



1stExtraordinary Inter-Sessional Summit of the OACPS

Theme: “Transcending the COVID-19 Pandemic: Building Resilience through Global Solidarity”

Agenda Item 4: Discussion on Key Global Solidarity Actions

Wednesday, June 3, 2020

The Most Honourable Andrew Holness, ON, MP
Prime Minister of Jamaica

- Mr. Chairman my brother Jambo! - It is good to see you even in this virtual setting.
- Secretary General
- Colleagues all
- When we met in Nairobi last year, we resolved to deepen and strengthen our solidarity as a group of developing states.
- Little did we know that only a few weeks later, the Novel Corona Virus would be declared a “Global Health Emergency” and then later a Pandemic, severely eroding our resilience and even reversing the hard-earned gains of sustainable development.
- CARIFORUM States have experienced devastating impacts in multiple areas including health, education, culture, trade and finance. The mainstays of most of our economies; agriculture and tourism, were hardest hit by a staggering fallout in revenue and employment. These experiences are certainly echoed across ACP states.
- This global crisis is a resounding call to action for nothing less than a comprehensive revision of the system of global economic governance that will promote sustainable development, even in the face of a pandemic. This includes redefining development indices, ameliorating inequalities and addressing economic imbalance.
- Admittedly, the pandemic has summoned increased coordinated responses from the international community. These include the UN Secretary-General’s launch of the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan requesting US\$2 billion from Member States to boost the global response.

- In Nairobi, we committed to strengthen multilateralism for development. Let us therefore engage our institutions to consider innovative solutions. The flaws in the current international financial and economic system must be remedied.
- The OACPS must mount a strong advocacy campaign for access to emergency liquidity support of developing countries with vulnerable economies. This will require the international financial system to facilitate the channeling of public and private credit flows into productive development capital.
- Together, we must address global inequality, unsustainable debt, and socio-economic disparities. In this regard, intra-ACP collaboration, including South-South Cooperation can become an effective tool in building stronger social systems and infrastructures.
- Regional cooperation can also promote the reorientation of our societies to adjust to the 'new normal' that we must now embrace. Institutions such as the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) have played a sterling role in instituting health protocols that have helped to minimize the spread of the coronavirus and its effects on Caribbean societies.
- Collaboration with regional health agencies across the OACPS and the exchange of information, technical expertise and best practices are essential.
- Bilateral partnerships, strong multilateral institutions and private sector participation are critical in the battle and recovery from COVID-19. In addition to financial resources, they can offer well needed investment especially in the areas of research and innovation.
- Caribbean countries noted, with great concern, the announcement that the EU had blacklisted some of our countries for assessed deficiencies in our Anti Money Laundering system. Our organization, must lobby collectively to curtail the unilateral

listing of our countries, which imposes further economic and financial hardships and negates efforts to build the economic resilience needed for development.

- Instead, we would wish to see our EU partners leverage their influence in major multilateral fora to advocate on behalf of developing countries, to have the crippling structural imbalances in the international economic system, swiftly addressed and give further support to those countries that are demonstrably making effort to comply and implement global standards.
- The Pandemic has no doubt threatened lives and livelihoods, however it has also provided us with an opportunity to reconfigure our societies to work smarter and safer by further integrating technology and innovation in our productive activities. As a forward looking Organisation, let us commit to using the opportunity the crisis presents to "build back better".
- Although the global disparities are increasingly evident, we in the CARIFORUM Group believe that new institutional arrangements can address the current deficiencies, so that we all emerge renewed, in the face of this global crisis.
- Let us pursue that new architecture!