

**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE THIRTY-SIXTH REGULAR MEETING OF
THE CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY, 2-4 JULY
2015, BRIDGETOWN, BARBADOS**

The Thirty-Sixth Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) was held at Bridgetown, Barbados, 2-4 July 2015. The Prime Minister of Barbados, the Right Honourable Freundel Stuart, Q.C; MP, chaired the proceedings.

Other Members of the Conference in attendance were: the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, the Honourable Gaston Browne; the Prime Minister of The Bahamas, the Rt. Honourable Perry Christie; the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Dominica, the Honourable Roosevelt Skerrit; the Prime Minister of Grenada, Dr. the Rt. Honourable Keith Mitchell; the President of Guyana, His Excellency Brigadier David Granger; the President of Haiti, His Excellency Michel Martelly; the Prime Minister of Jamaica, the Most Honourable Portia Simpson-Miller; the Premier of Montserrat, the Honourable Donaldson Romeo; the Prime Minister of St. Kitts and Nevis, Dr. the Honourable Timothy Harris; the Prime Minister of Saint Lucia, Dr. the Honourable Kenny D. Anthony; the Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Dr. the Honourable Ralph Gonsalves; and the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar.

Belize was represented by the Honourable Wilfred Elrington, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Attorney-General; Suriname was represented by His Excellency Michel Kerpens, Ambassador-at-Large, Chief of the Cabinet of the Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Associate Members in attendance were: the Premier of the British Virgin Islands, the Honourable Dr. Orlando Smith, and Chief Minister of the Turks and Caicos Islands and the Honourable Dr. Rufus Ewing.

Also in attendance were His Excellency Ban Ki Moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Kamalesh Sharma, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, His Excellency Patrick Gomes, Secretary-General of the African Caribbean Pacific Group of States (ACP) and His Excellency Luis Almagro, Secretary-General of the Organisation of American States.

CARICOM: VIBRANT SOCIETIES, RESILIENT ECONOMIES

Opening statements

The Chairman of Conference, the Rt. Honourable Freundel Stuart, the immediate past Chair, the Rt. Honourable Perry Christie, Prime Minister of The Bahamas, the President of Guyana, His Excellency Brigadier David Granger, the Honourable Donaldson Romeo, Premier of Montserrat the Prime Minister of St. Kitts and Nevis, Dr. the Honourable Timothy Harris, and His Excellency Ambassador Irwin LaRocque, Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community, made statements at the Opening. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Ban Ki Moon also addressed the Opening Ceremony.

Prime Minister Stuart noted that it was 50 years almost to the day that the then Premiers of Barbados and Guyana began the journey to CARICOM with discussions that led to CARIFTA.

The Chairman urged the Community to keep its perspective, think and work through its economic and financial challenges, and expressed the view that as a Region we were more than equal to meet the challenge. “The talent pool in the CARICOM Region is as rich as that which can be found in any other Region in the world. We have demonstrated this time and time again, in the area of culture, sport, literature, the arts, in the world of academe, and in the way we have managed the development of our societies and economies in the face of formidable challenges,” the Chairman of Conference added. He stated that the “vibrant societies in the Region have put us in the favourable position of being able to undertake, with confidence, the task of creating resilient economies for the benefit of all of our people.” The Chairman also called on the Community to deal “in a structured manner” and “mobilise the idle hands in our Region around the idle lands in our Region and deal systematically with the food security issues we have been facing.”

Prime Minister Christie stated that the youth were looking to the leaders to help secure their future. “It is our responsibility to ensure that they get a good education, become part of the formal economies of our countries and become beneficiaries of the practice of social mobility, equity and fairness,” he added.

The Prime Minister referred to “the ill-advised classification of Caribbean countries by the European Commission as non-cooperative jurisdictions.” He noted that a number of CARICOM countries had sought to adhere to every global legislative and regulatory stipulation imposed upon their territories. “The question remains however, as to who will repair the damage done to our financial service industries by the unfair labeling that drives away potential multi-national company investors” he asked. Prime Minister Christie alluded to a current situation in his country to make the point that GDP per capita should not be the sole determinant for the question of the economic support that is to be given the Region. He insisted that vulnerability to economic shocks must be taken into account as a single large investment “can, when it collapses, throw an entire country out of whack.”

