



Caribbean Community

**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE
TWENTY-SECOND INTER-SESSIONAL MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE
OF
HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)
25-26 FEBRUARY 2011, GRAND ANSE, GRENADA**

The Twenty-Second Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) was held in Grand Anse, Grenada, on 25-26 February 2011. The Honourable Tillman Thomas, Prime Minister of Grenada, presided.

Other Members of the Conference in attendance were: the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, Honourable Winston B Spencer; the Prime Minister of Barbados, Honourable Freundel Stuart; Prime Minister of Belize, Honourable Dean Barrow; the Prime Minister of Dominica, Honourable Roosevelt Skerrit; the President of the Republic of Guyana, His Excellency Bharrat Jagdeo; the President of Haiti, His Excellency René Garcia Préval; the Prime Minister of Jamaica, Honourable Bruce Golding; the Prime Minister of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis, Honourable Dr. Denzil L. Douglas; the Prime Minister of Saint Lucia, Honourable Stephenson King; the Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Dr. the Honourable Ralph Gonsalves; the President of the Republic of Suriname, His Excellency Désiré Delano Bouterse; the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar.

The Commonwealth of The Bahamas, was represented by the Honourable Brent Symonette, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Associate Member, Bermuda was represented by Honourable David Burch, Minister of National Security.

Special Guests in attendance were His Excellency Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Minister of External Relations, Brazil; His Excellency Kamalesh Sharma, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth and His Excellency José Miguel Insulza, Secretary-General of the Organisation of American States (OAS).

OPENING

The Chairman of Conference, Honourable Tillman Thomas, the immediate past Chairman, Honourable Bruce Golding and the acting Secretary-General, Ambassador Lolita Applewhaite, addressed the Opening Session.

The acting Secretary-General pointed out that the countries in the Region had important assets and advantages. “How we pool them and deploy them to benefit the people of our Community is the crux of the task at hand. I posit that to maximise that benefit, the need to deepen our integration process has not lessened. If anything it has become more urgent”, she said.

Prime Minister Golding said that the Community could not escape addressing the issue of governance for it was a major cause of the “implementation deficit – the Caribbean people’s benefit deficit”. He said that various mechanisms had been proposed but none had found unanimous acceptance. “If we are hoping to find the perfect solution, we are setting up our own disappointment for there is no perfect solution. But it must be within our possibilities to scale up the governance mechanism to better meet the mandate of Grand Anse”, the Prime Minister added.

The Chairman told his colleague Heads of Government that “for us upon whose shoulders the responsibility for leading this region lies, we must remain focused and singular in purpose”. He added that “we must remain united in our conviction and commitment, that our Regional integration movement remains a primary construct and vehicle in our process of transformation and modernization”.

“As we pursue our course, we must be ever mindful of the needs, wishes and aspirations of our expectant people. A populace, who are more discerning and engaged than before, and are unrelenting in their quest for a better standard of living and a better region”, Prime Minister Thomas added.

DEVELOPMENTS IN RELATION TO HAITI

Heads of Government reviewed the situation in the Member State of Haiti with the assistance of the Secretary-General of the Organisation of American States (OAS) and their Special Representative on Haiti, the Most Honourable P. J. Patterson.

Heads of Government reiterated the Community’s strong support for the country as it recovers from a series of catastrophes and crises.

In order to strengthen the country’s ability to effectively participate in all aspects of the Caribbean Community, including the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME),

they looked forward to Haiti exploiting the three year one-way duty free concession granted by the Council of Trade and Economic Development (COTED) to goods entering the Single Market from Haiti and requested COTED to look at the possibility of expanding the list of products at the earliest opportunity.

Heads of Government urged the CARICOM private sector to collaborate and take advantage of the opportunities offered by Haiti to strengthen that country and the Region's position in regional and external markets.

Heads of Government supported the creation of a CARICOM Special Fund for Private Sector Investment on Haiti to facilitate Caribbean private sector investments in developmental activities in Haiti. They also agreed to encourage the private sector, including members of the Diaspora, through appropriate incentives, to contribute generously to the Fund.

Heads of Government restated their commitment to provide support to augment Haiti's institutional capacity and to make available professional and technical expertise especially in the short to medium term.

Heads of Government noted that the cholera epidemic was on the decline in Haiti and congratulated the Government of Haiti and their international partners on their efforts at controlling the disease.

They also took note that the Heads of Government of Haiti and Jamaica regretted the circumstances that led to the withdrawal of the Haitian under-17 football team from the Confederation of North Central American and Caribbean Associations of Football (CONCACAF) World Cup qualifying tournament in Montego Bay, Jamaica.

