



STATEMENT

By

H.E. INGA RHONDA KING,

Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
to the United Nations

**ON BEHALF OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY
(CARICOM)**

On

**AGENDA ITEM 136 PROGRAMME BUDGET BIENNIUM 2018-2019:
RESTRUCTURING OF THE OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (OHCHR)
AT THE FIRST RESUMED PART OF THE SEVENTY-SECOND
SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

(New York, 16 March 2018)

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Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the fourteen (14) Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) on agenda item 136: Programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019, on the Restructuring of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) during the first resumed part of the seventy-second session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

CARICOM wishes to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on the exemplary work done in the past main session. You as well as the Bureau can continue to count on the support of the CARICOM as we engage constructively on the important agenda items before us.

CARICOM also wishes to recognize the presence of the Ms. Bettina Tucci Bartsiotas, Assistant Secretary-General, Controller, Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, Department of Management, and Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) for the presentation of the relevant reports on this agenda item.

Mr. Chairman,

CARICOM recognizes the importance of the protection and promotion of human rights as one of the key purposes and guiding principles of the United Nations, and within this context the significant role of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Group underscores that the Organization's approach to human rights must be balanced and based on intergovernmentally agreed principles including universality, indivisibility, transparency, and non-discrimination.

In this context, CARICOM is supportive of the Organization's initiatives to strengthen the ability of the OHCHR to conduct its work on the basis of General Assembly resolution 48/41 including the improvement of the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations machinery in the field of Human Rights.

Of particular importance to CARICOM is the proposal to place additional capacity through the establishment of a Regional Office in Bridgetown, Barbados to benefit seventeen Member States from North America and the Caribbean. CARICOM therefore strongly supports the

recommendation by the ACABQ in its report contained in document A/71/584 for the establishment of this office for the regional coverage for North America and the Caribbean.

We emphasize that given the objectives of the proposed restructuring of the OHCHR, it is ultimately important that the required post and non-post resources be allocated commensurate to the operational realities of the Regional Office including foreseeable workload consideration.

Mr. Chairman,

CARICOM is already optimistic of the opportunities and benefits that will redound from this field-centered approach, which we anticipate will allow for stronger dialogue and collaboration between Member States and the OHCHR. This is especially important as it relates to the OHCHR's contribution to Member States' implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which is a unique opportunity to advance our economic, social, political and cultural rights. We remain encouraged by the strong will and capacity to support this Regional Office demonstrated by the prospective host Government of Barbados.

Mr. Chairman,

In closing, the CARICOM assures you of its full cooperation and constructive engagement, for a successful outcome of the deliberations on this item. We agree with you Chair that the Committee should ensure that its work during the rest of this resumed session is conducted in a pragmatic and solution oriented manner.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.