

Submitted by the Government of St Kitts and Nevis

Parliamentarians Supporting Sustainable Use of Marine Resources

June 15, 2006

St. Kitts and Nevis

Parliamentarians, Ministers and Commissioners supporting the sustainable use of marine resources met in St. Kitts and Nevis on June 15, 2006 prior to the opening of the 58th Annual Meeting of the International Whaling Commission. The meeting was chaired by the Honorable Minister Cedric Roy Liburd, Minister of Housing, Agriculture, Fisheries and Consumer Affairs in the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis. The meeting was attended by 34 parliamentarians, Ministers and Commissioners from 21 countries including, Antigua and Barbuda, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Grenada, Gabon, Republic of Guinea, Iceland, Japan, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and The Grenadines, Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu, as well as a number of government officials.

Meeting participants exchanged views on the challenges that coastal states are facing in pursuance of the sustainable use of the oceans' marine living resources including the current situation within the IWC. They agreed to distribute the following statement to the 58th Annual Meeting of the IWC.

Statement

Reaffirming their belief that law makers have a critical role in ensuring that international commitments to the principle of sustainable use of resources are honored;

Aware of the opportunities and challenges related to the sustainable use of all living marine resources;

Further aware that these resources are critical to the socio-economic survival of many coastal communities;

Also aware that cetaceans are an important fisheries resource for many coastal communities and that the use of cetaceans contributes to sustainable coastal communities, sustainable livelihoods, food security and poverty reduction;

Regretting that the IWC has failed to carry out its functions "*... to provide for the proper conservation of whale stocks and thus make possible the orderly development of the whaling industry;*" mandated by the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW);

Understanding that research related to estimating population abundance, biological parameters, food consumption, and ecosystem interactions are of vital importance for the proper management of all marine resources including whales;

Convinced that sustainable whaling is possible and that the ICRW provides a firm basis for this so that whales can be treated as any other marine living resources available for harvesting subject to the needs of conservation and science-based management as is required by Article V of the Convention;

Believing that the current dysfunctional state of the IWC serves neither whale conservation nor the interests of those who wish to utilize these resources on a sustainable basis and that this situation can only be resolved by bringing the focus of the IWC back to the purpose of the Convention and by implementing conservation and management measures which will allow controlled and sustainable whaling;

Expressing its gratitude to the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis for hosting the 58th Annual Meeting of the IWC;

Urging the strong support of all IWC participants for the St. Kitts and Nevis Declaration which expresses their commitment to normalizing the functions of the IWC based on the terms of the ICRW and other relevant international law and respect for cultural diversity and traditions of coastal peoples and the fundamental principles of sustainable use of resources;

NOW THEREFORE, THE PARLIAMENTARIANS, MINISTERS AND COMMISSIONERS ATTENDING THIS MEETING CALL ON THE IWC TO:

- 1. ENSURE** that the fundamental principle of science based policy and rule making as the primary paradigm of resource management is applied to its work;
- 2. Recognize** that the use of cetaceans contributes to sustainable coastal communities, sustainable livelihoods, food security and poverty reduction and respect the rights of people to sustainably utilize these resources;
- 3. Work** towards normalizing the functioning of the IWC consistent with the provisions of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling;
- 4. ACKNOWLEDGE** the value of research programs such as those being conducted by Japan, Iceland, the Caribbean and African countries which are providing valuable scientific information for the management of whales;
- 5. SUPPORT** the ST. Kitts and Nevis Declaration

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