

mechanisms for dealing with crisis situations.

### **The Diplomatic Option**

While CARICOM has been remarkably successful in using collective diplomacy to change international systems, (e.g., the proposed New International Economic Order (NIEO)), its member states have been less successful individually in securing support through bilateral diplomacy for their own development objectives. Similarly, the CARICOM countries have been effective in building and maintaining integration movements, at the regional and sub-regional levels, as well as traditional trade and aid relationships. But they have not pursued a coherent or consistent response to the challenge of their geographic location. They have also not yet adequately explored the possibilities for political co-operation with members of the EEC or Canada, in the hope of widening the margin for manoeuvre within the constraints of their geography. Small states over the last decade have recognized that as members of the international community they are primarily responsible for their own security and development. But if their objectives are to be pursued with reasonable autonomy, they need to substitute carefully thought-out and planned approaches in place of *ad hoc* responses to developments in the external environment.

While articles 52 to 54 of the UN Charter call initially for regional solutions to regional conflicts, such solutions have rarely proved feasible. There is a need to develop procedures or institutional mechanisms that would allow the Security Council to utilize regional arrangements more effectively. Such developments would be of particular benefit to small countries whose concerns are frequently overlooked within the existing decision-making framework of the United Nations. Moreover, the recommendations of a Commonwealth consultative group relating to political measures which might be taken at the UN to enhance UN assistance to small states should be followed up. ( See the report, **Vulnerability, Small States in the Global Society**, published by the Commonwealth Secretariat in 1985.)

### **Lessons for the Caribbean From Small States of Other Regions**

In comparing the Caribbean with the South Pacific and the experience of other small states, questions of the maintenance of sovereignty and of security appear to be matters of degree rather than of kind.

Regional co-operation is capable of diminishing vulnerability, increasing control over the economy and reducing the likelihood of external penetration of, or influence over, national policies. While