



Statement by

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on behalf of the Caribbean Community

at the 10th Session of OWG on SDGs

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United Nations Headquarters

Co – Chair

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Member States of CARICOM. We align with the statement delivered by Bolivia, on behalf of the G-77 and China. Allow me some general comments on our work during this 10th session of the OWG on SDGs.

We thank you, Co-chairs, for the documents which were circulated for consideration. Taken together, they provide a good basis for our work as they develop the linkage and focus of the arduous work of stock-taking that the OWG has undertaken over the course of several months with the more succinct elaboration of areas of priority focus from which can emerge potential sustainable development goal areas.

CARICOM is accordingly heartened by your invitation to engage during this session in a more substantive discussion on the revised focused areas you have provided with a view to consolidating and clustering them wherever possible bearing in mind the ultimate objective of the working group which is to formulate goals and targets.

Our comments today should be understood in the context of and in conjunction with previous pronouncements we have made within the OWG on the various thematic issues and also in relation to the more specific comments that will follow in the days ahead during the substantive consideration of the respective focus areas.

Of course, like many others, we accept the present clustering as a convenience for the organisation of our work this week. It also supplies a helpful orientation of the kind of clustering that will be necessary in moving from the large number of nineteen focus areas we currently have towards a more desirable smaller number of potential goal areas. However, we do not subscribe to the present clusters as indicative of the actual substantive cluster areas and we should avoid their consolidation as such at this stage.

This approach is especially necessary as our own work within CARICOM, especially in capitals, of clustering the focus areas is on-going. We wish, nonetheless, to highlight some of the aspects that are guiding our consideration and which might also inform the approach of the OWG in the exercise as we move forward. These include:

- **Current Clusters for Organizational Purposes.** Clusters useful for working purposes but are not taken to be indicative of how the goals will be created. - Clusters useful for working purposes but are not taken to be indicative of how the goals will be created
- **Further Synthesis and Clustering is Essential but we should Avoid Over Clustering.** Clearly, a primary preoccupation of the necessary synthesis, analysis and distillation of a wide range of sustainable development themes and areas into a small number of SDGs that can galvanize action on the pursuit of sustainable development globally. On the

other hand, the placement of too many areas into one cluster could reduce the focus on transformative actions needed in specific areas. Such an approach can make meaningful action to promote sustainable development on the ground less viable or likely. A balance has to be struck between efforts to cluster focus areas and ensuring there is no over clustering in which distinctive focus areas which merit treatment in their own right are not lost within a larger category.

- **Goal and Targets should address and be focused on Sustainable Development Priorities as contained in the Rio Outcome Document (See para 247).** While many issues impact on sustainable development, it would appear most beneficial to focus on commonly agreed core issues within the three dimensions of sustainable development. The potential goal areas should retain focus on the priorities as agreed in the Rio Outcome Document.
- **Universal Framework / National Relevance.** On the whole, our methodology should contribute to the establishment of a universal framework that contains universal targets and minimum standards applicable to all countries. We believe it will be important that all countries, developed and developing subscribe to some minimum core aspects. However, the framework should also allow for further adaptation in keeping with particular circumstances and situations at regional and or national levels. This will be particularly relevant in determining the indicators of success.
- **Economic Dimension.** In promoting true integration of the three dimensions there is need for particular emphasis on the economic dimension as it is most easily and often omitted. For practical purposes, the temptation to lump all the economic related issues into one goal must be resisted. We stress the importance of a strong economic dimension and ensuring that it is not reduced to a single goal on economic growth or conflating the economic elements with a stand-alone goal on MOI.
- **Need to Emphasise the Interlinkages.** Importantly, the interlinkages are made clear and we believe that the consideration and application of the interlinkages is the key to achieving a more effective clustering. The Co-Chair's document is useful. Potential Goals or Focus Areas should have core targets and then additional targets the link them with other goals and help to strengthen the integration of the three dimensions.
- **Importance of Greater Specificity.** Many of the focus areas are still at a level of generality that does not allow for an assessment of the full extent of their possible contribution to a transformative agenda. We can address some of these shortcomings in the specific discussions.

- **Treatment of the Means of Implementation(MOI).** There is still need for greater clarity on the treatment of the means of implementation within the OWG especially in the context of other intergovernmental processes. The joint meeting with the Committee of Experts was very useful. The concrete arrangements for MOI bear special relevance in light of recent experience in relation to MDG Goal 8 and the failings in relation to implementation. In many instances, difficulties arose not necessarily in relation to identifying the appropriate targets but in relation to assuring effective follow through. The SDGs must not just be another set of goals and targets but a renewal of commitment to ensuring the necessary means to implement the global sustainable development agenda. The prospects for appreciable progress on sustainable development in the absence of such commitment in concrete terms are not promising. It goes beyond the question of merely resources. Still a long way to go on this discussion within the OWG. There is a need for greater assurance of dealing with this in concrete terms and the structure that will allow us to do so.
- There is a need for balance across the three dimensions of sustainable development
- **Realization of Universality and Differentiation in the SDG Framework.** It is taken as a given that not all goals will be relevant to all countries in the same way. Need to consider how the matter of differentiation is to be addressed in a universal framework is an issue that the OWG will need to confront directly as we move towards goal setting.
- **Dealing with countries in special situations.** It is more than just means of implementation.
- **Attention to Enablers.** We believe some aspects will be best addressed within the context of enablers for the SDGs and should receive greater attention within the process to finalize the post 2015 development agenda. There should be a clear inter-relationship with Enablers. Several of these enablers might also be effectively mainstreamed across all the goals.
- **Data / Indicators.** We wish to underscore the fact that in the absence of appropriate statistical capabilities developing countries, and SIDS in particular, would face great challenges implementing the SDGs framework and specifically would have great difficulty developing indicators to accompany the goals and targets.
- **Substantive Priorities:** CARICOM will provide specific comments on the various focus areas. (Strengthening treatment of DRR / Resilience, NCDs, Systemic Issues, etc).

Co-Chair,

CARICOM believes these are some of the perspectives that we should bring to bear in our work of looking more closely at the list of revised focus areas in order to achieve an effective clustering and a clearer path towards the establishment of a limited set of SDGs. We will remain constructive and engaged in the work ahead to achieve our objective.

I thank you.