

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

1312 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Dear Mr. President:

Your proposal for a new economic initiative by the United States addressed to the Caribbean Basin is a welcome step to focus U.S. attention on the issues of poverty and human needs in the Caribbean region.

While the Caribbean and Central America involve a complex blend of several elements, I believe the fundamental long-term questions there are the struggle for social justice and the protection of human rights for the people of the entire region.

I am hopeful that our country will indeed identify with their aspirations for justice and show itself ready to provide creative forms of economic support to people in need. Otherwise, I fear we shall miss a significant opportunity both for our own country and for the people in these neighboring nations.

I, therefore, support the idea of a serious, long-term economic effort in the Caribbean and Central America, and I urge that U.S. efforts in the region be of a diplomatic and economic nature. If your proposal serves as a first step to reorient U.S. policy away from military measures, it will mark a significant turning point for the image which that policy enjoys in the critical area of the Caribbean and Central America. I hope this redirection can be accomplished in a rapid and decisive manner.

Sincerely yours,

Most Reverend John R. Roach, D.D.
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
President, NCCB/USCC

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500