

# **THIRTY-FIRST INTER-SESSIONAL MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY**



## **DECISIONS**



**CHAIRMAN:**

**Hon. Mia Amor Mottley  
Prime Minister  
BARBADOS**

**VENUE AND DATE:**

**Bridgetown  
BARBADOS**

**18-19 February 2020**

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**INS/HGC/2020/31/4**

**CARICOM SINGLE MARKET AND ECONOMY  
(CSME)**

**INS/HGC/2020/31/4.1**

**Update on the CSME**

**Having considered Paper INS/HGC/2020/31/4.1 entitled “CARICOM SINGLE MARKET AND ECONOMY (CSME): UPDATE ON THE CSME”;**

**Recognising** that most of the agreed timelines for implementation have not been met;

**Acknowledging** that not implementing agreed measures within agreed timelines could have a negative impact on the effectiveness, usefulness and credibility of the CSME. For the business sector, this could be more than an inconvenience since financial decisions affecting the life of the business would have been based upon unimplemented decisions of the Conference, the highest Organ in the Community;

**Noting** the recommendation that there is an urgent need to review the existing strategy for implementation and to seek to address the underlying reasons for non-implementation since commitments given are not being honoured;

**Also recognising** that the CSME is at the stage of implementation which requires the active and engaged participation of not only the public sector but also the parliamentary opposition and most importantly, of the key intended beneficiaries and users, particularly the private sector, in policy development and implementation strategy;

**Welcoming** Jamaica’s readiness to operationalise the assistance to Member States in relation to technical and vocational training (TVET), covering tuition, assessment and certification;

**Also welcoming** the provision of equipment from Jamaica to assist Member States in their efforts to readily identify the security features in Jamaica’s new CSME skills certificate;

**Also noting** the comments submitted by Jamaica with respect to the CARICOM Financial Services Agreement;

**Recalling** its decision that the Conference and Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee (PMSC) on the CSME should meet more regularly; and

**Also recalling** the work of the Expert Group of Heads led by Prime Minister Gonsalves and the Rose Hall Declaration of 2003 which dealt with implementation, financing and institutional arrangements for Regional governance;

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**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Commended** Prime Minister Mottley for a successful Regional Consultation on the CSME in November 2019;

**Agreed** that the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on the CSME should meet to review and make recommendations to the Forty-First Regular Meeting of the Conference on:

- (i) the Strategy and programme for implementation of the CSME in Member States;
- (ii) key issues which could be signed-off on by the Conference;

**Accepted** the offer made by the Prime Minister of Barbados, to second two persons from Barbados to the Secretariat to be stationed at the CSME Unit to assist in advancing the work of the CSME;

**Mandated** that the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on the CSME meet prior to the Forty-First Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government to address key issues;

**Also agreed** that the CARICOM Financial Services Agreement (CFSA) should be finalised, taking into account Jamaica's comments, and be submitted to the Forty-First Regular Meeting of the Conference for adoption and opening for signature;

**Further agreed** to establish a Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee chaired by Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves and to include the Heads of Government of Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago to review the work of the Expert Group of Heads on issues of implementation financing and institutional arrangements for Regional governance, and to submit recommendations to the Forty-First Regular Meeting of the Conference;

**Requested** the Lead Head of Government for Free Movement and Labour to review the proposals on Free Movement previously prepared by the Prime Minister of Dominica for the benefit of Heads of Government and make recommendations at the Forty-First Regular Meeting of the Conference;

**Also requested** the Secretariat to circulate The Rose Hall Declaration as a reminder of the decision previously taken on implementation of Conference decisions.

**INS/HGC/2020/31/4.2**

***Matters Related to the Operations of The  
CARICOM Development Fund (CDF)***

***Having considered*** Paper INS/HGC/2020/31/4.2 entitled “**MATTERS RELATED TO THE OPERATIONS OF THE CARICOM DEVELOPMENT FUND (CDF)**” in caucus;

***Reiterating*** the important role of the CARICOM Development Fund (CDF), established by Article 158 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, particularly in addressing economic dislocation and ameliorating or arresting adverse economic and social impact arising from the operation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) in disadvantaged countries, regions and sectors;

