

## THE ELEVENTH HOUR!

We, a cross section of the scientific, technological, public and private sector communities of the Caribbean meeting held in Trinidad and Tobago from May 10-13, 2006,

**Aware** of the significance of Science, Technology and Innovation (S,T&I) as the driver of the global economy and of the **Consensus** on the importance of S,T&I for Developing Countries towards the goal of sustainable development;

**Cognizant** of the importance of S,T&I in the sustainable development of the region, with particular reference to its role in the strategies for social and economic development;

**Recognizing** the need for a more significant role for S,T&I in the key development goals of the region, which encompass the UN Millennium Development Goals;

**Determined** not to continue the cycles of enthusiastic discussions followed by long periods of apathy and inaction which have previously characterized S,T&I initiatives in the Caribbean;

**Issue** a Wake-up Call to:-

- a) Our governments, all our institutions, the private sector, civil society and the scientific and technological communities, to immediately and proactively support this clarion call for emphasis on S,T & I for Development;
- b) All stakeholders, to fast track their efforts aimed at developing S,T&I as a *sine qua non* for sustainable social and economic development in the Region;

### 1. Strongly Recommend and Urge:

The establishment of a regional mechanism for Development, Research, Science and Technology, to *inter alia* ;

- i) coordinate and harness existing and future resources – human, institutional and financial- of the region, for the purpose of ensuring that S,T&I underpin the social and economic development efforts of the Region;
- ii) Inform the region's responses to challenges and opportunities which increasingly are predicated on the creation, access and utilization of new knowledge;
- iii) Mobilize, oversee, monitor and evaluate competitive development funding focused on S,T&I for development;
- iv) Network with the international and the diasporic communities in arenas of S,T&I for development;

**2. Mandates** the Chairman of this meeting and a small team to discuss with the Lead Head in the CARICOM Quasi-Cabinet for S&T, the setting up of a Steering Committee

by August 2006 to oversee the establishment of such a mechanism and to co-opt members from the private sector and regional organizations;

### **3. Strongly Recommend and Urge**

- i) That our education systems place increased emphasis on the demystification of Science using local knowledge and examples and make the concepts of entrepreneurship and the use of S&T part of the education curriculum from the pre-primary school level;
- ii) Increased recourse to the Caribbean Diaspora to assist in the promotion and use of S,T&I in the development of the Region.
- iii) Members of the private sector to recognize that it is in their enlightened self-interest to partner with governments and the S&T community, to invest in and develop an indigenous S&T capability which would underpin sustainable social and economic development.

We consequently and hereby **COMMIT** ourselves to use our personal experiences and skills to give our best efforts in mobilizing our colleagues and available resources and in influencing our decision – makers towards achieving these objectives.

**DELAY IS NOT AN OPTION!!!**