



*Permanent Mission
of Barbados to
the United Nations*



STATEMENT

BY

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MINISTER OF FAMILY, CULTURE, SPORTS AND YOUTH
BARBADOS**

AT THE

**UNITED NATIONS HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON THE
COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN
REALIZING THE DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT ON
HIV/AIDS AND THE POLITICAL DECLARATION ON HIV/AIDS**

ON

JUNE 9, 2011

**United Nations Headquarters
New York**

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Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, Excellencies, distinguished delegates.

I bring you greetings from the Government and people of Barbados. I hope that the report I will share today on our benchmarks of effectiveness within our National AIDS Programme will add some value to the collective knowledge required for greater success in the global prevention and control of HIV.

Let me first congratulate you Mr. President and the Secretary-General on the foresight in convening this High Level meeting on HIV/AIDS.

Following a successful World Bank First Project, Barbados has started the execution of the Second Project with a systematic focus on: **Universal access to care treatment and support, reducing new infections, eliminating stigma and discrimination and significantly reducing AIDS related deaths.**

The achievements and progress of Barbados' National AIDS Programme continue to get necessary support at the highest level. There are 18 government Ministries and over half of these have a functioning HIV core group, with each Ministry having an annual action plan for HIV.

So we have been putting in place the measures and frameworks necessary for achieving the goals set at the beginning of the second World Bank project. These include:

- Maintaining the percentage of HIV-positive pregnant women receiving a complete course of anti-retroviral prophylaxis for PMTCT above 95%.
- Increasing the funds disbursed to civil society organizations under results-based agreements with the National HIV AIDS Commission to facilitate the implementation of targeted programme interventions for key populations at higher risk during this second project.
- Increasing the number of persons from key populations at higher risk who can access preventative services.
- Increasing the percentage of sex-workers who report the use of condoms with their most recent client, and

Data collated from this second World Bank project will form the basis for our National Strategic Plan for 2013-2018.

As a collective of nations we need as a matter of urgency to address the issue of lack of access to concessionary funding which impacts Barbados and other developing countries as a result of our relatively high per capita income fueled in our case mainly by tourism, which itself has introduced other issues of vulnerability.

This difficulty has the potential of reversing recent successes in the provision of access to vital but expensive HIV-combatting drugs.

We in Barbados have also adopted a national bi-partisan approach to the management and treatment of HIV as evidenced by a joint declaration recently signed by our Prime Minister the Honourable Freundel Stuart and the Leader of the Opposition the Right Honourable Owen Arthur.

In this declaration of commitment, the representatives of the Government and People of Barbados reaffirm our commitment to the global response to HIV;

We also re-affirm our commitment to Barbados' national HIV response through our multi-sectoral approach, as articulated in its National Policy on HIV, the National Strategic Plan on HIV Prevention & Control 2008-2013 and embedded principles in design of our national HIV programming;

In that declaration we recognise our shared space (geographical or otherwise) and our shared responsibilities in reaching the Universal Access 2015 "Zero" goals, and we support the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) position as articulated through the Pan Caribbean Partnership against HIV and AIDS;

We also recognise the need for targeted attention in specific areas at the Barbados country level;

We further acknowledge that while noteworthy strides have been made in HIV care and treatment especially with respect to Prevention Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT) and support of Persons Living With HIV

(PLHIV) significant efforts still need to be made in relation to prevention of HIV and STIs;

And we commit to addressing HIV-related Stigma & Discrimination at all its levels within society

The declaration gives full assurance that as a country, Barbados will continue appropriate programmatic action to:

Promote HIV-relevant policies;

Enact supportive legislation;

Improve Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) for evidence-based programme planning;

Strengthen national surveillance systems;

Ramp up Civil Society Organization (CSO) partnerships for more targeted interventions especially among key populations at higher risk;

Adopt rights-based approaches; and

Develop evidence-informed programmes that address factors that increase HIV-related vulnerabilities including stigma & discrimination, gender inequality and abuse of children.

We commend this approach to the international community.

I thank you.