***Noting*** the decision of the Forty-Ninth Meeting of the COTED to approve the Policy Statement and recommendations for implementation of the CARICOM Cohesion Policy which were subsequently endorsed by the Forty-Fifth Meeting of the Community Council for onward transmission to the Conference of Heads of Government for its approval and adoption;

***Considering*** the challenges that the CDF continues to face in replenishing its Capital Fund for the second funding cycle (July 2015 to 2020), both as a result of unpaid contributions from some Member States but also from the failure to attract adequate funding from International Development Partners (IDPs) to date;

***Recognising*** the potential impact of funding shortfalls and protracted payment delays on Member States’ programmes and the CDF’s liquidity, financial sustainability and capacity to expand its operations;

***Acknowledging*** that Barbados, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago have made payments to the CDF in accordance with their commitment to do so in tranches;

***Also noting*** the drafting instructions to the CARICOM General Counsel regarding the drafting of an amendment to the Agreement Relating to the Operation of the CDF to authorise the CDF to issue bonds singularly or collectively;

***Also acknowledging*** the expiration of the tenure of the last COFAP-appointed Chairman of the Board of Directors of the CARICOM Development Fund (CDF), Mr Sherwyn Williams, a National of Guyana, on 13 July 2019; and

***Further acknowledging*** that the following Member States are eligible to participate in the selection of the Chairperson - Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines as at the end of January 2020;

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**(i) *With respect to the amendment to the Agreement Relating to the Operation of the CARICOM Development Fund,***

**Agreed** to the policy that informs the proposed amendment to the Agreement Relating to the Operation of the CARICOM Development Fund (CDF) to authorise the CDF to raise resources through the issuance of bonds singularly or collectively and through other means approved by the Board;

**Also agreed** that the CARICOM General Counsel and the Board of the CDF would engage in urgent consultations to complete the proposed amendment;

**Mandated** the Legal Affairs Committee to consider and submit the proposed amendment for adoption and opening for signature by the Conference in the margins of the CARICOM-Mexico Summit on 11 March 2020;

**Further agreed** that the CDF would review its governance mechanisms including its investment policy in light of the proposed amendment and report to the Conference;

**Noted** that Jamaica reserved its position with respect to the proposed amendment to the Agreement Relating to the Operation of the CDF;

**(ii) *With respect to the selection of a Chairperson for the CARICOM Development Fund,***

**Agreed** that Heads of Government would make a decision on the Chairperson for the Board of Directors of the CDF for a non-renewable term of two years in the margins of the CARICOM-Mexico Summit on 11 March 2020;

**(iii) *With respect to other Matters Relating to the Operation of the CARICOM Development Fund,***

**Adopted** the Policy Statement for the CARICOM Cohesion Policy which will become one of the main instruments for fostering economic efficiency and social equity in the Caribbean Community;

**Instructed** the CDF to continue its efforts at mobilising funds from international development partners (IDPs) and other agencies to assist in replenishing the capital fund of the CDF;



**Approved** a one-year extension to the CDF's second contribution and subvention cycle to 30 June 2021.

## **INS/HGC/2020/31/5                      REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE ECONOMY**

*Having considered Paper INS/HGC/2020/31/5 entitled "REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE ECONOMY" and having received the submission of a Draft Report from the Chairman of the Commission on the Economy;*

*Noting that the four recommendations submitted by the Commission on the Economy are aimed at facilitating economic development; and*

*Further noting that the said recommendations have been so structured to require little or no financial outlay from Member States;*

### **THE CONFERENCE:**

**Thanked** the Chairman and Members of the Commission for their Draft Report while noting that a Final Report will be submitted in two (2) weeks;

**Agreed** to refer the Final Report to the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on the CSME for consideration, with the attendance of the President of the Caribbean Development Bank, and to submit its recommendations to the Forty-First Regular Meeting of the Conference in July 2020;

**Also agreed** that enhanced integration arrangements among like-minded Member States should be pursued, with account being taken of the various levels of development among them.

