

**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE THIRTY-FIRST  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF  
THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY, 4-7 JULY 2010, MONTEGO BAY, JAMAICA<sup>1</sup>**

The Thirty-First Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) was held at the Rose Hall Resort and Spa, a Hilton Resort, Montego Bay, Jamaica from 4-7 July 2010.

The Prime Minister of Jamaica, Honourable Bruce Golding presided. Other members of the Conference in attendance were: the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, Hon. Winston Baldwin Spencer; Prime Minister (ag) of Barbados the Hon. Freundel Stuart; the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Dominica, Hon. Roosevelt Skerrit; the Prime Minister of Grenada, Hon. Tillman Thomas; the President of Guyana, His Excellency Bharrat Jagdeo; the President of Haiti, His Excellency René Garcia Préval; the Prime Minister of Saint Lucia, Hon. Stephenson King; the Prime Minister of St. Kitts and Nevis, Hon. Dr. Denzil L. Douglas; and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar.

The Honourable Brent Symonette, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs represented The Bahamas; the Honourable Wilfred Elrington, Minister of Foreign Affairs represented Belize; His Excellency Ellsworth John, Ambassador to the Caribbean Community represented St Vincent and the Grenadines; and Her Excellency Manorma Soeknandan, Ambassador to the Caribbean Community represented Suriname.

Associate Members in attendance were: the Chief Minister of Anguilla, Hon. Hubert Benjamin Hughes and the Premier of Cayman Islands, Hon. William McKeeva Bush. Minister of Labour, Safety and Home Affairs, Honourable Lt Col (ret) David Burch represented Bermuda.

#### **OPENING CEREMONY**

Representatives of regional institutions and international organisations including the United Nations Secretary-General, His Excellency Ban Ki-moon and the Secretary-General of the Organisation of American States, His Excellency Jose Miguel Insulza also attended the ceremony.

The Chairman of CARICOM, the Prime Minister of Jamaica, Honourable Bruce Golding; the Prime Minister of Dominica, Honourable Roosevelt Skerrit; the Prime Minister of St. Kitts and Nevis, Honourable Dr. Denzil Douglas; the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar and the Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community His Excellency Edwin Carrington addressed the Opening Ceremony. His Excellency Ban Ki-moon also addressed the Opening Ceremony.

Prime Minister Golding pointed to the gains made by the Community in advancing the integration movement, acknowledged the internal challenges with which the Community grappled in realising the ideals of regional integration and emphasised the importance of working together.

He noted, however, that despite the challenges, the impatience of many to have the CSME agenda expedited and the expressed cynicism of some observers, the Community was still the best hope for Member States in countering the deluge of global crises, which he stated, had severely dislocated Caribbean economies and made them vulnerable to other social problems such as organised crime.

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<sup>1</sup> Tomado de [www.caricom.org](http://www.caricom.org)

Prime Minister Douglas outlined that in his fifteen year sojourn as a member of the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM he had seen major challenges but what stood out more to him was the achievements in the areas of free movement of people and capital under the CSME, in health development, institutional strengthening, education and external negotiations and that these successes should never be underestimated. Prime Minister Douglas advised his colleagues that they should not hesitate to look at the Revised Treaty of Basseterre which established the OECS Economic Union as a model on proceeding towards integration at the regional level.

Prime Minister Skerrit, immediate past Chairman of CARICOM, joined in expressing satisfaction that the Region had achieved all that it could under the present economic circumstances. He remained un-convinced that the Community was in any way 'less endowed' with leadership than it was some fifteen years ago. Expressing great optimism about the future of the Community, the outgoing Chairman of CARICOM was resolute that "going backward was not an option" for the Caribbean Community, yet moving forward would require the cooperation of all its citizens and not just CARICOM Heads.

Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar announced that her government remained resolute in its continued commitment to the Caribbean Community. She applauded the achievements of the Community and suggested that more emphasis should be placed on health care development, especially for critically ill children, poverty reduction, education and the empowerment of women in order to provide "a better quality of life for our peoples in CARICOM."

CARICOM Secretary-General His Excellency Edwin Carrington said the Community in its 37 years had garnered rich experience on which it could now draw in fighting the global and environment crises it was now facing. He noted that more developed countries were attempting to forge similar ties in order to stave off the crises, and asserted that what the Caribbean needed was "more and not less regional unity."

His Excellency Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, reiterated his support for Haiti as a priority for the United Nations and encouraged the Heads of Government to continue to pursue the goals of regional integration. He gave his commitment to supporting CARICOM initiatives in economic development, security and climate change.

