

APPENDIX III

OPENING STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE JEANETTE R. GRANT-WOODHAM, MINISTER OF STATE, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, JAMAICA, 22 MARCH 1987

Mr. Chairman

Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Participants, other Distinguished Friends,

Allow me to add my own words of welcome to those already expressed by the Acting Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies, Professor Leslie Robinson. This Workshop has brought together a formidable collection of experts on Caribbean issues, whose intellectual energies and capacity are guaranteed to make this a memorably successful "think-tank". We are particularly pleased that a Workshop of this nature is being held in Jamaica and congratulate the co-sponsors on this initiative. A special welcome is extended to our friends — both co-sponsors and participants — from overseas, for whom I hope that your time here will be effectively and enjoyably spent.

You have all come expecting much from this Workshop and I believe that its important objectives will be attained. The structure of the programme, the themes to be covered and the acknowledged high level of expertise of the participants, are my basis for this belief. I also believe that this Workshop has a tremendous potential for making a significant contribution to the policy formulation and review process of governments in this region and may well have an impact on decision-making in other capitals.

The "Caribbean Basin" is a term subject to as many definitions as there are interests in the sub-region. The Initiative which bears that name excludes a few countries of Central America and the Caribbean. Some Latin American views on the "Cuenca del Caribe", include all island states plus those mainland states bordering on the Caribbean Sea. The Regional Environment Programme, for obvious reasons, covers the "Cuenca del Caribe". However, if one may judge from its programme, this Workshop will highlight the small states of the Caribbean, in particular the Commonwealth Caribbean. My statement will therefore reflect that slant.

Caribbean perspectives to the year 2000 and beyond are inescapably founded in the realities of today. We are a number of newly independent, western oriented states spread across thousands of miles of sea, sharing a common colonial past; the socio-economic problems endemic to the Third World; a commitment to democratic principles and institutions; and a thirst for development for the benefit of our peoples and societies. Integrationist policies find expression in our Caribbean Community whose fortune fluctuates in tandem with its members' perceived national interests. In multilateral organizations, particularly the United Nations, we have exercised influence and participated at levels beyond our small size as we strive to