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STATEMENT

BY

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ON BEHALF OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY

**(CARICOM)**

ON

**"PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 2012-2013"**

October 27, 2011

*Please check against delivery*

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the fourteen Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) on the "Proposed Programme Budget for the Biennium 2012 2013". CARICOM also aligns itself with the statement made by Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his presentation of the proposed programme budget for the next biennium and also thank Mr. Collen V. Kelapile, Chairman of the ACABQ, for introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee.

CARICOM maintains that the programme budget is more than a financial and accounting tool to secure the core resources of the Organization. It is, in our view, an authoritative statement that should reflect the strategic vision of the Secretary-General in delivering the mandates and priorities, as decided by Member States, with a view to ensure the full and efficient implementation of all mandated programmes, activities and relevant policies. In this context, we reaffirm the central role of the General Assembly, together with its relevant intergovernmental and expert bodies within their respective mandates, in planning, programming, budgeting, and monitoring.

Mr. Chairman

CARICOM Member States share the widespread concern for the continued global economic upheaval. No country has been spared the repercussions of the global financial and economic crises which had its beginnings in systemically important major developed economies. While the more advanced among us managed to implement counter cyclical measures to address the impacts of the crises, many of us were left without fiscal or policy options. The CARICOM region was forced into a recession. The gains we had only recently begun to champion in our progress towards full implementation of the Millennium Development Goals are now tenuous at best, slipping at worst. Now more than ever we need the United Nations; and, we need to ensure that the Organization is adequately funded to effectively and efficiently implement and reinforce action in development, peace and security, and human rights. In the midst of the ongoing global economic distress, it is ever more important to invest in the United Nations.

CARICOM Member States are therefore greatly concerned with the arbitrary cut of 3.7% in resources, especially since this decision was taken without any formal approval from the General Assembly. This cut – which is aimed to appease the desire of only a few member states – will severely constrain the Organization's capacity to implement all mandated programmes and activities and compromise the quality of implementation of legislative mandates approved by Member States. It is all the more worrisome that some delegations are insisting that 3 % is not enough because of potential add-ons. Mr. Chairman, even with subsequent add-ons included, the budget assigns less than a dollar to each of the world's inhabitants!

The argument that the financial and economic crisis warrants such action is untenable. How can advocates of this argument explain why trillions should be spent to salvage domestic banks, and pennies should now be taken away from programmes for the poor and destitute who themselves had no hand in the financial meltdown? How can we explain to the nearly 2 million people still living in non self governing territories that an already de minimis budget for decolonization should be cut by a further 40 percent? Why should the United Nations, an Organization that remains a beacon of hope for the most

vulnerable across the globe, pay the price for poorly regulated markets and industries? Surely there is a flaw in this rationale.

Mr. Chairman

CARICOM Member States have specific concerns with proposals in the budget document relating to regional commissions and the development account.

Regional Commissions have an important role in facilitating the global development agenda. The proposal to cut the budget of the regional commissions, particularly in the case of ECLAC, would incapacitate the Commissions at a time when their work is critical. The United Nations should be focused on reinforcing and supporting the Commissions' development strategy. In this regard, CARICOM believes that the budget document presented today needs further improvements to better reflect those priorities.

In the case of the development account, CARICOM stresses that the efficient management of this account is one of the appropriate tools to cope with the evolving needs of the global development agenda. Yet, the development account only amounts to 0.4% of the overall regular budget. This falls short of the original intent of the General Assembly to establish a true dividend for development at USD 200 million. We ask that priority be given to address this situation. CARICOM further strongly supports the establishment of an appropriate funding mechanism for the account through the regular budget.

Mr. Chairman,

The United Nations plays an indispensable role in world affairs. This is clearly reflected in the growing number of mandates approved by the intergovernmental organs. CARICOM is concerned for the ever increasing imbalance between assessed and voluntary contributions. Indeed, we are facing a situation in which the amount of extra-budgetary resources has reached a level that is nearly twice as large as the regular budget. This has put the Organization in a governance crisis, whereby on the one hand, legislative bodies approve mandates and priorities, and, on the other, voluntary contributions are often used to bend the priorities toward other mandates.

Mr. Chairman,

While funding for the development activities has been reduced, the budget of special political missions, which is integrated into the level of the regular budget, has grown dramatically from US\$ 100 million, in 2000, to an estimated US\$ 1.2 billion, taking into account the latest developments in one of the two main missions.

Such disproportionate growth in the provisions for special political missions has led to large distortions in the size of the budget. This has engendered the false impression that the regular budget is somehow spiraling out of control. Mr. Chairman this cannot be further from the truth because the growth can be attributed to the Special Political Missions mandated by the fifteen member Security Council. CARICOM Member States underscore that priority activities funded by the regular budget should not be jeopardized by the increase in Special Political Missions.

CARICOM takes this opportunity to insist that the Secretary-General should fill the post of the Special Advisor for Africa, a matter of priority mandated by the General Assembly in its Resolutions 62/236 and 63/260.

Mr. Chairman,

CARICOM recognizes that the negotiations on the Budget will be complex. It is therefore important that those negotiations occur in an open, transparent and inclusive manner, respectful of the positions of all Member States. We stand committed to ensure that political will, policy support and coordination are brought to bear in this process so that we may arrive at a widely acceptable consensus budget.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman