



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

THIRD COMMITTEE PLENARY MEETING

ON

AGENDA ITEM 25: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

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FINAL TEXT

Chair,

I have the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of the 14 Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

CARICOM aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Cuba on behalf of G77 and China.

We thank the Secretary-General for the reports provided under this agenda item and take note of the recommendations contained therein.

Chair,

According to the Report of the Secretary General on 'Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals', the world will not achieve gender equality by 2030. In fact, we will be nowhere close to this goal. It is estimated that, at the current rate of progress, it will take up to 286 years to close gaps in legal protection and remove discriminatory laws; 140 years for women to be represented equally in positions of power and leadership in the workplace; and 47 years to achieve equal representation in national parliaments.

These are grim predictions that require an honest assessment of the obstacles and challenges that continue to stymie the achievement of gender equality. Drastically off-track results require drastic action. In CARICOM's view, a combination of political will, investment, financial

support and international cooperation is needed to realize significant progress.

We remain focused on the attainment for all women of equal pay for equal work, equal sharing of unpaid care and domestic work, an end to sexual harassment and all forms of violence against women and girls, improvement of educational opportunities, robust gender responsive universal health coverage, and equal participation in decision making in political and other areas of life.

Chair,

The majority of the world's poor are women. The eradication of poverty and removal of discriminatory policies and practices are central to reducing the vulnerability of women and girls and building resilience. Critical to this is the provision of education and training opportunities.

This is a key priority for CARICOM countries. Our efforts, in this regard, have resulted in increased success of girls at the secondary and tertiary levels and more women emerging as effective leaders, entrepreneurs and agents of change for development. Our governments have also prioritized access to health care and social protection.

Chair,

We welcome the report of the Secretary General that there has been significant improvement in the status of women in the UN system, particularly in the professional and higher categories. The United Nations should be a positive example for the rest of the world.

CARICOM Member States recognize the essential role that women play in the socio-economic and political development of our region. Despite challenges, women in our region have established themselves as dependable partners in the development process and make crucial contributions to promoting sustained and inclusive economic growth and poverty eradication. While we have not achieved gender parity, women are better represented in decision making, including in the political sphere.

Chair,

Investment in women-led and women-focused sustainable solutions is critical, including indigenous and rural nature-based solutions, resource management, and food production activities. In this regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's report on the improvement of the situation of women and girls in rural areas. We recognize the value of women's participation in managing natural resources and in the design and implementation of early warning systems.

Our region is prone to climate-related disasters. In the aftermath of such disasters, it is often women and girls who are disproportionately

affected. Notwithstanding this, women in our region have shown immense fortitude and leadership, contributing in numerous ways towards climate responses. In many instances, they are the leaders advocating for the protection of the environment.

Chair,

The world continues to fail in the efforts to eradicate violence against women and girls. One in three women globally is subjected to physical and/or sexual violence at least once in their lifetime. With the increase in use of technology, we have seen that online harassment, particularly on social media, has increased dramatically. We are deeply concerned about this issue which has short and long term economic, physical and psychological consequences and severely hinders women and girls' empowerment, advancement and full participation in society.

Combatting violence against women and girls requires legislative and administrative measures, mobilization of resources, intensified advocacy and community outreaches. Our governments are consistently working to eliminate this scourge, ensuring access to justice for victims, support for survivors, strengthening of family support structures, and the removal of negative social norms and gender stereotypes. We recognize the critical importance of engaging men and boys in these efforts.

Chair,

The achievement of gender equality is hindered by multiple factors that require specific and measurable actions. We must systematically remove obstacles. We must work collaboratively. We continue to seek support from our development partners towards building our capacity to collect credible data and information so that evidence-based policies and action plans can be developed.

In CARICOM's view, if we are to make real progress towards achieving gender equality, the use of special measures and quotas for more targeted investment in women and girls is also necessary. The world today and the world we should bequeath to future generations demands no less.

I thank you.