## **INS/HGC/2020/31/6                      ENGAGEMENT WITH PRIVATE SECTOR, LABOUR AND CIVIL SOCIETY**

*Having considered Paper INS/HGC/2020/31/6 entitled "ENGAGEMENT WITH PRIVATE SECTOR, LABOUR AND CIVIL SOCIETY" and received the presentations from the representatives of the CARICOM Private Sector Organisation (CPSO) and the Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL);*

*Noting the update provided by the CPSO on the completion of the institutional arrangements for its establishment as a non-profit organisation in Barbados and for its operationalisation; and*

**Acknowledging** the findings and proposals from the CPSO to reduce CARICOM's agri-food imports by US\$400 million by 2025;

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Commended** the CPSO on the Report to reduce CARICOM's agri-food imports by US\$400 million by 2025;

**Agreed** to refer the proposals from the CPSO and the CCL to the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on the CSME for consideration and make recommendations to the Forty-First Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government;

**Accepted** Trinidad and Tobago's offer to second two persons to the CARICOM Secretariat to work specifically on the proposals made by the CPSO.

**INS/HGC/2020/31/7**

**CRIME, VIOLENCE AND SECURITY ISSUES**

**Having considered** Paper **INS/HGC/2020/31/7** entitled "**CRIME, VIOLENCE AND SECURITY ISSUES**" in Caucus and having received a Security Brief from the Executive Director (Ag.), CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS);

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**With respect to COVID-19,**

**Mandated** CARICOM IMPACS to engage in negotiations with regional European partners to discuss border security cooperation in relation to COVID-19 and to develop partnerships that allow for JRCC and the European partners to work together to identify travel histories of Persons of Interest;

**With respect to Crime and Violence,**

**Having discussed** the high rates of crime and violence, especially homicides and some factors that may influence them;

**Agreed** to treat with the issue of violence in CARICOM as a serious matter of Public Health and to utilise the services of CARPHA, in this regard;

**Also mandated** the establishment of a Regional multi-sectoral partnership to include the Private Sector, Youth, Faith-Based Organisations, Artistes, Sportsperson, Teacher Associations and CARPHA to address the matter;

**Also agreed** that a High-Level Summit of Member States and the regional multi-sectoral partners would be convened as a matter of urgency;

**Accepted** the offer of the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago to host the Meeting;

**Further agreed** that Barbados, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago would be updated on the preparation for the Summit given their quasi-cabinet responsibilities;

***With respect to the IMPACS,***

**Urged** Member States to honour their contributions to CARICOM IMPACS.

**INS/HGC/2020/31/8                      CARICOM ADVOCACY AGAINST BLACKLISTING,  
DE-RISKING                      AND                      WITHDRAWAL                      OF  
CORRESPONDENT BANKING SERVICES**

***Having considered Paper INS/HGC/2020/31/8 entitled “CARICOM ADVOCACY AGAINST BLACKLISTING, DE-RISKING AND WITHDRAWAL OF CORRESPONDENT BANKING SERVICES”, and having received the submission from the Honourable Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda;***

***Recognising that the mutuality of interests between the United States and CARICOM States resulted from the threat to U.S. national security from weakened Caribbean economies becoming marginalised from the global financial system;***

***Acknowledging the outcomes of the Community’s interaction with the United States Congressional Committee on Financial Services during the Roundtable on Expanding Financial Services in the Caribbean held in November 2019 in Washington DC;***

**Noting** the status of those Member States which have participated in the Financial Action Task Force/Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (FATF/CFATF) Fourth Round Mutual Evaluation process where, with the exception of Bermuda, none of the assessed countries have achieved an overall satisfactory level of effectiveness and eight of the nine evaluated jurisdictions have been placed in the Enhanced Follow-Up and the International Country Risk Guide (ICRG) Process;

**Recalling** the mandate to the European Commission under the Fifth Anti-Money Laundering Directive to compile a list of high-risk third countries which have strategic deficiencies in their Anti-Money Laundering-Countering Financing of Terrorism (AML-CFT) regimes thereby posing a threat to the financial system in the EU;

**Also noting** the AML-CFT developments in the United States which could result in the resurgence of the de-risking phenomenon as well as the importance of the International Narcotics Control Strategic Report in driving perceptions of jurisdictional risk and susceptibility to money laundering activities; and

**Further noting** the ongoing blacklisting approach (which designate countries as non-cooperative tax jurisdictions) pursued by the European Union along with the individual listing of some European States, most recently France and previously the Netherlands;