Heads of Government expressed their support for the demarches of Haiti towards the Federation of International Football Associations (FIFA) and CONCACAF for special consideration to be given to Haiti to permit the team to participate in the World Cup Finals.

His Excellency René Préval, President of Haiti, informed the Heads of Government that this Meeting of the Conference would be his last. President Preval expressed his deep appreciation to his colleagues for the support provided by the Community to Haiti during his tenure and for standing side by side with Haiti, following the calamities of 2010.

Heads of Government also issued the **attached** statement on the recovery and reconstruction of Haiti.

PRIORITISING THE FOCUS AND DIRECTION OF THE COMMUNITY

Heads of Government reaffirmed their commitment to the regional endeavour and agreed that the objective of the Regional Agenda should be focussed on *Improving the Lives of the People of the Caribbean Community*.

In noting that there appeared to be a loss in the momentum with regard to the regional integration agenda, Heads of Government agreed there was a need to reassess approaches with a view to determining modalities that would re-energise the Regional Integration endeavour, in accordance with their vision.

Heads of Government recognised that their discussions were taking place against the backdrop of the rapidly changing international environment, including the on-going global financial and economic crisis which has had a negative impact on the economies of the Region.

They fully recognized that the Region itself was facing many serious challenges to its survival. They were however convinced that as a community of states committed to the concept of a Region moving together, these challenges could be overcome.

It was against this background that, despite their concern at the slow pace of the regional integration movement, Heads of Government urged that the Community should not allow itself to be discouraged by the often expressed views that CARICOM was in crisis. They urged instead, that the Region be viewed as being at the crossroads of opportunity.

Heads of Government believed that CARICOM's leadership, at all levels, should acknowledge the protracted challenges and the urgency of arresting the associated perception of decline. The most urgent need was not for broad new decision-making; it was for implementing decisions already made and embodied in the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas and living by the spirit of unity and collective action that inspired the Grand Anse Declaration which preceded it.

In this context, they accepted the invitation of the President of Guyana for a special two day Retreat in Guyana confined to discussing the way forward for CARICOM, to be held between now and their Regular Meeting in St. Kitts and Nevis in July 2011.

Heads of Government looked forward to their Regular Meeting to be held in St. Kitts and Nevis next July and committed themselves to that spirit of regionalism that inspired the Community's highest moments of achievement.

Heads of Government are of the view that it is time for faith in the onward march of Caribbean civilization and for progressive, enlightened and courageous action by a united Region strengthened by that self-belief.

CARICOM SINGLE MARKET AND ECONOMY (CSME)

Heads of Government acknowledged the efforts of Member States to continue developing the CSME, despite the difficulties faced due to severe economic challenges.

In light of the external trade environment, including the Economic Partnership Agreement with the European Union and the on-going negotiations with Canada for a Trade and Development Agreement, Heads of Government reiterated the importance of the CSME as a platform for the organisation of production and the development of competitiveness in order to develop globally competitive industries to exploit opportunities in markets which are outside of the Community and which require cooperation, collective action and the pooling of resources.

Heads of Government, noting the status of the macro-economic policy initiatives, mandated the Council for Finance and Planning (COFAP) to review the elements and timetable of the Single Economy, with a view to advising on the feasibility of the timelines for the completing the framework of the Single Economy.

Heads of Government, in mandating an urgent meeting of the Ministers with responsibility for Information and Broadcasting, requested that they facilitate consultation towards the finalisation of an overarching strategy by the end of the second quarter of 2011, for public education and information.

HEALTH AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Heads of Government noted the significant role being played by the Community in advocacy and preparation for the UN High-Level Meeting on the prevention and Control of Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs) scheduled for September 2011. They agreed that the Region would advocate for specific focus to be given in the Outcome Document to the adoption of policies to address risk factors, such as tobacco, alcohol, diet and lack of physical exercises, the reengineering of health systems and services, strengthening of systems for access to low cost pharmaceuticals and supplies and those for surveillance and monitoring and evaluation of programmes. They committed to convening national

consultations, involving a wide range of stakeholders, in preparation for the Meeting in September and to ensuring representation of the region at the highest level.

Heads of Government urged Member States to sign the Inter-governmental Agreement establishing the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) and committed to providing all necessary support for the short and medium term activities, including advocacy and information activities required to sensitise stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels. Heads of Government commended the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO); the Public Health Agency of Canada; the UK Department of Health; the CARPHA Steering Committee; the CARPHA Advisory Group for their support of this initiative.

Heads of Government agreed to recognise the Caribbean Accreditation Agency for Engineering and Technology (CACET) as the Accrediting body for engineering and technology in the region. They also emphasised the importance of regional coordination with regard to the accreditation of programmes and institutions and agreed to sign and ratify the Inter-Governmental Agreement establishing the Regional Accreditation Agency for Education and Training as a matter of urgency.

