



STATEMENT

BY

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OF BELIZE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON BEHALF OF
THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)

AT THE

INFORMAL MEETINGS OF THE PLENARY ON THE PROCESS OF
INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE POST-2015
DEVELOPMENT AGENDA, PURSUANT TO RESOLUTION 69/244
AND
DECISIONS 69/550 AND 69/555

17 FEBRUARY 2015

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Mr. Co-Facilitator,

On behalf of the fourteen Member States of the Caribbean Community, thank you for the useful elements you have provided and around which we can structure our interactions this week.

CARICOM Member States associate with the statements delivered on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States and on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. We wish to respond to the questions you have raised specifically on vision and challenges. We consider that in addressing these we can better understand transformation.

On Vision

Drawing on the various inputs to the post-2015 process, there has been **a consistent narrative** that can inform the challenges we face and the opportunities we seek to realize in 2030.

Those inputs speak to the paradox of our development exercise - of progress and at the same time unevenness or regress; of increasing opportunities for some but limited opportunities or worse, none, for others; of economic growth at the expense of environmental degradation; and of the need for greater global solidarity and enhanced cooperation to tackle fundamental challenges to our common humanity.

They also speak to **transformation** – making a difference in the lives of billions and instilling hope for future generations; harnessing economic opportunities and realizing economic growth; and stewarding the environment for our children.

The inputs we have had from this development exercise, from the various intergovernmental processes and expert advice, and from our people themselves, tell us that this transformation is possible only **through a people-centred, planet-sensitive and inclusive approach to development**, grounded in the **common values and principles we espouse as a United Nations**, based on the **realignment and coherence of our economic, social and environmental goals** and the **necessary means through which we can achieve those goals**. They also tell us that this transformation is possible only through a **universal agenda** that can accommodate the **diversity** of approaches to the diversity of needs at the national and regional levels.

If we take this narrative to its logical conclusion, our vision for 2030 at the core would reflect the very vision enshrined in the Charter for a **world free from fear and want and for a people free to live in dignity**. It would also reflect the unfulfilled promises of the Millennium Declaration for **freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility**.

On Challenges

You have asked in your letter *what challenges we will need to overcome to make this vision a reality*.

The easy answer to this question is **means of implementation** and a **renewed global partnership**. These are indisputably critical to support sustainable development. Presently we are

revisiting the policy framework for financing for development that will be an essential component of the post-2015 development agenda.

At the same time there are other challenges that will not necessarily be overcome by financing. These challenges are structural as highlighted in the case of the Least Developed Countries. They are also *inherentas* in the case of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) – a group of countries that have been recognized as a special case for sustainable development. To overcome such challenges, we need a robust development agenda that can specifically differentiate global responses for these particular cases. To this end, CARICOM Member States have advocated for the globally agreed outcomes of the international conferences on the countries in special situations to form and **be incorporated in the Declaration as an integral part** of the whole post-2015 development agenda.

The other challenges CARICOM wishes to highlight relate to the **global enabling environment and climate change**.

As SIDS, our countries are inherently vulnerable to external crises and shocks that have persistently constrained our development. Moreover climate change, the volatility of the global economy and our own limited fiscal space due to high debt burdens further exacerbate these inherent vulnerabilities. Our sustainable development will therefore depend on building economic, environmental and social resilience.

In addition, given our size and vulnerabilities, we will require a strong regional and international enabling environment. At the global level this will necessitate **global trade reforms** including enhanced financial and technical assistance, the extension of trade preferences, more flexible rules of origin and other forms of special and differential treatment; it will require **global financial system reforms** to improve the flow of finance to the Caribbean and to reduce volatility; as well as, mechanisms for **international collaboration on technology and capacity building**; new approaches to **measuring development progress**; a more **democratic and coherent international development cooperation** system; and **improved institutions** including strengthened data and monitoring systems for evidence-based decision making, accountability and transparency. The CARICOM proffers that beyond the transformational shifts that will be required at the national levels which the sustainable development goals are intended to catalyze, there must similarly be **a transformational shift at the global level** that will mutually reinforce those goals and our noble ambitions.

Finally, a fundamental challenge that we will have to overcome to realize our vision of sustainable development is **climate change**. The SIDS have been the proverbial canary in the coal mine on this issue. We have seen years of development rolled back with the passing of one storm. We are seeing drivers of our economic development – our already limited natural resources – being steadily depleted. Despite our best endeavours, our physical size itself limits our adaptation options. And our high susceptibility to natural hazards coupled with limited human and financial resources, constrain our ability to cope. If scientific projections for a 1m SLR are met in 2100, some small islands will become uninhabitable. Moreover, the cost to combat sea level rise would be extremely high relative to the size of our economies. It is for this reason that together with the need for an international enabling environment, the CARICOM calls for a strong and rapid international response to climate change. It is an inescapable fact that **combatting climate**

change and fostering sustainable development are mutually reinforcing agendas. Our Declaration must be unequivocal on this fact.

Mr. Co-facilitator,

We look forward to the exchange of views during this session with the hope that we can define a common outline for a communication strategy that the Declaration will articulate.

CARICOM Member States agree with the view that how we communicate our vision and our goals can be used to leverage political will and commitment across a wide range of stakeholders necessary for catalyzing action and ensuring the success of this new agenda.

We have a lot of common ground amongst us and we hope to use this as a basis for building consensus.

Thank you.