

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The events in the Caribbean Island of Grenada, in October 1983, focussed international attention on the security problems of small states. Meeting shortly thereafter in New Delhi, Commonwealth Heads of Government directed that a study should be undertaken of this problem. The recommendations of that study — **Vulnerability, Small States in the Global Society** — were endorsed by the Nassau Commonwealth Summit in October 1985, and will be reviewed at the forthcoming Heads of Government Meeting in Vancouver, in October 1987.

In March 1987, the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security (CIIPS) and the International Peace Academy (IPA) co-sponsored a workshop with the University of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica to consider the issues raised in this Commonwealth report as they applied to the future of the Commonwealth Caribbean.

The participants recognized that the development and strategic problems of these small states were interrelated and were closely linked with geopolitical factors; they therefore considered a range of issues and problems which arose from both the external and national environments.

The findings of the workshop can be summarized as follows:

In seeking to develop their societies so as to meet the expectations of their people for a higher standard of living and to provide for a rapidly expanding work force, the small states of the Caribbean are faced with the following problems:

- externally, their location in a region of perceived geostrategic significance limits their freedom to choose whatever development strategies and external policies they prefer;
- internally, they have to deal with the problems which arise from:
 - a rapidly increasing work force expected to amount to an additional million by the end of the century;
 - the loss of the growth dynamic of their traditional industries which are in danger of collapsing;
 - their susceptibility to mercenary attacks or, in the case of multi-island states, to secessionist tendencies, and more recently to a modern manifestation of mercenary interests — the increasing infiltration and penetration of their societies by powerful drug-trafficking groups;
 - their smallness and, in the case of island states (a majority),