



Statement by the Honourable Camille Robinson-Regis,  
Minister of Planning and Development of the Republic of  
Trinidad and Tobago, on behalf of CARICOM, on the  
occasion of the 2018 High-Level Political Forum on  
Sustainable Development

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16 July 2018  
Trusteeship Council  
3:30 p.m.

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 Egypt, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China; the Maldives, on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS); and El Salvador, 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 (HLPF) 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) for convening the third Forum following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The theme of this 2018 HLPF, “Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies” affords Member States the opportunity to take stock of the work needed to be undertaken and calibrate or re-calibrate their approach accordingly to ensure the full and successful implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Accordingly, CARICOM welcomes the 47 countries that will present their Voluntary National Reviews over the next three days, and we especially highlight that two members of our Community: The Bahamas and Jamaica, will present their review during this Forum.

Mr. President,

CARICOM Heads of State and Government 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 of 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 within and among countries, raising the basic standards of living, fostering equitable social development and inclusion and the promotion of integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems.

It is CARICOM's considered view that sustainable finance is an absolute necessity for the successful achievement of the sustainable development goals. We affirm that our collective focus must center on how the international community can drive transformation to align financial markets with sustainable development and elaborate concrete ways in which Member States can approach financing the implementation of different SDGs.

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

We, therefore, reiterate our call for a reassessment of the allocation criteria of International Development Cooperation, must be based on methodologies that account for the multidimensional nature of development. Accordingly, CARICOM welcomes the upcoming High Level Event on Middle Income Countries which will take place later this year.

I also wish to highlight here 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 continued fulfilment of one of the mandates of the HLPF- the provision of adequate time and sufficient attention to SIDS and sustainable development.

CARICOM looks forward to the Mid-Term Review of the SAMOA Pathway and encourages Member States to actively participate in the process and renew their support to SIDS as they seek to implement the SAOMA Pathway through the mid-term review which will be held in 2019.

As CARICOM Member States stated during last week's SIDS segment, 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 reiterate our call for dedicated support for strengthening national statistical systems and offices as it relates to the collection and disaggregation of data.

In closing,

We note this is the first HLPF to be held following the adoption of resolution 72/279 that has launched the process to strengthen and adapt the United Nations Development System to better support Member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. CARICOM continues to call on the United Nations development system to support national development priorities towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as we endeavour to leave no one behind.

I thank you.