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**(i) With regard to the blacklisting strategy adopted by the European Union –**

**Agreed** to proceed with the recruitment of an international legal strategist and to share the associated costs. The Legal strategist will advise on –

- (a) an appropriate strategy for CARICOM States to continue the advocacy against blacklisting as non-cooperative tax jurisdictions being pursued by the European Union; and
- (b) potential remedies in respect of CARICOM States becoming disadvantaged by the EU's tax governance strategy within the context of the dispute resolution provisions under the EU-CARIFORUM Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). This would involve mapping an escalating dispute resolution strategy ranging from meaningful dialogue with the EU to international arbitration including submitting a case before the World Trade Organization (WTO);

(ii) ***With regard to the De-Risking Strategy Pursued by U.S. Correspondent Banks and related Anti-Money Laundering-Countering Financing of Terrorism (AML-CFT) Developments –***

**Also agreed** to emphasise the perspective in conversations with representatives of the U.S. Government that US security interests would be compromised if Caribbean economies were further weakened through withdrawal of correspondent banking relationships (CBRs);

**Requested** the Committee of Central Bank Governors to encourage commercial banks to participate in the ABA/BAFT Respondents' Playbook Training for the Caribbean scheduled for 30-31 March 2020 in Miami;

**Instructed** the CARICOM Secretariat to review the offer from the Centre for Strategic International Studies (CSIS) to determine whether it would be value for money and prepare terms of reference for the services to be provided (estimated to cost US\$150,000) for consideration of Heads of Government at the Regular Meeting of the Conference in July 2020;

**Urged** Member States to pay particular attention to their responses to the questionnaires circulated to jurisdictions in preparation of the U.S. International Narcotics Control Strategic (INCS) Report;

**Encouraged** Member States to require that their Ambassadors in Washington DC make strong representation regarding any inaccuracies, unsubstantiated information and anonymous sources cited in the INCS Report;

**Commended** Prime Minister Browne as well as the CARICOM Ambassadors in Washington DC for their sterling work in advancing the CARICOM Advocacy against De-Risking;

(iii) ***With regard to the status of Member States Anti-Money Laundering - Countering Financing of Terrorism (AML-CFT) Evaluation,***

**Encouraged** Member States to –

- (a) pursue the upgrading of their AML-CFT and financial crimes regimes in accord with the FATF/CFATF standards; and
- (b) seek to return the CFATF to its original role as the advocate for the Caribbean's interests within the FATF rather than serving primarily as an agent of the FATF;

**Expressed** concern about the slow processing of financial transactions (including wire transfers) as well as the obstacles to opening bank accounts being encountered by CARICOM Citizens which adversely impacts trade, competitiveness and financial inclusion;

**Urged** Member States to conduct dialogue with domestic banks with a view to encouraging their adoption of more risk-based approaches to enable greater responsiveness in service delivery without compromising their AML-CFT compliance policies and procedures.

**INS/HGC/2020/31/9                      SUPPORTING CARICOM RESILIENCE AND  
DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION – UPDATE ON  
MATTERS OF IMPORTANCE FOR SCIENCE AND  
TECHNOLOGY (incl. ICT)**

***Having considered Paper INS/HGC/2020/31/9 entitled “SUPPORTING CARICOM RESILIENCE AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION - UPDATE ON MATTERS OF IMPORTANCE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (INCL. ICT)”;***

***Having also considered some of the many issues related to the reduction and/or elimination of roaming rates in CARICOM;***

***Recognising that the Internet has become a fundamental tool and enabler for advancing scientific collaboration and innovation, facilitating industrial research and development, promoting access to government services, and accelerating the development of skilled human capital; and***

***Acknowledging the role of CARICOM Governments in creating an enabling environment for innovation, using the Internet;***

**THE CONFERENCE:**

***With respect to the Removal of Roaming Rates and Costs (or Charges) Attributed to Accessing Government Site,***

**Agreed** to the establishment of a Technical Committee on Roaming Negotiations to be determined by the Prime Minister of Grenada, Lead Head of Government in the Quasi-Cabinet responsible for Science and Technology (including Information and Communications) and under his supervision; and **urged** an early meeting between the Technical Committee and the Telecoms companies;

