



Statement by His Excellency Eden Charles,
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Nations,

on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

at the
General Debate
of the

2016 High Level Political Forum
under the theme "Ensuring that No One is Left Behind"

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Trusteeship Council
United Nations Headquarters

Statement on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) on the occasion of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development- (Ministerial Segment)

Mr. President,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the fourteen (14) Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

CARICOM aligns itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of the Kingdom of Thailand on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Maldives on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and the Dominican Republic on behalf of the Community of Latin America and the Caribbean (CELAC).

CARICOM recalls the decision taken to establish a universal intergovernmental high-level political forum on sustainable development to replace the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) made by Heads at the Rio+20 Conference. Accordingly, we wish to use this opportunity to commend the President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), H.E. Mr. Oh Joon, for convening this very important meeting to be held in the first year of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The theme of this 2016 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)- *“Ensuring No One is Left Behind”* is indeed appropriate for the first meeting of the Forum charged with responsibility for the integrated follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It affords Member States the opportunity to take early stock of the work needed to be

undertaken and calibrate their approach accordingly to ensure the full and successful implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Mr. President,

CARICOM Member States are of the firm view that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda must build on the achievements and lessons learnt from the Millennium Development Goals. Additionally, our leaders have acknowledged that the essential requirements for sustainable development are poverty eradication, promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production and protecting and managing the natural resource base essential economic and social development.

They understood that this will require the promotion of sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, the creation of greater opportunities for all; the reduction of inequalities the raising of basic standards of living, fostering equitable social development and inclusion and promotion of the integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems.

For CARICOM, our full and successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda can easily be undermined by our region's high debt to GDP ratio. Indeed, in spite of our middle income status and relatively high placement on the human development index, as a region we remain challenged by our small, vulnerable economies which are exacerbated by their narrow bases, limited product and market diversification, lack of economies of scale and high dependence on international trade, vulnerability to natural disasters and the impacts of climate change.

Consequently, debt relief, economic grants and increased Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments can foster sustained economic growth and employment and strengthen domestic resource mobilization.

I also wish to bring to the attention of this Meeting the issue of the termination of correspondent banking relations in the region as this similarly has the potential to threaten our economic stability and capacity to remain properly integrated into the global financial, trade and economic systems.

Mr. President,

As Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the implementation of the 2030 Agenda cannot be divorced from the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway- our sustainable development blueprint. We note, with appreciation, the fulfilment of one of the mandates of the HLPF, that is, the provision of adequate time and sufficient attention to SIDS and sustainable development.

CARICOM reiterates what we stated during last week's SIDS segment, that is, the global goals have been constructed to work in an integrated, indivisible manner, aligned to national priorities and anchored in our national plans. As many of our Member States work towards the finalization of this integration process, the criticality of high-quality reliable and timely data and analysis, must be emphasized. We therefore renew our call for dedicated support for strengthening national statistical systems and offices as they relate to the collection and disaggregation of data.

CARICOM wishes to note the implementation of its regional Strategic Plan 2015-2019. It is premised on a resilience model for socio-economic progress and targets the achievement of economic, social, environmental and technological resilience. Additionally, it emphasises the importance of addressing inequality and advocates for the mainstreaming of inclusiveness in public policy and the adoption of integrated approaches to development. The Strategic Plan therefore aligns with and will play an integral role in underpinning the delivery of support for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Caribbean region.

In closing,

CARICOM welcomes all ongoing and upcoming intergovernmental processes related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda such as the Third UN Conference on Human Settlements.

CARICOM also calls on the United Nations development system to support national development priorities toward the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as we endeavour to leave no one behind.

I thank you.