### **Conferment of Honours**

During the opening ceremony representatives of the major sectors that provided emergency relief to Haiti – emergency response, emergency health and security and logistics - were presented with Scrolls of Commendation on behalf of all emergency relief personnel for their selfless and courageous service on the ground in Haiti in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake.

### **GOVERNANCE**

Heads of Government deliberated at length, the critical issue of Community governance. They agreed to appoint a committee comprising the Bureau of the Conference - the incumbent Chairman, Prime Minister of Jamaica; in-coming Chairman, Prime Minister of Grenada; and the outgoing Chairman of the Conference Prime Minister of Dominica - to which were added the President of Guyana and the Prime Ministers of St Kitts and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago. The Committee, with the assistance of a Technical Working Group, would conduct a review of the proposals on the table with regard to this issue. A special Meeting of Heads of Government on the issue would take place in late September, and the results of those deliberations would be presented to the Intersessional Meeting in February 2011.

## HAITI

CARICOM Heads of Government gave great prominence to the agenda item on Haiti in their deliberations. The Secretaries General of the United Nations and the Organisation of American States participated in the international dimension of the discussions.

Special Representative of CARICOM Heads of Government on Haiti, the Most Hon. P. J. Patterson gave an overview of the various forms of assistance provided by the Community to that Member State following the catastrophic earthquake of 12 January. The report pointed to emergency relief and solidarity, the contribution of financial and other resources, institutional assistance including the advocacy role of the Special Representative, the role of the Community and its private sector in the reconstruction process, and collaboration between the Community and Haiti.

In this regard, Heads of Government agreed to facilitate the movement of Haitian business persons within the Community and to endorse the recent decision of trade ministers to permit Haiti to commence non-reciprocal trade in goods in a range of products.

They also agreed to provide technical assistance to offset Haiti's depleted institutional capacity.

Heads of Government further agreed that the Community would contribute to the recovery and development processes through direct action and the encouragement of the involvement of the Private Sector, including the Diaspora and other actors, in sectors such as housing, construction, education and agriculture.

An update was given on the recent launch of the process leading to Presidential and legislative elections on 28 November 2010, which are viewed as fundamental for ensuring democratic continuity. The Community's participation in an International Task Force in support of the electoral process was underlined. The related proposal for the Community to provide technical assistance to the Haitian Provisional Electoral Council and to field an election observation mission if requested by the Government of Haiti was also endorsed by the Heads of Government.

The grave concerns of Heads of Government over the slow rate of disbursement of donor pledges, the shortfall in budgetary support for the Government of Haiti and the uncoordinated role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the recovery and reconstruction process were brought to the attention of the Secretaries General of the UN and OAS and expressed in a separate statement, a copy of which is attached.

Heads of Government welcomed the support provided by Australia and Spain to CARICOM in responding to the situation in Haiti.

## CARICOM SINGLE MARKET AND ECONOMY

Heads of Government considered action taken pursuant to the Appraisal of the State of Implementation of the CARICOM Single Market. In this regard they re-emphasised the importance of an effectively functioning CSME for supporting the development of the Region and contributing to the achievement of the aspirations of the people of CARICOM. To ensure that outstanding measures were put in place as expeditiously as possible, the Conference mandated the COTED to review the progress made by each Member State towards implementation and report regularly on their compliance. Heads of Government noted the completion of a related Study on **the Factors and Circumstances Restricting the Full Integration of the OECS and Belize in CARICOM**. This study proposed a framework for identifying and assessing factors and circumstances that constrained the full and effective

participation of the Lesser Developed Countries (LDC) in the CSME. The CARICOM Secretariat was charged with responsibility to prepare a comprehensive Action Plan which would convert the recommendations into implementable actions.

## **AGRICULTURE**

Heads of Government reiterated the commitment given at their Thirtieth Meeting to the Liliendaal Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security identifying agriculture as a priority sector for allocation of financial and other resources, and emphasising its importance for Food and Nutrition Security and for the development of the economies of the Community.

Heads of Government particularly focused on the importance of effective agriculture health and food safety systems, sanitary and phytosanitary measures and the operationalisation of the Caribbean Agriculture Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA) that was established at its Inter-Sessional Meeting in March. In this regard, Member States which have not signed the Agreement establishing CAHFSA, gave the undertaking to accede to the Agreement at the earliest opportunity, recognizing that the urgency to get the Agency up and running has become increasingly critical for CARICOM's intra-regional and extra-regional trade.