President Granger said the task facing the Community today, was to reaffirm its collective support for the principles enshrined in international law for safeguarding its territorial integrity and sovereignty and national independence. Referring to a recent Venezuelan Decree which laid claim to much of the coastline and most of the exclusive economic zone of Guyana and a number of Member States, the President stated that “we must be prepared also to exercise absolute sovereignty over our maritime waters and resources. We must protect these resources from being invaded and annexed. We must pursue the principle of collective security which provides that a threat to any of our members represents a threat to our entire Community.”

Prime Minister Harris said we were living at a historical juncture whereby regional unity, as a vital strategy for building economic resilience, driving growth and fostering inclusive and comprehensive social development for each nation state, was even more of an imperative today than it was in yesteryear. He pointed out that this year provided an ideal opportunity for CARICOM “to leverage the full weight of its collective voice and vote towards ensuring its effective and meaningful participation” to protect the interests of the people of the Community in global negotiations.

Premier Romeo observed that “for us smaller islands, no longer does our individual square mileage or population determine our capabilities. Thanks to technology, the waters which separate each Island, act as highways facilitating trade, investments, mobilizations of brain power and sharing skills.”

Secretary-General LaRocque emphasised that “the sustainable development of the Caribbean Community can be achieved with the marriage of our human and natural resources to our innate skills, innovative ideas and hard work,” as exemplified by two outstanding CARICOM youth. He added that the ingredients for success lie within the people of the Community. “Unleashing the dynamism and creativity which have been the hallmark of our Region and using that distinctive Caribbean vibrancy to build our society on our own terms will put us on the path to create the resilience we need,” the Secretary-General stated.

UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki Moon declared that in respect of the three major international conferences being held this year, “partnership and solidarity were needed to achieve our goals in this big year for humanity.” The Caribbean, he said, was home to ideas, examples and solutions. “Your views and experiences shape global policy. We have seen it time and again. You put the challenge of non-communicable diseases on the global agenda. You have made enormous progress in the battle against HIV/AIDS - including Mother-to-Child Transmission. You have many successes in achieving the Millennium Development Goals” he added.

DECISION MAKING PROCESS

In keeping with the ongoing reform process of the Community, Heads of Government continued their review of procedures and decision-making in the Community with a view to enhancing the efficiency with which the Community conducts its business so as to ensure greater effectiveness in the implementation of its decisions. In particular, Heads of Government adopted principles to guide the identification of CARICOM candidates for international positions including a provision to establish a search committee where necessary. Heads of Government agreed to continue their review of the Community's procedures at their Twenty-Seventh Intersessional Meeting in 2016.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Heads of Government, acutely aware of the opportunity provided to build truly vibrant societies and resilient economies and chart a new era of sustainable development for the Region and the world, discussed the culmination of three on-going and integrated global processes. They noted that the Region has been actively involved in the processes which will be brought to a climax in major inter-related high level International Meetings in the latter half of 2015.

Heads of Government were of the view that a negotiated and agreed outcome at the first of the conferences, the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD3) in Addis Ababa in July, should contribute to, and support the implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. In that regard, Heads of Government looked forward to the identification of the financial resources, including new resources, required to assist developing countries in addressing their major development challenges, including those which will arise from implementation of Post-2015 Development Agenda and the SAMOA Pathway, trade liberalisation, global environmental degradation, including climate change and global security issues.

This Agenda will be the focus of a Special Summit on Sustainable Development at the United Nations in September. Heads of Government noted that this Special Summit will seek to get world leaders to embrace a new Agenda and set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) designed to achieve a global paradigm shift in thinking about sustainable development and in the mechanisms needed to achieve the goals.

