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**St Martin poetry in United Nations book to promote child rights**

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GREAT BAY, St Martin: St Martin poetry has found its way in the book *Words Are Powerful: Writers and Childhood*, published this December by UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund.



**Nils Kastberg, Regional Director of UNICEF, Latin America and the Caribbean. (UNICEF photo)**

The poem "St Martin Soul II" by Lasana Sekou is among the essays, fictions, and poetry by world-renowned authors such as Isabel Allende (Chile), George Lamming (Barbados), Ernesto Cardenal (Nicaragua), Frankétienne (Haiti), and Carlos Fuentes (Mexico).

"The idea behind the anthology was that in the quest for change, words are a most powerful ally, a tool to promote child rights as a way of ... building a better life for children and adolescents," said Nils Kastberg, Regional Director of UNICEF in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The 852-page opus contains more than 200 writers from Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal.

Kastberg, who invited Sekou to contribute work to the book, also said that words "are an eloquent testament, powerful voice, and inspirational motivator to instigate change and improve the harsh realities faced daily by millions of children in Latin America and the Caribbean, particularly by children who come from indigenous or afro-descendent families."

The participating writers include those who may be more known in their country, region, and even just their city, but all, said Kastberg, "have contributed their time, words, passion, commitment, vision and energy, and made the dream of the *Words Are Powerful* project, a reality."

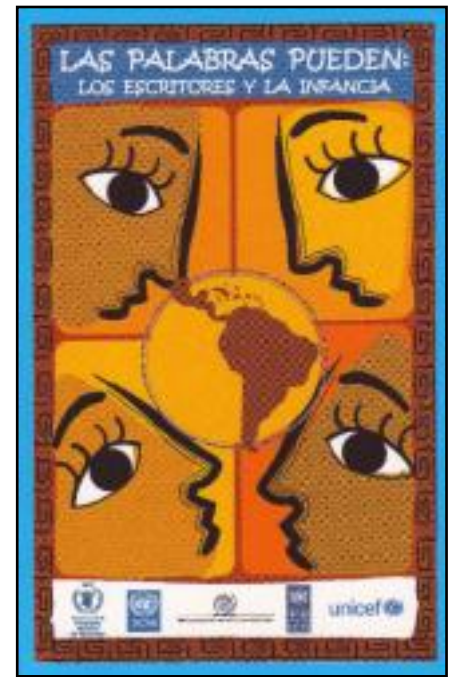
With most of the writers coming from Latin America, the Caribbean is represented by authors such as Mervyn Morris (Jamaica) and Nancy Morejón (Cuba); Kendel Hippolyte (St. Lucia) and Marion Bethel (The Bahamas) -- both former guest authors of the annual St. Martin Book Fair; and writers from the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Guadeloupe, and Trinidad & Tobago.

The literary selections are in the language of the authors and are not translated. Sekou's poem in Words Are Powerful is from a series of verse to and about the island's children and teenagers in his book 37 Poems.

Critically reviewed in the Caribbean Review of Books and The Jamaica Gleaner since its publication in 2005, Sekou's 37 Poems is available at Van Dorp and other bookstores, Amazon.com, and spdbooks.org.

Words Are Powerful is an independent publication of UNICEF and the Programa Mundial de Alimentos (PMA). The UN agencies OCHA, OIM, FUPAD, UNDP and WFP collaborated on the book project.

For the new book contact info: Wivina Belmonte, Regional Communications Advisor at UNICEF, [wbelmonte@unicef.org](mailto:wbelmonte@unicef.org)



**Words Are Powerful:  
Writers and Childhood,  
new UN book contains  
poetry from St Martin**

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