

**Declaration: Towards Greater
Involvement of CARICOM
Heads of Government in the
development of Youth in the
Caribbean Community**

**Paramaribo, Suriname
27 January 2010**

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We the youth representatives who have gathered in Paramaribo, Suriname in a Regional Youth Forum, on the eve of the Special Summit of CARICOM Heads of Government on Youth Development, to discuss the watershed Report of the CARICOM Commission on Youth Development, commissioned by Heads on the Situation of youth in the Caribbean:

Celebrate this, the International Year of the Youth by placing importance on fostering the full and effective participation of youth in the development of the Caribbean Community;

Express appreciation for those Heads of Government participating in the Summit;

Commend the 15-member Commission for delivering on the Mandate of the Twenty-Seventh Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government to provide, “a full scale analysis of the challenges and opportunities for youth in the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) and make recommendations to improve their well-being and empowerment”;

Recognise the significance and seriousness of the Mandate of Heads of Government to the Commission;

Also recognise the seriousness of the findings and recommendations contained in the Commission’s Report and

the implications for the development of youth and the advancement of the integration movement, particularly the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME);

Affirm our Commitment to do all that is in our creative power to mobilise our peers in advancing the objectives of the CSME;

Also affirm our sterling and unswerving commitment to the ideals and goals of the integration movement and to supporting our respective Governments and the CARICOM Secretariat in making the CSME a reality;

Further affirm our expectations that our Heads of Government will endorse the findings and recommendations of this seminal Report on Youth Development that will help to chart an appropriate path toward the development of youth and the CSME;

Now Declare

Our profound sense of disappointment in the non-attendance of the majority of our Heads of Government at the Summit on Youth Development;

Our alarm and regret at the unequivocal signal that this has sent to nine million young people in the region about the indifference to and scant regard of some Heads of Government for the outcomes of the Report and by extension the situation of youth in the Community;

Our resentment of this demoralising blow to the hopes, aspirations and dreams of the youth of the Community;

Our recognition and acceptance of our collective responsibility to be the change that we want to see in our Community; and

Declare further, our resolve, that in spite of the obstacles, we will continue to work assiduously to realise the goals and ideals of the integration movement and the CSME and in the process, advance our own development.

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