



**Secretaría General
Del Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana
SG-SICA**

Speech by the SICA Secretary General Doctor Juan Daniel Alemán Gurdián,
at the Coordination Meeting among the
CARICOM, ACS and SICA Secretariats

Dear Friends:

It is indeed a pleasure for us to meet here with the Hemispheric Secretariat and with the Secretariats of the Caribbean and Greater Caribbean, particularly during the celebrations of the V Summit of the Americas, which was concluded successfully.

It is with great satisfaction that we acknowledge the results of that Summit, which arrived at significant agreements that will benefit our Region. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Government of Trinidad and Tobago on the successful organisation and convening of the event.

The Summit allowed for high level dialogue among the Heads of State of the continent, resulting in a deeper knowledge and understanding of priorities, problems and varying perspectives, as well as ideologies, all expressed in an atmosphere of openness and cordiality.

Based on that dialogue in which there was participation by all Greater Caribbean leaders, I believe that it is essential to follow-up their concerns, initiatives and agreements, so as to promote greater justice, security and development in our region, tackling the challenges imposed on us by the international conditions that currently exist.



Along that vein, during the Extraordinary Summit convened in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, in October 2008, the Heads of State and Government of SICA agreed to accept the good offices of the Secretariat of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) to, in conjunction with the SICA and CARICOM Secretariats, develop the mechanisms necessary to execute the SICA-CARICOM Plan of Action, thereby promoting sustainable development in both regions. In addition to the value that inspires this meeting, it will also allow us to fulfil that mandate of our Heads of State and Government.

Distinguished Secretaries General; Dear friends:

This is also a propitious opportunity and we must take advantage of it, for our Secretariats, within the spirit of their respective mandates, to conclude agreements that are indicative of our commitment to ensuring greater collaboration in the thematic areas that are of common interest for our leaders and organisations, demonstrating the sub-regional systemic condition and unbreakable link shared among CARICOM, the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) and SICA.

The agreements that we adopt here must be geared toward promoting increased coordination among our Secretariats, establishing a Joint Technical Unit that would be, on a permanent basis, responsible for activating the follow-up mechanism outlined for executing the SICA-CARICOM Plan of Action, and which, on the basis of consensus, could present to our respective institutions, the proposals deemed pertinent.



We must not stifle efforts to continue holding ongoing and multidimensional consultations among our Secretariats, regarding issues of priority interest for both regions, which include the international financial crisis, regional security and climate change, promoting greater participation by the Secretariat of the Association of Caribbean States in the development of the SICA-CARICOM Plan of Action, especially concerning matters related to the environment and climate change, natural disasters, trade and investments, air transport and tourism.

It is also necessary to encourage highly concrete actions, such as visible and productive relations among the entrepreneurs of the Caribbean and Central America, in addition to their participation in the development initiatives of both regions, in full coordination with the ACS, SICA and CARICOM Secretariats.

Greater rapprochement between the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (BCIE) and the Caribbean Development Bank could undoubtedly assist us in accomplishing many of our joint aspirations and in exploring joint initiatives that would allow the SICA-CARICOM Plan of Action to be developed more quickly and with greater cohesion.

My dear friends:

In order to avoid rendering ineffective the course taken by our countries toward their gradual rapprochement and in order to prevent the dissipation of the impetus that emerged here in Trinidad during this 5th Summit of the Americas, it will be crucial to ensure, before the end of June 2009, the holding of the 3rd Summit of Heads of State and Government of SICA and CARICOM, in Managua, Nicaragua, which will help to cement the achievements obtained during the 1st and 2nd Summits held in Belize.



It is important to recall that the Ministerial Conference between SICA and CARICOM convened more than 10 years ago, launched the strengthening of that relationship that still unites us today and which has been reinforced by the global and regional, political, economic, environmental and regional security challenges that we are facing, which clearly demonstrate the need to further strengthen those relations that exist among our governments and institutions.

In closing, I would like to express my thanks to Ambassador Albert Ramdin, Assistant Secretary General of the OAS for participating in this meeting, for the involvement of the President Pro Tempore of Nicaragua on behalf of the Member States of SICA, and for the participation of the ACS and CARICOM Secretaries.

I would like to convey special thanks to Ambassador Andrade for his collaboration and that of his staff, in convening this important meeting.

Thanks very much,

Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, April 20, 2009.