



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

STATEMENT BY

HIS EXCELLENCY E. COURTENAY RATTRAY  
AMBASSADOR / PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON BEHALF OF  
THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)



ON

AGENDA ITEM 20:

***IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOMES OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCES ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND  
ON HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND  
STRENGTHENING OF THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS  
PROGRAMME (UN-HABITAT)***

**IN THE SECOND COMMITTEE  
71<sup>st</sup> SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**NEW YORK**

**TUESDAY, 25<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2016**

*FINAL TEXT*

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the fourteen Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). CARICOM aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Kingdom of Thailand on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Dominican Republic on behalf of CELAC and the Maldives on behalf of AOSIS.

CARICOM welcomes the unanimous adoption without reservation of the New Urban Agenda at the Third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development in Quito on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2016. This reflects the result of extensive consultations among Member States and stakeholders and demonstrates a collective commitment to make our cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. The importance of well-planned and managed urbanization cannot be overstated in terms of its contribution to sustainable development which, for CARICOM, is an overriding imperative.

Mr. Chairman,

An unfortunate feature of the rapid urbanization that has taken place in our region is the creation of a housing deficit that has resulted in a large share of the population living in informal settlements, which are vulnerable to and disproportionately affected by landslides, flooding and storm surges. The absence of efficiently functioning land markets, inaccurate property registrations and land disputes have further compounded the problem and slowed the pace of housing construction programmes. A key issue going forward involves our ability to put measures in place to protect homes against rising sea-levels, given that half the population in our region lives within 5 kilometres from the coastline. The knock-on effects for lives and livelihoods, in a context of disaster risk, are frequently calamitous as the accumulated losses can severely and swiftly undermine years of social and economic development.

Mr. Chairman,

CARICOM supports the attention given in the New Urban Agenda to renewed local-national partnerships, in which stakeholders and local and sub-national governments serve as strategic partners of national governments, based on a strong national system of cities and well balanced territorial development, in support of national development targets. We are also in support of effective decentralization, based on the principle of subsidiarity and the recognition of local self-governance that can strengthen urban governance and management, with devolved systems of co-responsibility based on effective contributions from local authorities and civil society.

Within this context, the importance of urban-rural and cross sectoral linkages and the need for equitable distribution of resources across the urban rural continuum is of great significance. Critical infrastructure related to transportation, public health, educational facilities, water and

sanitation systems, agriculture, communications and other vital sectors must be prioritized, in order to ensure coherence and coordination in our integrated developmental efforts.

Mr. Chairman,

It is in this respect that CARICOM advocates for the continued strengthening of the work being done by UN-Habitat to support developing countries to improve in areas such as urban legislation, urban planning and design, housing and slum upgrading, disaster risk reduction and rehabilitation, and research and capacity development. The significance of maintaining strong political will, as well as identifying the financial means to implement this Agenda cannot be overstated and CARICOM is committed to playing its part in making our cities and human settlements liveable, sustainable and inclusive.

Thank you.