**Accepted** the recommendation that a Negotiation Team, comprising industry experts under the guidance of ICT Ministers and supported by the CARICOM Secretariat, will lead the continued negotiations with the telecoms providers;

**Endorsed** the Draft High-level Action Plan for Roaming and Zero-rating of Government websites;

**Called on** Member States to provide the necessary resources for the efficient conduct of the negotiations on the removal of roaming rates in CARICOM;

**Mandated** the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) to lead in the development of the technical papers to guide the regional negotiations and support the negotiating team;

**Also mandated** that ICT Ministers meet urgently with national regulators and other related stakeholders, to share information on the digital transformation efforts, including the removal of roaming rates and the zero-rating of government websites, and to advise on the role of the national regulators in this process;

***With respect to the Update on the Establishment of a Prime Ministerial CARICOM Science and Technology Committee,***

**Endorsed** the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Science and Technology Committee;

**Agreed** that each Member State will appoint a national focal point to support the work of the Committee by providing requested information and facilitating meetings with key stakeholders.

## **INS/HGC/2020/31/10**

## **HEALTH**

### ***INS/HGC/2020/31/10.1***

### ***Regional Approach to Coronavirus***

***Having considered Paper INS/HGC/2020/31/10.1 entitled “Regional Approach to Coronavirus”;***

***Recognising that the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) has activated its Incidence Management Team for Emergency Response and is working closely with regional security and international health partners to monitor these developments and provide Member States with guidance to support national response efforts, while strengthening Regional Health Security;***

**Mindful** that Ministers of Health and senior health officials, Heads of CARICOM Institutions (the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) as well as senior technical representatives of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) met on 3 February 2020 in a Special COHSOD (Health) to provide Ministers of Health with information on the Novel Coronavirus and to assess the Region's capacities and resources to respond and manage a potential outbreak of the virus;

**Also mindful** that while the risk of transmission of the COVID-19 in the Region remains relatively low, an outbreak can reverse economic gains of CARICOM States. Actions to prevent and control risk factors require support and collaboration with non-health sectors;

**Recalling** that the COHSOD agreed to the drafting of an aggressive communications strategy to, inter alia, increase public knowledge on actions being taken to prevent importation and transmission of the Novel Corona Virus in the Region, and counter myths and misinformation thereby reducing potential social media hysteria associated with the fear of an outbreak in CARICOM Members;

**Welcoming** the efforts by China to assist students and other CARICOM citizens who cannot return home at this time; and

**Also welcoming** the offer by China to provide support to the Region to address potential gaps in their response should any case of the COVID-19 be found;

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Approved** the coordinated CARICOM public health response to the 2019-nCoV being led by CARPHA;

**Mandated** the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, as interlocutor, and in collaboration with CARPHA, to explore the offer from the People's Republic of China to provide support to the Region to address potential gaps in their response should any case of the COVID-19 be identified.

**INS/HGC/2020/31/10.2                      *Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs): Towards the Strategic Management of Acute Myocardial Infarctions in the Region***

**Having considered Paper INS/HGC/2020/31/10.2 entitled "Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs): Towards the Strategic Management of Acute Myocardial Infarctions in the Region";**



**Noting** the decisions of the Thirty-Seventh Meeting of the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) - Health;

**Conscious** of the implications of the absence of an acute phase response to address acute myocardial infarction; and

**Mindful** of this strategic short-coming to which the CARICOM Region retains a systemic vulnerability;

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Endorsed** the decision of the Thirty-Seventh Meeting of the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) for the adoption of a standardised classification of cardiac injury;

**Mandated** the CARICOM Secretariat, the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) and the Caribbean Cardiac Society to prepare a Draft Regional Strategy, aimed at identifying critical Regional public goods essential for the operationalisation of the strategy.

