



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

**STATEMENT BY**

**HIS EXCELLENCY BRIAN WALLACE  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAMAICA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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



**AT THE**

**FIRST PLENARY MEETING OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE:  
AGENDA ITEM 24: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

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NEW YORK**

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the fourteen Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) on Agenda Item 24: Social Development.

**Chair,**

At the outset, the group extends our congratulations to you and the other members of the Bureau on being elected to preside over the work of this Committee. We wish you every success during your tenure and we assure you of the support of our delegations.

We also thank the Secretary-General for the reports on this agenda item which will assist in guiding our discussions during this session.

CARICOM aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Cuba on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

**Chair,**

Year after year we have heard the resounding calls to ensure that no-one is left behind. Despite our many efforts to answer this call and to implement the 2030 Agenda, even as the international community emerges from a pandemic, our progress towards inclusive and sustained development have been stymied by a myriad of factors including increasing inequalities, economic volatilities, global conflicts and climate change.

CARICOM reaffirms our commitment to fulfilling the goals and objectives outlined in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme

of Action. These commitments, which were made at the World Summit for Social Development almost 30 years ago, remain very much as relevant today as they were at their adoption in 1995. In that connection, we take note of the proposal by the Secretary-General to convene a World Social Summit in 2025 which would serve as an opportunity to review gaps and progress in advancing a people-centered approach to development, as called for in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, and as a means of accelerating action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Chair,**

The susceptibility of our region to external shocks is a constant concern and a reminder of our inherent vulnerabilities as Small Island Developing States. Climate change and environmental degradation continue to thwart our development and our ability to deliver on our commitments to our people. Nevertheless, we are resilient and we will continue to ensure that our social development policies are tailored to our context. However, we cannot do it alone.

In that connection, we reiterate that unprecedented times call for an unprecedented response from the international community. We therefore stress the need for North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, to support national efforts aimed at building resilience, reducing inequalities and alleviating poverty, and to realize the

commitments made in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, and those contained in the 2030 Agenda.

Additionally, CARICOM reiterates the call for urgent action from the international community to reform the international financial architecture and ensure an enabling environment for developing countries to actively participate in and benefit from the global economy. The Multi-Vulnerability Index and the Bridgetown Initiative, which have found consensus among CARICOM must be vigorously pursued.

**Chair,**

A people-centered approach to sustainable development embodies a healthy and productive life. In this context, CARICOM welcomes the convening of the three recently held high level health-related meetings during the high-level week of the 78<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly. Our region suffers from a high non-communicable disease burden, and we continue to prioritize primary and specialized health services for the prevention, screening, treatment and control of NCDs, including risk factor reduction and prevention, in its health policies. In that regard, CARICOM recently celebrated Caribbean Wellness Day, an annual celebration held in September to raise awareness for policies that promote healthy behaviors in Caribbean people, at the community, institutional, national, and regional levels, with a goal of minimizing the risks of NCDs through individual and collective action.

**Chair,**

CARICOM recognizes the need to prioritize education in our social development policies. Advancing human capital development has been a central pillar of our region's social development framework. Accordingly, CARICOM is working assiduously towards the implementation of its *Human Resource Development (HRD) 2030 Strategy* as well as SDG 4 "quality education".

We remain cognizant of the serious impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on access to quality education, and the lives of students, teachers, and communities, as well as the need to bolster investment in education through a regional coordination of resources to support education financing. In this regard, CARICOM is committed to rethinking education and what it should accomplish to enable students to exit schools with confidence as Caribbean citizens who are participants and power brokers, the arbiters of their destinies, and global citizens who can make a meaningful contribution to our international community.

**Chair,**

Addressing inequality, in all its dimensions, is essential to eradicating poverty, advancing social progress and achieving sustainable development for all. It is an ongoing battle which we as Small Island Developing States continue to grapple with.

As CARICOM celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we celebrate 50 years of resilience and transformative change. We will continue to play our part, to ensure that we leave no one behind.