



*Mission Permanente de la République d'Haïti
auprès des Nations Unies*

**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY MR. ANTONIO RODRIGUE
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TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON BEHALF OF THE
CARICOM GROUP**

**AT THE VIRTUAL MEETING ON
OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT SEGMENT OF THE
UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
(ECOSOC)**

New York, le 19 mai 2021

Checked against delivery.

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CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY

Statement at the 2021 Economic and Social Council
Operational Activities for Development Segment
*Session 6: Responding to needs and priorities of countries serviced by multi-country
offices*
Wednesday 19 May 2021
4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the fourteen (14) Member States of CARICOM, and at the outset, the Group expresses its appreciation to the President and Vice-President of ECOSOC, for convening this very important session on responding to the needs and priorities of countries serviced by multi-country offices.

CARICOM also extends its gratitude to the Secretary-General and the Development Coordination Office (DCO) for their respective reports on the implementation of the mandates set forth by the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of the operational activities for development, pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 75/233 and 72/279.

I also take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the panelists for their insightful presentations, and I wish to align these remarks with those delivered by Guinea, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and with those remarks Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

Mr. Moderator,

We are facing challenging times. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continues to fall heavily on our overburdened social protection and health care systems, lay waste to our key economic sectors and industries, and erode decades of our hard-earned development progress. The United Nations response to this unprecedented human crisis is crucial to saving lives and livelihoods and steering vulnerable countries, like small island developing states, back to a path of sustainable, inclusive and resilient growth and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

The reinvigorated resident coordinator system and the new generation of United Nations Country Teams is facing its first real test. We commend the Secretary-General and the DCO for its efforts to swiftly commence implementation of the recommendations stemming from the MCO Review, which were endorsed at last year's OAS segment.

We note that that a number of outposted coordination officers are now in place in the region, as well as the regional coordination specialist to strengthen regional support in the Barbados MCO.

We look forward to the completion of the recruitment process of the outposted coordination officers in the remaining countries and territories to better enhance physical presence and coordination on the ground.

CARICOM welcomes the efforts to ensure more focused and tailored programmatic support to countries and territories by MCOs. However, we wish stress that the system's response and support to the challenges, needs and priorities of SIDS ought to be dealt in a broad manner across the system and not solely through MCOs as some SIDS are serviced by a Resident Coordinator Office.

Further, it is also important that country teams can draw on the leadership and capacities of the Resident Coordinator offices and the full assets and expertise of the entire UNDS. On this note, we commend the swift response of the Resident Coordinator in Barbados following the eruption of the La Soufriere Volcano in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The coordinated response of the UN, through the entities on the ground and in the region, was instrumental in mobilizing vital humanitarian relief and support. It is a testament to efficacy of the reforms.

Mr. Moderator,

We note that a number of UN entities have also taken steps to increase or strengthen their expertise on the group. As such, CARICOM also reiterates the importance of ensuring that staffing profiles in the MCOs are appropriately tailored to address the realities of the countries in which they serve. As a key part of the repositioning process, CARICOM reiterates the importance of ensuring that staffing profiles include the relevant skills sets, experience and knowledge to the unique challenges facing SIDS and the Caribbean region, especially in the face of this pandemic.

We also note the launch of the new Regional Collaborative Platforms and their Issue-based coalitions (IBCs), and CARICOM looks forward to the pooling of expertise to better support RCs and UNCTs in their support towards national priorities and needs, including in the context of the financial and debt challenges facing our region. The Group also wishes to stress the importance of strengthening data and statistical capacities in countries covered by MCOs, including improving on the ongoing work of the ECLAC sub-regional office for the Caribbean.

CARICOM also stresses the role of MCOs in mobilizing or improving access to predictable programmatic resources needed to help drive the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SAMOA Pathway, as well as to support our national development plans.

Mr. Moderator,

CARICOM Member States are currently engaging with the UN System on the development of a new multi-country sustainable development cooperation framework that is based on the multi-country common country analysis, which will also guide the country implementation plans for each country and territory. In this regard, we stress that the respective country implementation plans must be tailored and guided by national ownership and leadership.

In closing, CARICOM acknowledges with appreciation the steps taken to implement the Secretary-General's recommendations on the multi-country offices, as well as the wider SIDS support offer. These steps will contribute to our regional and national efforts to achieve sustainable development, particularly in addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, there must be continued consultations and follow-up to assess the progress, challenges and impact of the implementation of the MCO recommendations across the regions.

CARICOM remains committed and supportive to the overall repositioning process of the development system, the implementation of the 2020 QCPR, and the review of the Resident Coordinator System, including its funding. You can continue to count on the region's constructive and collaborative engagement going forward on this important issue.

I thank you.