THE BRITISH AMERICAN (BAICO) AND COLONIAL LIFE (CLICO) ISSUE

Heads of Government received a report from a Regional Technical Committee (RTC) on the resolution of the British American Insurance Company/Colonial Life Insurance Company (BAICO/CLICO) financial difficulties in the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU).

They agreed to the recommendation for the immediate establishment of a Health Insurance Support Fund of \$2 million (US) to be sourced from the Petroleum Fund established by Trinidad and Tobago.

Heads of Government also agreed that funds from the Petroleum Fund would be directed towards the recapitalisation of BAICO to address traditional life insurance policy holders. Heads of Government further agreed that the RTC would continue their work in respect of a proposal for an investment trust fund. In that regard, the RTC is expected to engage with the International Financial Institutions to assist in arriving at appropriate recommendations.

CLIMATE CHANGE PRIORITIES FOR THE REGION

Heads of Government welcomed a report from the Prime Minister of Saint Lucia on the outcome of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework

Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (COP 16) held last December in Cancun, Mexico.

They agreed that CARICOM Member States would make efforts to ensure that there is adequate and balanced representation by competent CARICOM experts, through GRULAC and AOSIS, on the newly formed governance bodies of the Convention.

They also agreed that CARICOM Member States would collectively sponsor and lobby for the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) to be designated an International Centre on Adaptation.

Heads of Government called on the Centre to visit Member States to assist in identifying and preparing appropriate projects, using established guidelines of the World Bank and the UNDP, in order to make use of available and emerging resources for climate change adaptation.

Heads of Government requested the CARICOM Secretariat to convene a Joint COHSOD-COTED Meeting to agree on an action plan to address the way forward for the Region to follow-up on the outcome of COP-16, preparation for COP 17 and for the implementation of the regional climate change strategic plan, among other issues.

TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS' CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUE

Heads of Government received an update on the situation in the Associate Member, Turks and Caicos Islands and reiterated their call for direct rule to be replaced by self rule and for a return to democratic and representative governance for the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands.

EXTERNAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

Heads of Government reaffirmed their commitment to sustained negotiations in order to conclude a mutually satisfactory Trade and Development Agreement with Canada and to that end, look forward to considerable progress in the next round of negotiations scheduled to be held in Canada in the Spring of this year.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGIONAL SPORTS ACADEMY

Heads of Government received with appreciation a presentation on the establishment of a Regional Sports Academy by His Excellency the President of Suriname. They

welcomed its establishment particularly given the important role which such a facility could play in the development of youth and sport in the Community.

CARIFESTA XI

Heads of Government expressed appreciation to Suriname for confirming its offer to host CARIFESTA XI in 2013.

BORDER ISSUES:

Guyana-Venezuela Relations

Heads of Government expressed satisfaction that since their last meeting, the United Nations Secretary-General had appointed Professor Norman Girvan as his Personal Representative to support him in his role as Good Officer to assist Guyana and Venezuela in the search for a solution to the controversy that arose from the Venezuelan contention that the Arbitral Award of 1899, that definitively delimited the territory between Guyana and Venezuela, is null and void.

Heads of Government noted the positive developments in the relations between Guyana and Venezuela and the efforts being made by the two countries to further strengthen those relations. They reaffirmed their unequivocal support for the maintenance and safeguarding of Guyana's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Belize–Guatemala Relations

Heads of Government noted the report on the status of Belize-Guatemala relations and the commitment of the two countries to conduct the simultaneous referenda to decide whether to refer the territorial dispute to the International Court of Justice for final settlement as required by the Special Agreement. They welcomed the efforts of both countries to improve the effectiveness of the Agreement on Confidence Building Measures to reduce tensions, pending a final resolution to the territorial dispute and to develop modes of functional cooperation in areas of mutual concern.

Heads of Government commended the support of the Group of Friends and the Organisation of American States (OAS) in helping to maintain peace and stability in the Region and called on the international community to continue to support the OAS and the two countries in this respect.

They further reaffirmed their unequivocal support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Belize.

EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH SPECIAL GUESTS:

Brazil

Heads of Government welcomed the Minister of External Relations of Brazil and reiterated their appreciation of the strong ties between Brazil and the Community.

They used the opportunity to express their gratitude for the consistent and sterling support and assistance rendered to Haiti by Brazil. The Heads of Government and the Brazilian Foreign Minister agreed on the need to respect Haiti's sovereignty as the efforts to rebuild the country continued in the wake of the devastating earthquake of 12 January 2010. They also expressed confidence that the electoral process for the second round of the Presidential and Parliamentary election would be credible and would strengthen the emerging democratic practices in Haiti.

