PROSPERITY.

WE ARE LIVING IN A CHANGING WORLD. IN SO MANY WAYS THE WORLD TODAY IS SO DIFFERENT FROM IT WAS FORTY YEARS AGO, YET SO MUCH STILL REMAINS THE SAME. THE TERROR OF THE COLD WAR IS SUPPOSEDLY OVER, BUT WE STILL LIVE IN FEAR OF MILITARY AND NUCLEAR FALLOUTS. THE DISPARITY BETWEEN THE RICH AND THE POOR KEEPS GROWING IN SCANDALOUS PROPORTION.

MANY OF THE ISSUES THIS MOVEMENT HAS STRUGGLED BEEN STRUGGLING AGAINST KEEP GETTING WORSE. WE ONLY NEED TO LOOK AT THE PLIGHT OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE WHO, DESPITE CALLS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS, ARE STILL BEING DEPRIVED OF THEIR MOST BASIC RIGHTS AND JUST ASPIRATIONS.

THIS MOVEMENT HAS A LOT OF WORK TO DO.

DIRE POVERTY AND ISSUES RELATED TO HUMAN SECURITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ARE CENTRAL CHALLENGES FACING OUR HUMANITY.

THE POOR CONTINUE DYING OF PREVENTABLE DISEASES. MILLIONS OF CHILDREN SUFFER NEEDLESSLY AND EVEN DIE OF HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION, AT A TIME WHEN MOUNTAINS OF FOOD ARE WASTED IN THE MORE AFFLUENT SOCIETIES.

SO-CALLED "THIRD WORLD" DISEASES STILL LACK ADEQUATE ATTENTION AND FUNDING FOR RESEARCH AND TREATMENT WHILE SPENDING FOR DESTRUCTIVE FORCES ARE ON THE RISE.

DESPITE PROMISES FROM THE RICH NORTH TO DEDICATE 0.7 PERCENT OF THEIR GDP TO DEVELOPMENT, INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT ARE HARDER AND HARDER TO ACCESS.

THE PANDEMIC OF HIV/AIDS THREATENS THE VERY SURVIVAL OF OUR SOCIETIES AND, DESPITE THE RHETORIC, THE COMMITMENT AND DELIVERY OF INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE IS VERY MUCH WANTING. LOCAL AND REGIONAL EFFORTS TO COMBAT THIS SCOURGE ARE

FRUSTRATED AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL IN THE INTEREST OF CORPORATE PROFIT.

CRIME AND CRIMINAL RELATED ACTIVITY INCREASINGLY THREATEN OUR COMMUNITIES AND DAILY LIVES. THE TRAFFICKING OF WEAPONS FROM THE RICH NORTH TO THE POOR SOUTH CONTINUES AT AN ALARMING RATE. THESE WEAPONS TERRORIZE OUR STREETS AND NATIONS AND TEAR AT THE VERY FABRIC OF OUR SOCIETIES. SO OFTEN CRIMINALS ARE SO MUCH HEAVIER EQUIPPED THAN OUR POLICE FORCES HENCE SEVERELY CURTAILING LAW AND ORDER IN OUR SOCIETY. OUR MOVEMENT MUST WORK TO ENSURE THAT THE ILLEGAL FLOW OF WEAPONS ARE STOPPED AND THAT THEIR PRODUCERS AND SUPPLIERS BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE.

IT IS SAID THAT WE ARE LIVING IN AN AGE OF PLENTY, WHERE GLOBALISATION OFFERS PROMISES OF PROSPERITY. EXPERIENCE SO FAR IS SHOWING THAT THE POOR IN THE SOUTH SUFFER ADVERSE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES FROM GLOBALIZATION AND LIBERALIZATION. DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY THE SMALL AND VULNERABLE, ARE MARGINALIZED AND ARE NOT ENJOYING THE PROMISED SHARE OF THE BENEFITS OF GLOBALIZATION. NAM MUST WORK TO CORRECT THIS INEQUITY.

THIS MOVEMENT IS THUS BEING CHALLENGED TO TRANSFORM THE INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE. IT MUST WORK TO STRENGTHEN MULTILATERALISM AND ENSURE THAT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES HAVE A GREATER VOICE IN GLOBAL GOVERNANCE. AS THE VOICE OF THE POOR, THIS MOVEMENT MUST CHAMPION REPRESENTATIVENESS, ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY.

UNITY OF PURPOSE AND SOLIDARITY IS CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS AND FUTURE RELEVANCE OF THIS MOVEMENT. THE FREEDOMS THAT HAVE BEEN ACQUIRED ARE THREATENED UNLESS WE FIRMLY RESOLVE TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE THEM. IN THIS REGARD IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE NOT JUST SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE, WE MUST ALSO ACT IN CONSORT. TOGETHER WE MUST WORK TO POSITIVELY SHAPE THE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND TO ENSURE THAT THE NEEDS OF THE POOR ARE EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSED AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL.

TOGETHER WE MUST WORK TO ENSURE THAT THE SOUTH'S OWN PERSPECTIVES AND SOLUTIONS ARE REFLECTED IN INTERNATIONAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES. WE MUST RESIST THAT OTHERS IMPOSE SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS IN THE SOUTH WHICH IGNORE HISTORICAL AND LOCAL CONDITIONS.

THIS IS WHY MY COUNTRY WELCOMES THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK TO CONTINUE "THE REVITALIZATION OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT". THE WORK THAT WAS DONE IN THE ZIMBALI PROCESS UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF SOUTH AFRICA IS A GOOD BEGINNING. THE

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MINISTERS IN THE ZIMBALI GROUP FOR THE PRIORITISATION OF ISSUES ARE SOUND AND WE MUST, IN UNITY AND SOLIDARITY, BEGIN WORKING ON THEM AS A MATTER OF URGENCY.

BELIZE IS COMMITTED TO THE SPIRIT AND IDEALS OF THIS MOVEMENT AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUE WORKING WITH THE MEMBERS TO PROMOTE OUR COMMON INTERESTS AND CONCERNS.

WE WISH THE PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA EVERY SUCCESS AS HE CHAIRS AND LEADS THE GROUP OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS. BE ASSURED THAT YOU HAVE BELIZE'S FULL SUPPORT AND COOPERATION.

THANK YOU.