**INS/HGC/2020/31/11                      PROPOSED                      CARICOM-AFRICAN                      UNION  
SUMMIT (JUNE 2020, AFRICA)**

**Having considered Paper INS/HGC/2020/31/11** entitled “**PROPOSED CARICOM-AFRICAN UNION SUMMIT (JUNE 2020, AFRICA)**”; and

**Having noted** the proposal to convene the first CARICOM-African Union Summit in June 2020 in Nairobi, Kenya;

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Agreed** to the proposed date of 22 June 2020 for the convening of the Summit, subject to the concurrence of the African Union (AU), close to the date of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM 2020);

**Also agreed** that the following issues should be included among those proposed for the Summit Agenda -

- (i) CARICOM-African Union (AU) Relations;
- (ii) Attributions of the designation of the Caribbean as the Sixth Region of the AU;
- (iii) Trade, investment, and transportation links;
- (iv) Sustainable development (health, climate change, disaster management, and building resilience);

- (v) International Decade for People of African Descent –
  - (a) Cultural Exchanges;
  - (b) People-to-people contact;
  - (c) ABCD Commission.

**Urged** Member States to submit any additional issues for the Summit Agenda to the CARICOM Secretariat as soon as possible;

**Also urged** Member States to participate at the highest level at the Summit.

**INS/HGC/2020/31/12                      HOSTING OF THE FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE FOR TRADE  
AND DEVELOPMENT (UNCTAD), BARBADOS,  
18-23 OCTOBER 2020**

***Having considered Paper INS/HGC/2020/31/12 entitled “HOSTING OF THE FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE FOR TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (UNCTAD), BARBADOS, 18-23 OCTOBER 2020” (Proposed by Barbados);***

***Having regard to the importance of Jamaica’s contribution to the negotiating process, in view of its role as the Community’s Lead for External Negotiations;***

***Noting that an opportunity will be provided to Caribbean artisans, craftspersons and tradespersons to showcase their products and services during the Conference; and***

***Recognising the importance of acknowledging the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the United Nations during the Conference;***

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Welcomed** the update provided by the Government of Barbados on its hosting of the Fifteenth Meeting of the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD XV);

**Called** on the Regional mechanism established by the Community Council to meet as soon as possible, with a view to developing a Regional negotiating strategy and to ensure the active involvement of Member States during the Conference.

**INS/HGC/2020/31/13**

**BORDER ISSUES**

➤ ***Belize-Guatemala Relations***

***Having considered*** in Caucus the presentation from the Government of Belize on its border dispute with the Republic of Guatemala;

***Noting*** the invaluable role played by the Organisation of American States, supported by a Group of Friends, in helping to find a definitive resolution, in reducing and avoiding tensions as well as in maintaining peace and security along the border between the two countries; and

***Further noting*** Belize's appreciation for the continued support of CARICOM on the issue;

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Agreed** to include an appropriate reference regarding this matter in the Communiqué emanating from the Thirty-First Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference.

➤ ***Guyana-Venezuela Relations***

***Having considered*** in Caucus the presentation from the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana on the border controversy with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela;

***Expressing support*** for the judicial process underway which is intended to bring a peaceful and definitive end to the longstanding controversy between the two countries; and

***Also noting*** Guyana's appreciation for the continued support of CARICOM on this issue;

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Agreed** to include an appropriate reference regarding this matter in the Communiqué emanating from the Thirty-First Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference.

**INS/HGC/2020/31/14**

**EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH SPECIAL GUEST –  
THE PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA**

*Having received Paper INS/HGC/2020/31/14 and the presentation from Honourable François-Philippe Champagne, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada which highlighted the excellent ties between CARICOM and Canada and the need for both parties to work towards the strengthening and the structuring of the relationship;*

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Extended** a welcome to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada, Honourable François-Philippe Champagne who represented the Prime Minister of Canada, Honourable Justin Trudeau who had been expected to be the Special Guest of the Meeting of Conference;

**Viewed** the visit as a signal of Canada's renewed interest to resuscitate its relationship with the Community and an opportunity to explore the possibilities for further meaningful cooperation between CARICOM and Canada;

**Welcomed** the willingness of Canada to advocate on behalf of CARICOM on issues of concern to the Community such as Correspondent Banking, Blacklisting, Climate Change and Financing for Development;

**Also welcomed** the commitment of Canada to continuing official development assistance (ODA) to the Region;

**Accepted** the proposal from the Government of Canada for the establishment of a CARICOM-Canada Dialogue;

**Also accepted** the proposal by Prime Minister Trudeau to host a Canada-CARICOM Summit in May 2020;

**Agreed** that a preparatory Meeting of Officials of CARICOM and Canada should be held at an early date to prepare the Agenda for the Meeting;

**Urged** Canada to reconsider its current approach to the Region, in particular the application of visa requirements for citizens of the Community.