## **TOURISM**

Heads of Government noted with concern the potentially negative implications for the regional tourism industry of the Air Passenger Duty (APD)/Per Plane Duty (PPD) - proposed by the Government of the United Kingdom. Given that Tourism was the mainstay of many of our economies, they also considered the implications for the inhibitive impact on travel by the Caribbean Diaspora from that part of the world.

Heads of Government agreed that efforts should be made at the highest level, to hold further discussions with the United Kingdom on this issue.

## **ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRISIS**

Heads of Government recognised that countries in the Caribbean were still struggling to achieve positive economic growth owing to the sluggish nature of the global recovery from the financial and economic crisis. The fragile nature of the global economic recovery is linked to persistent credit, home foreclosure and employment crises which resulted in weak aggregate demand and related outputs. In addition, the Caribbean rate of recovery in the short and medium term is threatened by a number of factors including its own very high level of indebtedness; a non-concessionary status with respect to access to resources of the International Financial Institutions (IFIs); an increasing rate of erosion of preferential access to the markets of its major development partners; and the place of its offshore financial services industry is in doubt as a result of the OECD-imposed standards for greater transparency and effective exchange information. Heads of Government encouraged the relevant national and regional authorities to continue with their economic recovery efforts and, in particular, agreed that attention be given to the following areas:

1. Fiscal policy reforms, including debt management and public expenditure control
2. Financial sector policy reform, including adequate bank capitalisation, adherence to statutory fund requirements for insurance companies, efficient management of private and public sector pension funds, and operationalisation of the newly created College of Regulators
3. More effective articulation between the financial sector and the real sector for purposes of achieving greater efficiency, productivity and sustainable development

## EXTERNAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

Heads of Government reviewed the progress, to date, in the negotiations for a Trade and Development Agreement between CARICOM and Canada and reiterated that tangible development provisions were essential for CARICOM in such an Agreement. In this regard, CARICOM would be submitting its concrete proposals to Canada in the next Round of Negotiations. Regional consultations would be intensified, with a view to clarifying CARICOM's position on Canada's interest in the inclusion of labour and environment in the agreement.

Heads of Government noted the lack of progress in the WTO Doha Development Round of negotiations and expressed concern that this could put at risk the gains achieved by CARICOM in the negotiations to date and called for an assessment of the likely impact on the Caribbean of a failure to conclude the Round.

Heads of Government emphasized the need for the Region to accelerate the development of a major CARICOM Aid for Trade Project that would have the widest impact on the Region for submission to international development partners. In this context, they welcomed the convening of a WTO- sponsored Caribbean Aid for Trade Forum in January 2011 which would bring together Regional officials, the International Trade Centre (ITC), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and other co-operation partners and institutions.

Heads of Government received a report on the status of implementation of the CARIFORUM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) and welcomed the convening of the inaugural meeting of the Joint CARIFORUM-EU Council in May 2010. They noted the progress made by Member States towards the formal entry into force of the Agreement and underscored the need to complete these as soon as possible.

In light of developments in the global economy and actions taken by the EU since the signing of the Agreement in 2008, Heads of Government called for an assessment of the impact on the projected benefits under the Agreement.

They acknowledged the importance of deepening trade and economic relations with traditional partners and agreed that notwithstanding its resource constraints, the Community would remain open to securing new market opportunities particularly in this hemisphere. In this regard, particular attention would be paid to those countries and groupings that recognize the principle of special and differential treatment as well as the need for a strong development component aimed at strengthening trade capacity in CARICOM Member States.

Heads of Government also welcomed the extension of the Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act (CBTPA) to 2020 by the United States of America and commended the bipartisan approach, which made this possible.

## HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### Youth Development

Heads of Government noted with appreciation, the follow-up activities undertaken at the national and regional level since the convening of the Special Summit on Youth Development, 29 January 2010, Suriname, and the issuing of the Declaration of Paramaribo on **The Future of Youth in the Caribbean Community**. They noted that the follow-up actions which had taken place both at the national and regional level included the updating of the Regional Strategy for Youth Development and discussions between the CARICOM Secretariat and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Organisation of American States (OAS), the United

States (USAID) and the World Bank, for technical assistance and other forms of support to implement the actionable recommendations of the Paramaribo Declaration.

The CARICOM Commission on Youth Development was commended for its insightful Report presented to the Special Summit in Suriname and the implementation of the Paramaribo Declaration was given full support from Heads of Government.

