



**PERMANENT MISSION OF JAMAICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

STATEMENT BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**ON BEHALF OF
THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)**



AT THE

**SECOND COMMITTEE JOINT DISCUSSION ON
AGENDA ITEM 21 AND 23: ERADICATION OF POVERTY AND OTHER
DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AND AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT, FOOD
SECURITY AND NUTRITION**

**11th OCTOBER 2023
NEW YORK**

FINAL TEXT

Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the 14 member states of the Caribbean Community.

CARICOM aligns itself with the statement delivered by Cuba on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and Samoa on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island Developing States (AOSIS).

Mr. Chairman,

The discussion on these two agenda items goes to the heart of the sustainable development agenda, as ending poverty and ensuring food security and nutrition are indispensable requirements for sustainable development. Sadly, the statistics before us paint a grim picture – the world is not on track to achieve these two goals by 2030 and if current trends persist more than six hundred million people will still be hungry in 2030. In fact, in 2022 there was no global progress on reducing food insecurity. While the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the situation, the reversal on gains made was already occurring before the pandemic.

Mr. Chairman,

A study conducted by CARICOM and the World Food Programme (WFP) found that in September 2022 moderate food insecurity in

the English-speaking Caribbean had risen to an alarming 46%, bringing the total population facing food insecurity to 57%.

The situation in Haiti is singularly a cause for deep concern with over half of the country's population chronically food insecure.¹ We call for the Humanitarian Response Plan to be adequately funded, recognizing the immediate food security needs and the need for investment in agriculture to address the issue in the longer term.

Mr. Chairman,

Rising costs for food, energy and other commodities, the effects of the war in Ukraine and the slow recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic have all contributed to this deterioration. The worsening impact of the climate crisis is further exacerbating the situation in our region, and placing a stranglehold on our ambitions. Predictions are that temperatures will continue to rise; rainfall patterns will be further disrupted, and many parts of the Latin America and Caribbean region will become drier. This undermines progress on target 2.4 of SDG 2, which calls for resilient agricultural practices to increase productivity and production by 2030.

Mr. Chairman,

¹ WFP Haiti Country Brief

CARICOM is of the view that it is constructive to harmonize discussions on these two agenda items, as poverty and food security are inextricably linked. Many of the world's poorest, including in the CARICOM states, are concentrated in rural areas, where agriculture is the main source of livelihood. This underscores the importance of the sector. Extreme poverty cannot be eradicated without major global investment to mitigate the challenges faced by the agriculture sector in the developing world, ranging from market access, price fluctuations, and subsidies, to the debilitating impacts of environmental degradation.

Notwithstanding the enormity of the challenges, CARICOM is accelerating its agriculture and food security agenda. CARICOM's common agriculture policy incorporates initiatives to address rural modernization and youth involvement, including climate-smart agriculture. This stresses the importance of improving the quality of life of rural communities through increased opportunities in agri-business, strengthening institutions supporting agri-business and community development, and building social capital.

Recognizing that CARICOM countries import more than 75% of their food, our Heads of Government adopted the "Vision 25 by 2025" Initiative, aimed at reducing the region's food import bill by at least 25% by 2025. We are also developing a Cross-Border Agri-Food Investment Strategy to bolster production corridors.

CARICOM continues to work with partners to increase our populations' resilience to shocks through stronger disaster management, social protection and food systems that are more effective, sustainable and responsive in meeting the needs of those most affected by crises. Social protection programmes and other government support have been scaled up throughout the Caribbean.

Mr. Chairman, while CARICOM continues its efforts to eradicate poverty and food insecurity, we must reiterate that real and accelerated progress will only be possible if we surmount the structural and geopolitical challenges that exist. These include preventing and ending conflicts; access to finance, including climate finance; the debilitating debt burdens of developing countries and access to relevant technologies. These issues must be addressed. We must also make progress in looking beyond GDP in order to have a true measure of our countries' economic, social and environmental well-being.

In this regard, CARICOM reiterates our call for reform of the international financial architecture; for the implementation of the Bridgetown Initiative; for the early completion and adoption of the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index; and for the speedy operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund. We also call for commitments to be met, including the 100 billion dollars annually for climate finance and the 0.7% of GNI by developed countries toward ODA. Together these measures can accelerate our efforts

in bringing an end to hunger and poverty and the overall implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

I thank you.