Heads of Government welcomed the intention of the SDGs to end poverty, transform the world to better meet human needs and the necessities of economic transformation, while protecting the environment, ensuring peace and realising human rights.

Heads of Government looked forward to the adoption for the first time of a universal, legally binding agreement at the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris in December. Such an agreement will enable us to

combat climate change and adapt to and mitigate its effects while effectively boosting the transition towards resilient, low-carbon societies and economies.

Heads of Government agreed to continue to strengthen advocacy for conditions important to the Community, as a region of Small Island Developing States and low lying coastal states (SIDS). They emphasised the peculiar nature of SIDS which made them a “special case” for sustainable development and called for measures to address their inherent and permanent vulnerabilities and in particular, facilitate resilience building in economic, natural, and social systems.

In this regard, Heads of Government committed to:

- ensuring that the goals articulated in the SAMOA Pathway were fully embedded in these processes; to building on existing cooperation and programme initiatives;
- giving urgent attention to elaborating a regional, advocacy, partnership and resource mobilisation strategy to support the implementation of the region’s priorities as captured in the Post 2015 Development Agenda and the SAMOA Pathway;
- partnering with other developing countries, in particular SIDS, for increased advocacy for debt relief;
- advocating for consideration by the UN, in collaboration with the international financial institutions, to the design of new instruments beyond the use of GDP per capita, appropriate for the valid measurement of development progress.

With regard to the Climate change negotiations the Conference adopted a Declaration on Climate Action which set out the region’s agreed positions.

RESILIENCE BUILDING AND WEALTH CREATION FOR CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT - THE ROLE OF CARIBBEAN UNIVERSITIES

Heads of Government received a presentation from the new Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies (UWI), Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, which highlighted the current and future importance of science and technology, industry academic linkages, and networking with tertiary education institutions internationally in order for Caribbean Universities to continue to play their designated role in developing and strengthening the Region's indigenous capacity to foster innovation, competitiveness and resilience, as outlined the Community's Five Year Strategic Plan.

They agreed to continue their collaboration with the UWI and other Regional Institutions of higher education, in identifying ways in which development needs of the Caribbean can be met.

CARIFESTA

Heads of Government received an update on the preparations for CARIFESTA XII which will be held in Haiti from 21 to 30 August 2015 and pledged their fullest support and participation.

Heads of Government also looked forward and pledged their support to CARIFESTA XIII which will take place in Barbados in 2017.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Heads of Government commended the Prime Minister of Grenada, the Lead Head of Government for Science and Technology for his leadership in the hosting of the Second High-Level CARICOM Science and Technology Meeting held in Grenada in March of this year.

They requested collaboration between the CARICOM Science, Technology and Innovation Committee (CSTIC), responsible for the implementation of the resulting Action Plan on Science and Technology and the Commission on Human Resource Development in the development of the CARICOM 2030 HRD Strategy.

Heads of Government agreed to work with the private sector and International Development Partners to increase the investment in spending on Research and Development (R&D).

BORDER ISSUES:

Belize-Guatemala Relations

Heads of Government welcomed the signing last December 2014 of thirteen cooperation agreements between the two countries that are conducive to improving bilateral relations between them.

They also supported the signing on 25 May 2015 of a Protocol to the Special Agreement that permits both countries to proceed with the holding of the required referendum simultaneously or separately according to their own convenience, which should expedite the decision on whether to submit Guatemala's territorial, insular and maritime claims to the International Court of Justice.

Heads of Government recognized the important role of the Organization of American States and of the Group of Friends in assisting Belize and Guatemala in their efforts to ensure the prevalence of peace and security and in their continued search for an early and definitive end to the extant Guatemalan claims.

Heads of Government reiterated their full support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Belize, which remains of paramount importance to the Caribbean Community.

Guyana-Venezuela Relations

Heads of Government viewed with deep concern the Presidential Decree 1.787 of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela of 26 May 2015 and revised on 8 June 2015 because of its effect on the maritime space of not only Guyana but also of a number of Member States of the Caribbean Community. The Heads of Government agreed to issue a statement which is attached to this Communiqué.