Commonwealth Secretary-General

Heads of Government received, with appreciation, the information provided by the Commonwealth Secretary-General on matters related to the 2011 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting to be held in Perth, Australia on 28-30 October 2011.

Heads of Government also welcomed the partnership between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the Commonwealth Business Council (CBC) to stage the Caribbean Investment Forum: "Building Global Partnerships: The Commonwealth and the Americas" on 13-14 June 2011 in Port-of-Spain.

ENDORSEMENT OF BRAZIL CANDIDACY FOR DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANISATION

Heads of Government agreed to endorse the candidature of Dr Jose Graziano Silva of Brazil for the post of Director-General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation.

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Heads of Government considered the situation in the Middle East and North Africa and agreed to issue the attached statement.

SIGNINGS

The following agreements were signed at the Twenty-Second Inter-Sessional Meeting:

Revised Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA):

- Signed on 25 February 2011 – The Bahamas, Haiti, Saint Lucia, St Kitts and Nevis, Suriname
- Signed on 26 February 2011 – Grenada, Guyana

CAHFSA entered into force on 26 February 2011 with the signature of the Prime Minister of Grenada (Seven signatures were required for entry into force).

Amendment to Annex III of the Agreement Relating to the Operation of the CARICOM Development Fund (to provide for preferential access by LDCs)

- Signed on 25 February 2011 – Saint Lucia, St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname;
- Signed on 26 February 2011 - Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada and Guyana

Amendment to the Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Aviation Safety and Security Oversight System (CASSOS)

- Signed on 25 February 2011 – Barbados
- Signed on 26 February 2011 – Grenada

Protocol Amending the CARICOM Agreement on Social Security

- Signed on 25 February 2011 – Dominica, St Kitts and Nevis

Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Community Accreditation Agency for Education and Training

- Signed on 25 February 2011 – Dominica, Saint Lucia

DATE AND VENUE OF THE THIRTY-SECOND REGULAR MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE (July 2011)

Heads of Government agreed to hold their Thirty-Second Regular Meeting in St Kitts and Nevis from 1-4 July 2011.



Caribbean Community

STATEMENT ON THE RECOVERY AND CONSTRUCTION OF HAITI

CARICOM Heads of State and Government recalled that at their Meeting in July last year, they bemoaned the lack of progress in the implementation of the Haiti Action Plan and called on the international donor community to make good on the pledges and promises made to Haiti. This they saw as critical for the Government of Haiti to begin to provide durable shelter for the internally displaced persons, remove the rubble and replace and augment the institutional capacity of the Government to make good on its responsibilities. They regretted that eight months later, nothing has changed while the second hurricane and rainy season since the catastrophe is upon the people of Haiti.

They recognized that the Haitian Recovery Fund (HRF) managed by the World Bank has no resources, the projects being approved by the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission (IHRC), admittedly important, do not reflect the critical immediate priorities and the implementation arrangements are uncertain.

However, the limited flow of resources pledged to the HRF and the drastic shift to the bilateral approach in the planning of the use of resources, did not bode well for addressing the priorities laid out by the Haitian Government in the Haiti Action Plan in the longer term.

Reiterating their concern that present strategies would not lead to significant progress nor improvement in the reconstruction of Haiti and in addressing the plight of the internally displaced, by the end of the eighteen month period of the life of the Commission, CARICOM Heads of State and Government called upon the international community to meet their commitments to Haiti in the manner originally planned in order to make their contributions more effective. They also called upon the IHRC to review its working methods in order to ensure that the priorities of the Haitian Government are met with the urgency which their mandate requires during the remainder of the life of the Commission

The Heads of State and Government renewed their call to the international donor community to place substantial funds in the HRF, synchronise their bilateral activities with the priorities of the Government and maintain the integrity of the process, as was agreed at the Donor Conference in the United Nations last March.



Caribbean Community

CARICOM Statement on the Middle East and North Africa

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) observes, with grave concern, the recent developments in the Middle East and North Africa, which have been sparked by the desire of the people of that Region for change. The Community expresses deep regret at the loss of life during the peaceful demonstrations.

The Caribbean Community promotes and encourages the adherence to democratic principles, good governance, the rule of law and the protection of human rights. The Community reiterates its endorsement of the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and therefore condemns the use of violence against people who are protesting peacefully.

The deep desire of the people of that Region to have greater political and economic involvement in their countries' future is evident through their sustained peaceful protests. The Community calls for an immediate end to the violence and looks forward to a resolution of the situation through dialogue and actions which would allow the free exercise of the fundamental human rights by the people of that Region.