

## **Evaluation of Preparedness for and Response to Hurricanes Georges and Mitch**

### **Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic**

**Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, first let me thank you for coming to this meeting that has been organized by us in close collaboration with UNDP, OCHA, UNICEF and IDNDR with generous support from the Canadian, UK and USA Development agencies. It is always a pleasure to recognize our partners.**

**We have with us here today representatives of a large number of agencies, institutions, NGO's and private individuals. This cross section of interests is a manifestation of a growing and irreversible trend. The really important issues of our time cannot be dealt with solely by nations, agencies or individuals, even the most powerful ones. The phenomenon of globalization is no longer restricted to economic or financial matters, it is now evoking the wide participation of ranges and numbers of actors that would have been unthinkable a few decades ago. In almost all aspects of our work we are looking to find the partners and interests that can bring value to the management of the issue or the search for solutions, if definitive solutions can ever be found the really important human challenges.**

**Natural disasters have for me always represented a classic example of the imperative need to involve multiple actors, or that multiple actors will by the nature of the phenomenon become involved. All of us are moved by Good Samaritanism to respond to misfortune, and the outpouring of material response to disasters is normal and natural. Various agencies have it within their mandate to respond to disasters and many ,perhaps moved by institutional Good Samaritanism also find that the must do something to help. It is in this light that I see the movement by various Agencies to attempt to establish oversight coordinating roles in the Americas. This is perfectly understandable and laudable. And of course the national governments must of necessity regard it as their constitutional responsibility to address the material needs of their populations.**

**This meeting represents a forum for all of us to learn together how to prepare ourselves better to help countries to be better prepared to deal**