

- geographical hazards (hurricanes) and fragile eco-systems;
- weak institutional and parliamentary structures incapable of providing effective support for the production or the redistribution of gains or the promotion of cohesiveness;
- the challenge by foreign electronic media to core national and cultural values.

Faced with a mounting debt crisis, and despite the clear need to pursue pragmatic approaches to development as dictated by their unique circumstances, the small Caribbean states are required to undertake adjustment strategies which may prevent the pursuit of programmes for growth, development and job creation. It is also possible that they may lose their eligibility for concessionary funding from international financial institutions, through the application of inappropriate criteria.

Yet the policy-makers of the small Caribbean states are not bereft of options for the future, both regional and international. The reorganization and strengthening of the regional integration movements (the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)) may make them more responsive to current needs and provide a countervailing factor in the management of unequal power relations. In particular the capacity of these institutions to implement declared regional strategies should be strengthened, wherever possible.

Further diplomatic collaboration with the states of the Caribbean littoral and with those middle powers which have traditional links with the region should be explored, in order to increase their chances of pursuing prudent development strategies of their choices.

It is important, however, in pursuing appropriate strategies, whether at national or regional levels, that the small states ensure that their choices are seen to respond to domestic imperatives and are not presented in ideological terms capable of being misinterpreted as taking sides in the East-West conflict.

While recognizing the nearly irreversible threat to their culture posed by foreign electronic media, the Caribbean small states should explore the possibilities for producing, both national and regionally, programme material and other cultural content which projects their own values. Where possible they could draw on material being produced by the Caribbean "diaspora" communities.

They should also examine to what extent multilateral assistance including help from the middle powers can be enlisted in support of existing defence arrangements. This will require careful study of the