### **Sustaining the Achievements of the Nassau Declaration**

Heads of Government reflected on the Nassau Declaration issued in July 2001 and acknowledged that all its actionable recommendations had been implemented. They noted in particular that this achievement included the Caribbean Cooperation in Health Initiative; the Pan Caribbean Partnership Against HIV and AIDS (PANCAP) which has been recognised by the United Nations as an international best practice; and the Port-of-Spain Declaration on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) 2007, which had spawned the region-wide observance of the second Saturday of September as Caribbean Wellness Day.

In this regard Heads of Government acknowledged the role of CARICOM ambassadors to the United Nations in pioneering a resolution for a UN high level meeting on NCDs in September 2011.

Heads of Government applauded the establishment of the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) as a giant step for the regional public health sector and the structure for making the Nassau Declaration a reality for the peoples of the Caribbean Community. They noted in particular, the pace at which the process was moving to meet the 2014 deadline for full operations of CARPHA and commended the steering committee for its efficiency in sticking to the implementation timelines in accordance with the mandate from the Conference in 2008.

Heads of Government welcomed the enthusiastic response to CARPHA from international partners including Canada, France, Sweden, United Kingdom and the USA at a recent partners meeting hosted by the Pan American Health Organisation in Washington, 14 June 2010.

### **University of the West Indies**

Heads of Government supported the proposal by the University of the West Indies to establish a Rex Nettleford Foundation in honour of the late Vice Chancellor Emeritus Professor Rex Nettleford. They also noted that the University, through its policies and programmes, was promoting regionalism and greater collaboration among tertiary level institutions. It was also broadening access to tertiary level education through emphasis on distance education and increasing use of Information and Communication Technology. Against this background they supported the establishment of a Task Force to define regionalism, its benefits and the mechanisms for its advancement.

They welcomed the university's efforts to offer places to Haitian students at its three campuses and to waive tuition fees even while seeking support to defray accommodation costs and living expenses.

They also expressed satisfaction with the development and implementation of the university's strategic plan which would be delivered in collaboration with other tertiary level institution and which included working toward the creation of a green university.

## **CRIME AND SECURITY**

Heads of Government agreed that crime and security remained one of the main priorities and urged the completion of implementation of the CARICOM Travel Card (CARIPASS) and the development of a Regional Crime and Security Resource Mobilisation Plan. They also agreed that the implementation of the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) with the USA should receive focussed attention with the establishment of the Technical Working Groups to advance the Action Plan agreed by both sides.

They further agreed on sustained with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to advance cooperation on joint prevention and crime reduction initiatives.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE PRIORITIES FOR THE REGION**

Heads of Government agreed to expedite the regional programme in preparation for the Sixteenth Conference of Parties (COP16) to the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Cancun, Mexico, November 2010. Recognising that the Copenhagen Accord which resulted from the Conference in 2009 was disappointing, Heads of Government agreed that its negotiators must adhere to the principles of the Liliendaal Declaration on Climate Change and Development (2009) and to the AOSIS Heads Declaration September 2009. They pointed specifically to the stabilisation of Green House Gases at 1.5°C and efforts to achieve a legally binding agreement on issues related to mitigation, adaptation, research and finance. Similarly, Heads of Government agreed to convene a joint COTED/COHSOD meeting in Saint Lucia in early September to consolidate the regional position on climate change for Cancun, Mexico.

Heads of Government expressed appreciation to Grenada for its role as Chair of Alliance of Small Island Developing States (AOSIS) and agreed to collaborate with the AOSIS in advancing the Region's interest in the Climate Change Negotiations.

## **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 and 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 expressed concern at the delay in the process to conduct the simultaneous referenda in both countries 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 establishment of the Belize-Guatemala High Level Working Group to identify and implement ways to improve the effectiveness of the Agreement on Confidence Building Measures to reduce tensions pending a final resolution to the territorial dispute. They commended the support of the Group of Friends and the OAS in helping to maintain peace and stability in the Region and called on their continued support in this respect.

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

### **Oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico**

Heads of Government considered the potential implications that the oil spill with Gulf of Mexico could have on the Region and discussed the countries framework for a strategy to deal with threat as well as similar emergencies. This would include a programme of public education.

## **EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH SPECIAL GUESTS**

### **United Nations**

Heads of Government discussed a number issues with UN Secretary-General including the post-disaster situation in Haiti; the impact of the global economic crisis on the Member States of the Community; crime and security; and the proposed high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly in 2011 initiated by CARICOM.

The UN Secretary General expressed his appreciation for the Community's strong commitment to multilateralism and to regionalization, and for the vital work undertaken by CARICOM at the United Nations. In this regard, he pointed out that the Community had helped to advance a number of key issues on the global agenda.

