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ALL ABOARD! FOR CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

Saint Lucia Prime Minister, Hon. Stephenson King highlighted the importance of a common regional approach to addressing the threats and challenges of climate change, in the countdown to UN Climate Change Conference.

He is also emphasizing full and effective participation of the Region in the Conference set for December 7-18 in Copenhagen, Denmark, where a new climate change agreement will be forged.

Prime Minister King who has lead responsibility for Sustainable Development including Climate Change in the Quasi – Cabinet of the CARICOM Conference of Heads of Government, in addressing the recently concluded CARICOM Ministerial Meeting on Climate Change underscored the importance of the Liliendaal Declaration on Climate Change and the importance of the latest scientific findings to inform decision making on climate change particularly in the formulation of a new global agreement.



The Liliendaal Declaration, endorsed by CARICOM Heads of Government at their 30th Summit in Georgetown, Guyana in July 2009, declared that “**all Parties to the UNFCCC should work with an increased sense of urgency and purpose towards arriving at an ambitious and comprehensive agreement at the COP 15 in Copenhagen in 2009, which provides for: long-term stabilization of atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations, at levels which will ensure that global average surface temperature increases will be limited to well below 1.5° C of pre-industrial levels; that global greenhouse gas emissions should peak by 2015; global Co2 reductions of at least 45 percent by 2020 and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by more than 95 per cent of 1990 CO₂ levels by 2050.**”

The Prime Minister pointed to the critical importance the Region had attached to the implementation of a systemic adaptation programme and the need for the mobilizing of action on adaptation at all levels to address current and future impacts of climate change in the Caribbean. He recommended that the region’s negotiators continue to make the case for enhanced action on adaptation up to and beyond 2012 as a priority.

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HONOUR LILIENDAAL DECLARATION CARICOM CHAIRMAN

*HE Bharrat Jagdeo
President of Guyana*

Chairman of the Caribbean Community, HE Bharrat Jagdeo stated that CARICOM was at a critical milestone, on the road to a new global climate change agreement that had the potential to go down in history as the agreement that enabled the global community to change course from the destructive path it had taken.

In his message to the recently concluded CARICOM Ministerial Conference on Climate Change held in Saint Lucia on 15 September, 2009, the CARICOM Chairman reiterated that the Liliendaal Declaration on Climate Change and Development adopted at the 30th Conference of Heads of Government in July, 2009, "must serve as a useful and uncompromising guide for negotiations."

The Guyana President also emphasized the importance to be given to issues relating to: Adaptation; a multi-window insurance facility; adequate and predictable financing for adaptation; enhanced investment and action in Research and Development; diffusion and transfer of technology to address the development challenges of climate change.



HE Bharrat Jagdeo, CARICOM Chairman

The President also highlighted the need to address a "forest based solution to mitigation" and cited Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy as a useful model upon which other developing countries could draw.

THE CARIBBEAN NEEDS

1.5 TO STAY ALIVE

Chairman of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) Prime Minister of Grenada, Mr. Tillman Thomas told the recent United Nations Summit on Climate Change that the International Community must agree to 1.5 degrees Celsius for the stabilisation of Green House Gas emissions ...

...in order to ensure the survival of many Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

In his address at the closing session of the Summit, held in New York on 22 September 2009, Prime Minister Thomas told the gathering of international leaders that a climate refugee status for the people living in SIDS must not be an option and that "... we must achieve 1.5 degrees Celsius to stay alive."



**Hon Tillman Thomas Grenada's
Prime Minister**

The Grenada Prime Minister pointed out that in pursuing this task, it was "... imperative that all countries, subject to their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, adopt a low carbon development pathway that ensures the survival of SIDS..."

CARICOM SECRETARY GENERAL BATS FOR SIDS

CARICOM Secretary-General has underscored the importance of multilateralism and partnerships in establishing a new Climate Change architecture to building resilience and promoting development in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

In addressing the opening session of the recent CARICOM Ministerial Meeting on Climate Change held in Saint Lucia, the Secretary-General pointed out that stabilizing greenhouse gases and slowing global warming was a critical matter of global security and development that required the immediate attention by the international community.

The Secretary - General highlighted the difficult challenges facing many Caribbean countries as a result of rising sea levels and changing weather patterns, noting that those could have disastrous consequences for the economic well-being and survival of the region.

The Secretary-General outlined five essential requirements that the new global Climate Change Agreement should address. Those include:



HE Edwin Carrington, CARICOM Secretary-General

1. Clarity on ambitious targets for the developed countries, including setting a long-term global goal for significant emission reductions by these countries;
2. Clarity on the adaptation measures and resources required to facilitate and enhance the sustainable development plans and programmes in developing countries and thereby significantly reduce the level of poverty in developing countries;
3. Clarity on measures and mechanisms to address the development challenges associated with climate change, sea level rise and disaster management for small islands and low-lying coastal developing states;
4. Clarity on how the financial and technological support both for mitigation and adap-

tation will be generated and disbursed to developing countries; and

5. Clarity on the institutional framework required to deliver finance and support for mitigation, adaptation, technology development and transfer and the capacity needs of developing countries.

With regard to financial and technological support, the CARICOM Secretary-General said significant attention must be given by the international donor community to the special circumstances of the future vulnerability of SIDS as a result of climate change.

“The existing universal practice of using gross domestic product (GDP) per capita explicitly as the basis for access to resources, simply does not address the problems associated with climate change in the Caribbean,” Mr Carrington concluded.

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According to Prime Minister King, the Region's approach to implementing Climate Change programmes must be supported by a flexible country-driven approach that allowed for the following:

1. Institutional arrangements under the Convention process to coordinate efforts to support country-driven priorities ...;

2. New, additional and predictable financial resources, separate from Overseas Development Assistance, supported by appropriate institutional mechanisms;
3. A dedicated funding mechanism for adaptation and **full support** of the Heads of Government for the location of the Headquarters of the UNFCCC Adaptation Fund Board in Barbados
4. Risk management and risk reduction strategies, including risk sharing and transfer mechanisms, such as insurance through a mechanism...

Full support of the Heads for the location of the Headquarters of the UNFCCC Adaptation Fund Board in Barbados

5. Enhanced capacity and knowledge sharing and transfers of adaptation technologies.

These issues, he said were critical to enhancing the Region's negotiating position in the series of UNFCCC meetings that would take place throughout the year and at the impending Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, 7-18 December, 2009.

AOSIS PRODUCES DECLARATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) has produced a declaration that outlines the position of the 48 member group in the lead-up to the United Nations Conference on Climate Change slated for Copenhagen, Denmark in December.

AOSIS developed this Declaration at the recent Climate Change Summit held at the American Museum in New York on 21 September.

The Summit was chaired by, the Honorable Mr. Tilman Thomas, Prime Minister of Grenada. It focused on updating AOSIS Leaders on the following:

1. The AOSIS negotiating positions and strategies in moving forward with the negotiations in the lead-up to the UN Copenhagen Conference;

2. Provide guidance on the issues for which there are differences within the group
3. Agree on a common approach to the political challenges that will emerge in the lead up to Copenhagen.

In addressing these and other related issues, the Summit produced a four page declaration that highlighted the threats and challenges posed by climate change to the survival of many small islands and low-lying developing states.



CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM BY CLIMATE CHANGE NEGOTIATOR

Grenada's Leon Charles

AOSIS and CARICOM Chief Technical Negotiator on climate change, Mr Leon Charles remains optimistic that information on climate change science would inform key decisions in the designing of a new global agreement on climate change.

Mr Charles made his comments in a very informative presentation to the Region's officials and Ministers with responsibility for climate change issues at the CARICOM Ministerial Conference on Climate Change held at the Bay Gardens Hotel in Saint Lucia.

The Chief Technical Negotiator of the 48 member Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) that represents the small developing states in the climate change negotiations and CARICOM emphasized that the negotiations represent an opportunity for the AOSIS Member States to put forward their concerns and proposals and to speak with one voice.

He noted that through the AOSIS group the region's interests were best represented in the negotiations given that the decisions in the United Nations process were based on consensus.

Mr. Charles explained that while the major focus in the negotiations was on fulfilling the obligations of Member States to the Climate Change Convention and Kyoto Protocol, the negotiations were also guided by the four building blocks established at the 13th Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC, in Bali, Indonesia.

He outlined the building blocks as: mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology and capacity-building and indicated further that the AOSIS had reiterated a number of principles of the Convention and Protocol on which the group had been elaborating its proposals.

Meanwhile, it was pointed out that to date the major emitters had failed in the negotiations to indicate the level of finance that would be made available to correct the dislocation caused by climate change.

Through the AOSIS group the Region's interests are best represented in the negotiations

CARIBBEAN PRIORITIES FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

CARICOM Secretariat's Assistant Secretary-General Human and Social Development, Dr Edward Greene is of the firm belief that the Caribbean and other coastal states need to advocate for programmes that stress mitigation and technological transfer with special emphasis on low carbon development strategies when they begin negotiations for a new climate change agreement at Copenhagen.



Dr Greene told participants at a workshop hosted by the Organization of American States (OAS), in Washington, DC that developing countries ought to consider programmes to combat deforestation, which he said was responsible for 20 per cent of Green House Gases (GHG) emissions.

He explained that this was critical to countries such as Belize, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti and Suriname, and called for equity in any agreement, which came out of Copenhagen, stressing that those who pollute should pay.

WORLD LEADERS BUILD MOMENTUM IN RUN UP TO CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon at the end of the UN Climate Change Summit in New York on Tuesday, 22 September, 2009 pointed out that the Summit laid a solid foundation for the upcoming UN Climate Change Conference in December. At this Conference leaders will seek to establish a new global agreement on climate change.

In summarizing the outcomes of the September Summit, which was attended by 101 Heads of State and Government, the UN Secretary-General pointed out that the Copenhagen deal must be comprehensive and must ensure the following:



Un Secretary-General, Ban KI Moon

1. Enhanced action to assist the most vulnerable and the poorest to adapt to the impacts of climate change;
2. Ambitious emission reduction targets for industrialized countries;
3. Nationally-appropriate mitigation actions by developing countries with the necessary support;
4. Significantly scaled-up financial and technological resources; and

5. An equitable governance structure

The Secretary-General also indicated to the Summit that he intended to set up a High Level Panel after the Copenhagen Conference to advise on how to better integrate climate change adaptation and mitigation into the development agenda.

He stressed that the UN system would be prepared to assist developing countries with implementation of the Copenhagen outcomes.