**INS/HGC/2020/31/15**

**ELECTION OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE  
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES**

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Agreed** that this decision is to be regarded as a sensitive decision pursuant to Rule 27.4 of the Rules of Procedure for Meetings of the Conference, and should not be disclosed in Plenary or recorded in the Summary of Recommendations and Conclusions and shall not be made public.

**INS/HGC/2020/31/16**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF A CARICOM DIPLOMATIC  
OFFICE IN KENYA**

*Having considered Paper INS/HGC/2020/31/16 entitled "ESTABLISHMENT OF A CARICOM DIPLOMATIC OFFICE IN KENYA"; and*

*Noting the commitment made by the Government of Kenya to meet the cost of rent and service charge for the office for a period of two (2) years commencing immediately upon the signing of the lease agreement;*

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Noted** that Barbados, Saint Lucia, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago have expressed interest in sharing the office space provided by the Government of Kenya for the establishment of a diplomatic office in Nairobi and the indication from Guyana that it is actively considering the matter;

**Agreed** that the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat would consult with the Member States in relation to the cost-sharing arrangements with a view to finalisation of a tenancy agreement between the Government of the Republic of Kenya and the Member States, to enable the Kenyan Government to undertake its financial commitment, thereby facilitating the functioning of the diplomatic office in time for the CARICOM-AU Summit in June 2020.

**INS/HGC/2020/31/17**

**PROPOSAL FOR A DECLARATION OF A FOURTH  
INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE  
ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM 2021-2030**

***Having considered Paper INS/HGC/2020/31/17 entitled “PROPOSAL FOR A DECLARATION OF A FOURTH INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM 2021-2030”;***

***Noting that the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (2011 – 2020) will conclude in December 2020; and***

***Having received a Presentation from the Premier of the British Virgin Islands, Hon. Andrew Fahie, on the proposal for a Declaration of a Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (2021 – 2030);***

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Agreed** to refer this matter to the Permanent Representatives of the Member States to the United Nations in New York by the end of April 2020 for consideration and submission of a Report to the Twenty-Third Meeting of the Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR) in May 2020.

**INS/HGC/2020/31/18**

**CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND  
CHINA**

***Having considered Paper INS/HGC/2020/31/18 entitled “CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA”;*** and

***Noting that the Cooperative Republic of Guyana assumed the Chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China for 2020;***

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Agreed** that the Member States of the Caribbean Community would make determined efforts to offer their consistent support and solidarity to the Cooperative Republic of Guyana in the discharge of its mandate as Chair of the Group of 77 and China in 2020;

**Also agreed** that Heads of Government would consider participation at the Head of State/Government level in the Third South Summit scheduled to take place on 17-19 April 2020 in Kampala, Uganda, under Guyana’s Chairmanship;

**Further agreed** that Prime Minister Gonsalves, incoming Chairman of the Conference, would represent the Community at the Summit.

**INS/HGC/2020/31/19      DATE OF THE FORTY-FIRST REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE CONFERENCE (ST. VINCENT AND THE  
GRENADINES, JULY 2020)**

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Agreed** that its Forty-First Regular Meeting would be held in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Wednesday, 1 July 2020 to Friday, 3 July 2020.

**INS/HGC/2020/31/20      SITUATION IN HAITI**

*Having received in Caucus a Presentation by the Government of Haiti on the Situation in Haiti;*

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Expressed** concern with regard to the deteriorating social and political situation in Haiti;

**Also expressed** its deep concern over the adverse impact of the increasing outflow of illegal Haitian migrants on the northern islands of the Community - in particular The Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands;

**Agreed** to send a Fact-Finding Mission to Haiti in early March 2020 under the leadership of the Secretary-General with officials from The Bahamas, Jamaica and Barbados.

**INS/HGC/2020/31/21**

**POLITICAL SITUATION IN SURINAME**

*Having received in Caucus a Presentation by the Government of Suriname on the Political Situation in Suriname;*

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Received** an update on the political situation in Suriname from the Vice President of Suriname.

