



**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)**



ON

AGENDA ITEM 134: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET: BIENNIUM 2016 - 2017

**IN THE 5TH COMMITTEE OF THE 70TH SESSION
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Mr. Chairman,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the fourteen Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) on agenda item 134, entitled "Proposed Programme Budget for the Biennium 2016-2017".

CARICOM thanks the Secretary-General for his comprehensive presentation of the proposed programme budget for the next biennium. We appreciate his commitment to improve the financial management of the Organization. We also wish to express appreciation to Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chairman of the Advisory Committee, for his introduction of the Committee's related report.

CARICOM aligns itself with the statements made by the distinguished representative of the Republic of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the distinguished representative of Ecuador on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States. We wish, however, to highlight some of the issues of particular importance to our sub-region.

Mr. Chairman,

CARICOM accords the highest priority to the consideration of the regular budget as it provides the core resources for the Organization to carry out its functions and to enable the implementation of the respective mandates and policies agreed by Member States. It is precisely for this reason that we reaffirm the role of the

General Assembly in ensuring that a thorough analysis is carried out in relation to the allocation and reallocation of resources to all sections of the programme budget.

CARICOM intends to carefully consider the proposals presented with a view to determining whether the Organization is indeed provided with resources commensurate with approved mandates. We note that the level of resources proposed for the biennium amounts to approximately \$5,568.6 million before recosting, reflecting a reduction of \$90.9 million or 1.6%. While CARICOM acknowledges that the proposals for the next biennium are said to be in line with General Assembly resolutions 69/17 and 69/264, valid questions remain as to whether the resulting decisions could serve to prevent the full implementation of mandated programmes and activities. We also question whether these steps could adversely impact on service delivery.

Mr. Chairman,

Member States have set certain development priorities for the Organization derived from UN Summits and conferences, including Agenda 21, "The Future we Want", The Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States and the recently adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – an ambitious agenda that sets out the global development vision and commitments for the next 15 years, as well as solidify our commitment to the three pillars on which this Organization is founded. These have resulted in the establishment of several mandates, which CARICOM expects to be adequately reflected in the budget.

How then do we justify or begin to comprehend the cuts in posts and decrease in allocated resources within these areas of immediate concern? We maintain that there can be no arbitrary cuts for the sake of efficiencies. We remain firm in our expectation that the General Assembly will ultimately approve resources that are commensurate with mandated programmes and activities.

CARICOM acknowledges that the proposed programme budget was prepared prior to the conclusion of some important processes, such as the financing of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the impending climate change agreement. It would, therefore, not have reflected any additional requirements related to issues emerging from these meetings. However, CARICOM expects that any additional budgetary requirements will be presented in a timely manner, supported by well thought-out and detailed proposals and introduced in keeping with established procedures.

Mr. Chairman,

CARICOM takes note of the plans associated with extra budgetary resources in connection with Small Island Developing States (SIDS). We welcome and support the preparation of the project proposal concerning the follow-up on the implementation of a). the mandate to ensure mainstreaming of the SAMOA Pathway, which emerged from the historic Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States; b) the mandate to enhance the coherence of the issues facing SIDS and c). the establishment of the Small Island Development

States Global Business Network. In this connection, we request that sufficient effort be made to keep Member States involved in the formulation and implementation of the proposal, in order to ensure ownership of the process. Furthermore, CARICOM reiterates its call for the exercise of more oversight to allow for the appropriate balance in the implementation of all mandates and programmes, notwithstanding the nature of their sources of funding.

Mr. Chairman,

I now turn to the matter of regional commissions. These commissions represent the first tier of interface between the United Nations and the billions of people around the world and they assume great responsibilities with regard to supporting the development agenda of the Organization. CARICOM believes that it is our collective responsibility to provide the regional commissions with adequate resources for the implementation of core mandates without undue dependence on extra budgetary resources.

The Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean (ECLAC) is a key player in contributing to the socio-economic development of Latin America and the Caribbean and reinforcing economic ties within the region and with other nations of the world. We expect ECLAC to continue to foster economic integration at the sub regional and regional levels, and to promote the implementation of the 2030 Development Agenda. We share the concerns raised by Ecuador on behalf of CELAC about the trend of decreasing resources allocated towards ECLAC. We are particularly concerned about the eventual negative

impact these declining resources will have on ECLAC's sub regional activities in the Caribbean.

On a final note, CARICOM recognizes the constraints of time under which the Committee will be working and the pressure to conclude our work, especially to adopt a budget for the biennium 2016-2017. With this in mind, we look forward to constructive engagement and to meeting the high standards of negotiation through transparent and inclusive consultations, in keeping with established arrangements provided for in the Committee's structure.

I thank you.