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE ENERGY IN THE COMMUNITY

Heads of Government considered and endorsed the establishment of the “Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE)” as the implementation hub for sustainable energy activities and projects within the Region, particularly taking into account its sustainability and its governance structure.

Heads of Government accepted with appreciation, the offer of the Government of Barbados to host the Centre.

CARIBBEAN ENERGY FUND

Heads of Government welcomed and endorsed the proposal presented by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, for the establishment of a Multi-Donor Energy Co-Financing Facility for Caribbean Sustainability, designed to support the transformation of the Caribbean Community's energy sector away from fossil fuels to alternative and renewable energy, thereby facilitating the use of cleaner energy, the development of more competitive industries and a more prosperous Caribbean economy.

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Heads of Government considered the grave situation of Dominicans of Haitian descent in the Dominican Republic. They viewed it as an unresolved human rights crisis that was not getting the attention it deserved from the major countries of the global community. Heads of Government pointed to the potential of the situation to mushroom into a major humanitarian crisis for Haiti and the wider Region. They issued a statement which is attached to this Communiqué.

EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH SPECIAL GUESTS:

Heads of Government engaged in exchanges of views with Special Guests, Their Excellencies, Juan Carlos Varela Rodrigues, President of the Republic of Panama; Ban Ki Moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations; and Kamallesh Sharma, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth.

President of the Republic of Panama

Heads of Government warmly welcomed the President of the Republic of Panama, His Excellency Juan Carlos Varela Rodriguez. They took note of the strong historical ties between CARICOM countries and Panama due to the migration of several thousands of West Indians, particularly from Barbados and Jamaica to work on the construction of the Panama Canal and rail road. They reiterated the importance of strengthening these ties, through cooperation in trade and investment, tourism, transportation, security, education, culture and people to people contacts.

The Heads of Government expressed their appreciation to President Varela for the priority he has placed on strengthening relations with CARICOM and for the invitation he has extended to them to visit Panama for the inauguration of the expansion of the Panama Canal in 2016.

United Nations Secretary-General

Heads of Government took note that as the United Nation celebrates its 70th Anniversary this year, preparatory work is being undertaken for high-level meetings on challenges of critical importance for the international community, in particular developing countries and SIDS. These include the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD3), the UN Post-2015 Development Agenda and the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. They commended the UN Secretary General for the priority he has attached to mobilizing world leaders around a set of new global challenges from climate change, extreme violence and economic upheaval to pandemics, refugee flows and increasing geopolitical threats involving food, energy and water.

The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth

Heads of Government took the opportunity to express their deep appreciation to the Commonwealth Secretary-General for the work accomplished during his tenure as Head of the Commonwealth and in particular, the continued focus that has been placed on seeking to address the needs and concerns of small states.

CUBA/UNITED STATES OF AMERICA RELATIONS

Heads of Government welcomed the announcement on 1 July, 2015, by the Presidents of the Republic of Cuba and the United States of America, confirming their decision to re-establish diplomatic relations between the two countries and to re-open Embassies in their respective Capitals on 20 July 2015.

Heads of Government viewed these positive developments as significant milestones in the process towards the normalisation of bilateral relations between these countries.

Heads of Government renewed their call for the removal of the trade embargo as this would be a further step in the normalisation of relations between the Republic of Cuba and the United States of America.

CARICOM/CANADA RELATIONS

Heads of Government welcomed the decision of the World Trade Organisation's Council for Trade in Goods to grant a new waiver for CARIBCAN up to 2023 and expressed their appreciation to the Government of Canada for having made that request. They re-iterated the importance they attached to Canada's continued support to the Region's economic and social development particularly through its development assistance programmes.

Heads of Government expressed regret at Canada's decision in May, 2015, to suspend negotiations for a trade and development agreement with the Caribbean Community. They re-affirmed the Region's interest in deepening economic co-operation and trade relations with Canada through a mutually beneficial and development -oriented trade agreement and emphasised the Region's willingness to re-engage in negotiations in the future.

EUROPEAN UNION BLACK-LISTING OF CARICOM TAX JURISDICTIONS

Heads of Government expressed their strong objection to the recent decision by the European Union to "blacklist" eight Member States and all Associate Members of CARICOM on the pretext that there was no co-operation on tax matters with the countries of the European Union. They viewed this listing as being without foundation or merit, in light of their continued efforts to comply with the onerous and unilateral regulatory measures developed by the Organisation of Economic Co-operation (OECD) which sets international standards on tax co-operation. They further noted that CARICOM States were members of the OECD Global Forum, which requires as part of its Members' good standing, to agree to the adoption and implementation of the OECD Multilateral Convention on Mutual Assistance in Tax Matters which provides for the Automatic Exchange of Information; and that the OECD had not blacklisted any of the CARICOM countries on the European Union list.

In light of the potential adverse effects of such a listing on the financial services in the region and the implications for economic growth, Heads of Government demanded that the European Union withdraw the listing immediately.

RELATED EVENTS

Heads of Government commended the initiative of the Government of Barbados to stage the High Level Dialogue under the theme: *CARICOM Vibrant Societies, Resilient Economies – a Partnership for Implementation*, which provided an excellent forum for the exposition of new and innovative ideas. Heads of Government observed that it presented a model for similar events in the future.

CARICOM 10k

Heads of Government expressed satisfaction at the successful staging of the CARICOM 10k event which saw the largest ever participation of regional athletes. They also welcomed the extension of the range of participants to include school children.

APPRECIATION

Heads of Government expressed their deep appreciation to the Government and people of Barbados for their generous hospitality and excellent arrangements as hosts for the series of meetings.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Heads of Government accepted the invitation of the Government of Belize to host the 27th Intersessional Meeting of the Conference at a date to be announced.

STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION WITH RESPECT TO DOMINICANS OF HAITIAN DESCENT AND HAITIAN MIGRANTS IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community expressed their abhorrence and outrage with respect to the treatment of Dominicans of Haitian descent and Haitian migrants in the Dominican Republic. This human rights situation is exacerbated as the tempo of so-called voluntary repatriation gathers pace in unregulated conditions resulting from pressures and the threat of violence as well as the absence of a revised bilateral framework between Haiti and the Dominican Republic that the latter has been unwilling to conclude.

Their concerns have been heightened by the breach of the undertakings given by the representatives of the Dominican Republic during the High-Level Dialogue between the European Union and CARIFORUM in Brussels on 11 June 2015 that there would be a new approach by their country.

Heads of Government underlined the compelling importance of the Dominican Republic concluding with Haiti the often requested revision of the 1999 Protocol on repatriation to take into account the new realities on the ground and to establish an agreed framework. Such a mechanism would ensure an orderly repatriation process with predictability and in-built checks and balances to preclude mass deportations and prevent the expulsion of Dominicans of Haitian descent made stateless by the 2013 ruling on nationality of the Constitutional Court to a country which is not theirs. A revised Protocol would also facilitate the efforts of the receiving state to better manage the growing influx.

Heads of Government condemned what they perceive as the makings of a grave humanitarian crisis in the Region and welcomed the statement of the United Nations Secretary-General at the Opening Ceremony, underlining the importance of respect for human rights and for the human dignity of the persons caught up in this deteriorating situation.

Heads of Government also welcomed the information provided by the Secretary-General of the Organisation of American States that the OAS were arranging to inquire into the situation on the ground.

STATEMENT ON THE DECREE 1787 OF VENEZUELA

CARICOM Heads of State and Government reaffirmed the longstanding, deep and wide-ranging friendship between CARICOM and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

They recalled the numerous agreements in the area of trade, investment, tourism and people-to-people contacts which bind the Governments and peoples of CARICOM and Venezuela together.

They discussed in detail Decree No: 1.787 of 26 May 2015 issued by the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Heads noted in particular the negative implications which the Decree has for the peace, security and development of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana.

