



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

20 JULY 2015

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Co-facilitators

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the member States of the Caribbean Community [CARICOM]. We wish to compliment the views expressed by the Group of 77 and China and those of AOSIS which we support.

We thank you for the present draft and your work in bringing all the different views together from our previous session.

The CARICOM is pleased to see that the overall structure of the text with the main parts – Declaration SDGs MOIs and Follow up and Review – remains intact.

Looking at each section in turn, we note the persistence of the Preamble, with noticeable alterations and the reordering of the Declaration for better logical coherence. We also note the revisions including some of our own inputs within the Declaration to better reflect the SDGs.

While, as has been stated, the draft brings us closer to the outcome for the summit, for the CARICOM there are five essential issues we find problematic:

1. The preamble
2. The tepid articulation of the political commitment to act
3. The lack of explicit integration of the SAMOA Pathway as a fundamental part of the agenda
4. The revision of targets
5. The treatment of the means of implementation

In addition to these points, we have also identified areas where streamlining is possible, where language should be tweaked for consistency with agreed terminology, for clarity and for accuracy, and where issues need to be reframed to ensure that action required is consistent with what the problems dictate as necessary – and here we speak specifically of climate change.

DECLARATION (Day One)

With respect to the Preamble of the Declaration, while it is much improved, we are yet to be convinced that it has any added value to the Declaration.

CARICOM shares the view that the Preamble even as re-drafted could very well lend itself to the misinterpretation of what is *sustainable development*; it could also lend itself to the perception of a silo approach – a problem that was endemic to the clustering approach that the SG attempted in his synthesis report; and above all it could distract focus from the Declaration itself.

If we are to agree to move forward with the Preamble, we would ask that these concerns should be addressed. Until then, we maintain reservations on this part.

For CARICOM, the Declaration is the headliner for the outcome document and for the sustainable development goals. It is the main political statement that the leaders will make. It should therefore capture the magnitude of the undertaking and the solemnity of their commitment. That commitment as stated in the Declaration is to an Agenda for the betterment of humanity with the overarching objective of poverty eradication and the principle of leaving no one behind. It is about an agreed paradigm shift from business as usual and a pivot towards sustainable development. It is about the present and the future. Through that commitment the Declaration should reflect our individual as well our global commitment to our peoples – children, youth and adult alike – and to safeguarding the planet – a collective commitment that will be realized through action in accordance with agreed values and principles. In short, the Declaration must capture with precision not only the vision of the Agenda but those very values and principles and above all an unequivocal commitment to act for its full and effective implementation.

The *Introduction* is a good start. There is room for further streamlining. For instance, the main point of paragraph 2 regarding the universal and transformative nature of the goals can be incorporated into paragraph 1. In paragraph 3, a better link should be made between the first and second sentence. In paragraph 5, it is sufficient to acknowledge the work of the United Nations as a whole. In paragraph 6, it should be clear that the work for implementation will be pursued on an ongoing basis through to 2030 and not left to the deadline alone.

We are comfortable with the re-ordering bringing *Vision* and *Shared Principles* forward. We also consider that the additions to the *Vision* get us closer to where we need to be.

We note that in moving *Shared Principles* up in the document, the paragraphs that were previously under this section have been separated with the previous paragraph 10 now appearing under *Our World Today* as paragraph 15. These commitments referenced in 15 are no doubt relevant to our world today, but they have a larger value than a contemporaneous one. They themselves embody enduring values and principles and have been formative of the new Agenda. They should therefore be a fundamental point of reference for this Agenda. We recommend keeping the paragraphs that now appear as 10 and 15 in the present draft together under *Shared Principles*. Further at the end of paragraph 15, we reiterate the call that AOSIS made for an explicit reference to the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States. As you know Rio + 20 mandated the SIDS Conference.

e.g. (para 15) We also recall the outcomes of major UN conferences and summits which have laid a solid foundation for sustainable development and have helped to shape ~~the~~ our new Agenda. These include the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development; the Millennium Declaration; the World Summit on Sustainable Development; the World Summit for Social Development; and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (“Rio+ 20”) and its follow-up including the outcome of the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States.

Under *Our world today*, we see room for further streamlining and for corrections to be made. The ideas in paragraph 16 would best be integrated into the other paragraphs. For

instance, the idea that challenges are interrelated and require integrated solutions can be added to the first sentence in paragraph 11; while the second and third sentences could be added to the end of paragraph 14.

e.g. para 11. We are meeting at a time of immense challenges, many of which are inter-related and require integrated solutions.

e.g. para 14 (new last sentence) **Our new Agenda recognizes that eradicating poverty and inequality, preserving the planet and creating sustained and inclusive economic growth are linked to each other and are inter-dependent. It defines thus a new approach to achieve sustainable development.**

Another area of improvement in this section is the manner in which it frames the issue of climate change. In paragraph 11, the fifth sentence speaks only to the “prospects” of climate change. It also equates the gravity of climate change to natural resource depletion and environmental degradation. The magnitude of climate change is different altogether. We have repeatedly referred to it as a fundamental threat to humanity. We have documented how it has reversed developmental gains. We cannot therefore treat lightly with it. We propose that the sentence could be reordered for instance to read:

The adverse impacts of climate change are already reversing development gains and the prospect of irreversible climate change, ongoing natural resource depletion and environmental degradation exacerbate the challenges humanity faces.

We also consider in line with AOSIS that a reference should be made to natural disasters and that this sentence should feature earlier in the paragraph 11.

In paragraph 13, second sentence, where the listing of countries appears, please add “**small island developing states**”. The international community in the SAMOA Pathway (paragraph 14 to be exact) recognizes that progress in the attainment of internationally agreed development goals including the MDGs has been uneven for SIDS.

Under *The new Agenda*, we maintain the position that the programmes of countries in special situations should be added to paragraph 21.

Paragraph 27 is still not there yet. The paragraph must address all dimensions of the climate change challenge – mitigation and adaptation – as well as the gravity of that challenge. This should then be the basis for a commitment of leaders to ensure that Paris delivers a meaningful outcome in line with what Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change have committed to. AOSIS has proposed language that we support.

Under *Implementation*, we suggest a correction to paragraph 35. In the last sentence strengthening the role of science-policy interface is confined to environmental governance. However as noted in the first sentence, it is relevant to sustainable development as a whole. Environmental governance should thus be replaced with sustainable development.

Paragraph 42 of the *Follow-up and review* should be further refined to provide for a commitment from leaders to follow-up and review including as set forth in the Agenda.

e.g. para 42, second sentence, can be replaced with “We will provide for systematic follow-up and review of implementation at the various levels including as set forth in this Agenda.”

Moving to the sub-heading on the call for action, we suggest that in paragraph 45, second sentence should be action-oriented. It could state as follows:

“We resolve to build a better future for all people, including the millions who have been denied the chance to lead decent, dignified and rewarding lives and to achieve their full human potential.”

The paragraph should end with this sentence.

Paragraph 46 likewise should be more forthright. It could read:

“Our agenda for global action for the next fifteen years is a global compact for people and planet in the twenty-first century. For our children and young people, in particular, this agenda will enable them /you to become positive agents for change and to channel [their]/[your] infinite capacities for activism into the creation of a better world.”

Co-faciliators,

These conclude our comments for now on the Declaration. We look forward to the feedback and inputs from other member States and stakeholders.

CARICOM member States wish to extend to you our full support and assure you of our commitment to work constructively for a good outcome within the timeframe allotted for our negotiations.