

Global economic turmoil has cemented bonds between poorer nations, UN hears



Foreign Minister Maxine McClean of Barbados

28 September 2009 – The strengthening of ties between developing countries has been one of the few positive consequences of the global economic meltdown, the leaders of two Caribbean nations told the General Assembly today.

South-South cooperation has “played a quiet but important role over the years in promoting trade and investment among developing countries,” Foreign Minister of Barbados Maxine McClean **told** the annual high-level General Debate at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

“This has served to enhance the value of such cooperation and presents great potential for future growth and development,” added Ms. McClean.

Ms. McClean underscored the importance of the UN in a multilateral approach to problem-solving amid the current crises facing the world, stressing that the world body is the institution best suited to mobilize global responses.

“Regrettably, over the past year the United Nations has been relegated to a subordinate role in the search for solution to the ongoing economic and financial crisis,” she noted.

“Barbados will not be complicit in any effort to marginalize the United Nations, which has had a unique and legitimate role in global economic decision making and rule setting.”

Also emphasizing the pivotal role of the growing trend in exchange of goods and services between developing nations, Foreign Affairs Minister for Saint Lucia Rufus George Bousquet today told the 192-member Assembly that South-South support had become an effective tool for economic development and foreign policy.

“An ever-changing global landscape has impelled developing countries to take initiatives to safeguard the common interests of each other as they possess diverse assets that can be complementary,” **said** Mr. Bousquet.

He spotlighted Cuba’s international medical assistance programme which serves the Caribbean, as well as the region’s historic and cultural ties with Africa along with recent

developments, such as the African Union Diaspora initiative as examples of the cooperation among poorer countries.

"We in Saint Lucia have received support from the Kuwaiti Funds to assist in infrastructural development," Mr. Bousquet added. "We are reaching out to the world for cooperation and collaboration in the advancement of our development efforts."

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