These related in particular to climate change, on which the Community had been pioneers in creating international awareness of the gravity of the issue and had continued to play a leadership role; the law of the sea; the establishment of the International Criminal Court; the impact of the global economic crisis on small economies; the Millennium Development Goals on whose attainment the Community had made appreciable progress; and the proposed High-Level Session of the UN General Assembly on non-communicable diseases (NCDs). He also commended the OECS for the recently signed economic union.

On the issue of Haiti on which a separate statement has been issued, the UN Secretary General expressed his gratitude for the priority attention and support the Community has accorded to Haiti. He made particular reference to the appointment of the CARICOM Special Representative on Haiti and to the Community's participation in one of the key mechanisms of the recovery process, the Interim Haiti Reconstruction Commission.

In response to the Community's concerns over the worsening threat of climate change which jeopardizes the Community's development, and over the international community's unwillingness to accept a lower warming threshold, the UN Secretary General acknowledged the compelling nature of the Community's message, 1.5°C to stay alive. He looked forward to progress being made on resource allocation at an upcoming meeting of the High-Level Advisory Group.

On the high-level meeting on non-communicable diseases, he pledged his full support and commended the Community for raising this critical issue.

With regard to the forthcoming mid-term review of the MDGs, he expressed satisfaction with the level of responses received and indicated that one of the major objectives would be the conclusion of a concrete, action-oriented plan. He looked forward to the continued leadership of CARICOM whose voice would make a difference. On the related issue of the development of small states for which the Community has been advocating a new development paradigm that takes account of the peculiarities of small highly indebted middle income countries, the

Secretary General reminded of the importance of a Summit next year on Lesser Developed Countries (LDCs).

### **International Monetary Fund (IMF)**

Heads of Government exchanged views with the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Mr Dominique Strauss-Kahn, on the operations of the IMF as they relate to the challenges being faced by CARICOM Member States as a result of the global economic crisis. The Conference expressed concern about the non-concessionary nature of access to loans by Caribbean countries from the IMF and other IFIs owing to the per capita middle income status of those countries. Many of the Small Highly Indebted Middle Income Countries (SHIMICs) like those of the Caribbean, have been deemed not eligible for access to the Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust Fund, which is one of the new financing facilities introduced to cushion countries from the global crisis. Concern was also expressed about the rate of interest in loan arrangements such as in the Stand-by Agreement Facility with Jamaica and Antigua and Barbuda. The IMF Managing Director agreed to review the issue of special and differential treatment.

Heads of Government noted the rapid pace at which the IMF expedited loan arrangements for large emerging market economies and expressed their wish for the Caribbean to be given a similar expeditious treatment, especially in times of external economic shocks and natural disasters. They also proposed that the IMF set up a Contingent Line of Credit catering to the particular needs of small vulnerable economies like those in the Caribbean. Heads of Government noted, with satisfaction, the IMF's promise to expedite the regulatory and bureaucratic arrangements now in train to make it possible to grant debt forgiveness to Haiti, in light of that country's experience with a natural disaster of mammoth proportions.

### **Organisation of American States (OAS)**

Heads of Government received the thanks of the Secretary General of the Organisation of the American States for the support of the Community for his recent re-election and that of the Assistant Secretary-General. In his remarks, he mentioned issues related to political developments in the hemisphere, development, governance and security. The Organisation was expanding its capacity to assist in the area of security and had been working with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. He looked forward to improving his organisation's relations with CARICOM in this critical area.

He indicated that the OAS was giving increased importance to trade-related matters and looked forward to continuing to work with the Community on election and other governance issues. In this regard, he informed of the support being provided by the OAS in support of the recently launched electoral process in Haiti. Assistance was being provided to the electoral commission in the area of voter registration by issuing voter identity cards and contributing to the compilation of the electoral register. Support for the tabulation of results would also be provided. The Organisation also intended to observe the forthcoming elections, to help develop Haitian domestic capacity for election observation. The Secretary General proposed undertaking a common observation effort with CARICOM. Heads of Government called on his CARICOM counterpart to liaise with him to coordinate efforts in this area.

### **DATE OF THE TWENTY-FIRST INTER-SESSIONAL MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE**

In accordance with the rotation schedule, Honourable Tillman Thomas, Prime Minister of Grenada, will assume the Chair of the Conference for the six-month period commencing 1 January 2011. The Twenty-Second Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference will be therefore

be held in Grenada on dates to be proposed by that Member State. The Inter-Sessional Meetings are customarily held during the first quarter of the year.

Montego  
July 7, 2010

Bay,

Jamaica