They recalled that just under a year ago on 8th September 2014, the Honourable Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, in his capacity as Chairman of Conference, had written to His Excellency Nicolás Maduro Moros, President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, encouraging Venezuela to redouble its efforts at an early delimitation of the maritime boundary between Guyana and Venezuela. Prime Minister Browne had also encouraged Venezuela to assist in the finding of an early solution to the controversy that has emerged from the Venezuelan contention that the Arbitral Award of 3rd October 1899 that established the boundary with Guyana, is null and void.

In that context, Heads of Government reaffirmed the inviolability of international treaties, agreements, awards and legal instruments and made particular reference to those international legally binding instruments that establish international boundaries.

Heads of Government further noted the negative implications of the decree for several other CARICOM countries.

Heads of Government called for adherence to accepted principles of international law in relation to the delineation and delimitation of the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf in the region. CARICOM states do not accept any unilateral proclamation which is inconsistent with international law.

They emphasized that CARICOM states have legitimate territorial and maritime entitlements that conform to international law and that must be respected.

As a result of these concerns, and in an effort to have the rights and entitlements of the affected Community Member States fully respected, a delegation of Heads met with the Vice President and Foreign Minister of Venezuela to express the Community's grave concern about Decree 1787.

Heads of Government therefore call upon the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, in the spirit of friendship and cooperation, to withdraw those elements of Decree 1787 insofar as they apply to the territory and maritime space of CARICOM States.

DECLARATION

CARICOM DECLARATION FOR CLIMATE ACTION

We, the Heads of State and Government of CARICOM Member States, at our Thirty-Sixth Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in Barbados , from 2-4 July, 2015,

Recognizing that climate change represents an urgent and potentially irreversible threat to human societies and the planet and thus requires to be urgently addressed by all Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (the Convention);

Acknowledging that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, with a view to urgently accelerating the reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions;

Reaffirming that Small Island Developing States (SIDS) remain a special case considering their unique and particular vulnerability to the adverse impacts of climate change, as acknowledged in the Convention and by the international community in multiple international fora since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992;

Further recognising that extreme weather and slow onset events and their adverse impacts including sea-level rise, coastal erosion, coral bleaching, flooding, ocean acidification, sea temperature rise, mangrove degradation, inundation and salinisation of coastal agricultural soils and residential areas, related to climate change, are fundamental threats to the sustainable development of low-lying Caribbean countries and island territories;

Noting that already with global warming of less than one degree Celsius, SIDS including Caribbean countries, as well as Guyana and Suriname, are experiencing more intense storms, droughts, extreme weather events, accelerating sea-level rise and other life-threatening impacts;

Concerned about the inadequate response of the international community to the threats posed by the impacts of climate change, including the inadequacy of financial resources available to support the actions required to reduce the impacts of climate change in the Caribbean;

Emphasizing that a global goal of limiting average temperature increase to below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels is inadequate for protecting critical ecosystems in SIDS from the adverse impacts of climate change and that the average temperature increase should be limited to well below 1.5 degrees;

Noting that some ecosystems in the Caribbean are already experiencing the negative effects of climate change and in some cases are approaching the limits of their adaptive capacities;

Reiterating the urgent need to close the gap between the mitigation pledges and the level of effort required to hold the increase in global average temperature to below 1.5 degrees centigrade above pre-industrial levels;

Emphasizing that the negotiations under the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP), which culminate in Paris, France in December 2015, are critical to advancing efforts to close the pre-2020 mitigation ambition gap and to securing a new universal agreement that focuses the efforts of all parties towards stronger climate action;

Further noting that Caribbean countries have exhibited leadership, including through agreement on a common framework to support the transformation of their energy systems, and are adopting ambitious national strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;

Recalling that as low-lying and small island countries recognized by the Convention as being particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, Caribbean countries have continued to emphasize, together with other SIDS, the need for ambitious and urgent action to address climate change,

Now therefore, we:

1. Urge all Parties to the Convention, with developed countries taking the lead, to work with urgency and purpose to achieve an ambitious, comprehensive and meaningful outcome in December 2015 at the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP -21) in Paris;
2. Stress that the Convention is, and should remain, the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change and reaffirm the importance of continuing to apply the principles of the Convention;
3. Call for the adoption of a new internationally legally binding agreement under the Convention that is in the form of a protocol and is applicable to all Parties at COP-21 in Paris (the 2015 Agreement);

4. Call for the 2015 Agreement to include inter alia:
- a) provisions to address the specific needs and special circumstances of SIDS;
 - b) enhanced provisions for supporting the adaptation needs of vulnerable developing countries, including provision of adequate, predictable, new and additional finance, technology and capacity building support, and strengthening of the institutional arrangements;
 - c) loss and damage as a central and distinct element of the agreement, that should be treated separately from adaptation;
 - d) the Technology Mechanism and the Warsaw REDD+ Framework;
 - e) commitment by developed country parties to take the lead in scaling-up the provision of adequate, predictable, new and additional financial resources, and opportunities for other Parties willing to do so, to also contribute to scaling up climate finance;
 - f) provision of support for capacity building and technology development and transfer to SIDS;
 - g) an explicit objective of limiting long-term the global average temperature increase to below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, supported by aggregate mitigation commitments that represent a feasible pathway to achieving that goal;
 - h) an explicit provision that parties fulfil and continuously enhance their mitigation commitments over time;
 - i) five (5) year mitigation commitment cycles, with robust ex ante and ex post review and upward adjustment processes;
 - j) provisions for measuring, reporting and verification of performance on commitments; and
 - k) a compliance regime.

Supporting Measures Finance

5. Reaffirm the need for Caribbean countries to receive improved and prioritised access to public, grant-based financial support to address climate change;
6. Emphasize that the recently capitalized Green Climate Fund (GCF) should play a critical role in facilitating the Caribbean countries access to financing to promote the paradigm shift towards low-carbon and climate resilient development pathways;
7. Further emphasize the importance of the GCF readiness programmes receiving adequate and continuous resources in order for Caribbean countries to receive readiness support for (i) strengthening arrangements for engaging the GCF, including for direct access (ii) receiving guidance on the accreditation of implementing entities, (iii) developing strategic frameworks for engagement with the Fund, (iv) developing initial pipelines of programme and project proposals aligned with the objectives and investment criteria of the Fund and national priorities, and (v) facilitating the access to knowledge products and distilling lessons from readiness programme experience;
8. Urge Parties that have made pledges towards the initial capitalization of the GCF to accelerate the signing of contribution agreements within one year from the time at which they are made;
9. Further urge developed country parties to scale up their contributions in line with their pledge for US\$100 billion per year by 2020;
10. Stress the importance for the GCF to commence the critical phase of considering funding proposals with a view to submit to the Fund's Board for approval some initial projects, including from Caribbean SIDS, ahead of the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP 21) in Paris;
11. Call on the GCF Private Sector Facility to give particular consideration to the small to medium enterprises in SIDS, including in the highly vulnerable tourism and agriculture industries given their importance to many Caribbean economies;

Loss and Damage

12. Urge the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage to work closely with the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility Segregated Portfolio Company (CCRIF SPC) and other insurance mechanisms and representatives of the hazard risk modelling community to assist in the design, development and implementation of innovative approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change tailored to the needs of SIDS , to include the agriculture sector;

13. Further propose the establishment of a process to develop appropriate international rules and procedures that provide redress for economic and non-economic losses emanating from irreversible and permanent damage resulting from human-induced climate change on land and sea resources and assets, and losses directly and indirectly associated with adverse impacts of human-induced climate change, including extreme events and slow onset events;

International Co-operation

14. Urge the international community to support the Caribbean in its ongoing efforts to contribute to the global effort to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and adapt to the impacts of climate change;
15. Further urge the international community to ensure that the outcome of COP 21 results in an ambitious international agreement that limits global warming to as far below 1.5°C as possible, in order to ensure the survival of the Caribbean States and territories.