



HGC/2025/48/CSC

**FORTY-EIGHTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF
THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)**

**20-21 February 2025
Saint Philip, Barbados**

**SUMMARY OF
CONFIRMED DECISIONS**

**Chairman:
Honourable Mia Amor Mottley
Prime Minister
Barbados**

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

CONTENTS

3. SIGNATURE BY MARTINIQUE OF AGREEMENT TO JOIN CARICOM AS AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY	1
4. RATIFICATION OF REPORTS:.....	1
4.1 Report from the Forty-Sixth Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government (February 2024)	1
4.2 Decisions from the Thirty-Ninth Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government (September 2024).....	1
5. EXCHANGES WITH SPECIALLY INVITED GUESTS.....	2
6. REPORT ON THE CARICOM SINGLE MARKET AND ECONOMY:.....	2
6.1 Report from the Fifteenth Meeting of the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (PMSC-CSME).....	2
6.2 Proposed Amendment to The Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (RTC) – Schedule 1 on The CARICOM Rules of Origin	2
6.3 Matters Relating to Transportation: Maritime and Air	3
6.4 Exchange with Executive Chairman of Sandals Resorts International	4
7. ADVANCING THE CARICOM AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS AGENDA: PRIORITISING REGIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY	5
8. CLIMATE CHANGE INCLUDING CLIMATE FINANCE:	6
8.1 Report on the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP 29)	6
8.2 Preparations for the Thirtieth Meeting of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP 30)	6
9. EXCHANGE WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM CIVIL SOCIETY, LABOUR, PRIVATE SECTOR AND YOUTH	7
10. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION OF THE FORTY-FIFTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE (JULY 2023, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO) ON FREE MOVEMENT (Caucus).8	
11. SECURITY ISSUES (Caucus):	9
11.1 Follow-up from the Second Regional Symposium on Crime and Violence as a Public Health Issue (November 2024, Guyana) – Implementation of the George-Bridge Declaration	9

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

12.	THE SITUATION IN HAITI (Caucus)	10
13.	GEOPOLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:	10
13.1	Report on the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on External Negotiations (Caucus).....	10
13.2.	Report from the Caribbean Meteorological Organisation	11
14.	ECONOMIC ISSUES:	12
14.1	CARICOM Commission on the Economy (Caucus)	12
14.2	Regional Telecommunications Strategy (Caucus).....	12
15.	FINANCING AND GOVERNANCE OF THE COMMUNITY (Caucus).....	14
16.	BORDER ISSUES:.....	15
16.1	Belize-Guatemala (Caucus).....	15
16.2	Guyana-Venezuela (Caucus).....	16
17.	UPDATES ON CANDIDATURES:	17
17.1	Candidature of Suriname to the post of Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS) (Caucus)	17
17.2	Candidature of Guyana to Director-General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA) (Caucus)	17
17.3	Candidatures from The Bahamas	18
18.	RECOMMENDATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO POSITION OF PRESIDENT, CARIBBEAN COURT OF JUSTICE (CCJ) (Caucus).....	18
19.	UPDATE FROM THE BAHAMAS ON CONSULTATIONS WITH ASSOCIATE MEMBERS (Caucus)	18
20.	REPARATIONS (Caucus).....	19
21.	UPDATE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES ON INDIGENISATION (Caucus)	20
23.	DATES OF FORTHCOMING INTER-SESSIONAL AND REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE CONFERENCE	21
24.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS:.....	21
24.1	Situation of Education in the Region (Caucus)	21
24.2	Guyana Digital School	22
25.	DIGITAL SKILLS COMMISSION	22

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

26.	REPORT FROM THE TWENTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE PRIME MINISTERIAL SUB-COMMITTEE (PMSC) ON CRICKET (NOVEMBER 2024)	23
27.	GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE ISLANDS SUMMIT 2025, BASSETERRE, ST. KITTS AND NEVIS	23
28.	REGIONAL POPULATION COMMISSION	24
29.	CARIFESTA XV	24
	AGENDA.....	25

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

3. SIGNATURE BY MARTINIQUE OF AGREEMENT TO JOIN CARICOM AS AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

DECISION

Having considered Paper HGC/2025/48/3 entitled “Signature by Martinique of Agreement to join CARICOM as an Associate Member of the Community”;

Noting the approval of the Legal Affairs Committee of the Agreements to be signed;

Also noting that accession of Martinique as an Associate Member of the Community will occur upon receipt of written notice via diplomatic channels, that the Agreement on the Protocol on Privileges and Immunities has been ratified by the French Parliament;

THE CONFERENCE:

Approved signature of the Agreements.

4. RATIFICATION OF REPORTS:

4.1 Report from the Forty-Sixth Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government (February 2024)

4.2 Decisions from the Thirty-Ninth Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government (September 2024)

DECISION

Having considered Paper HGC/2025/48/4 entitled “Ratification of Reports” and its Attachments;

THE CONFERENCE:

Confirmed the report of the Forty-Sixth Regular Meeting of the Conference.

Ratified the decisions of the Thirty-Ninth Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference.

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

5. EXCHANGES WITH SPECIALLY INVITED GUESTS

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Received presentations from and engaged in discussions with specially invited guests from international organisations and international financial institutions.

6. REPORT ON THE CARICOM SINGLE MARKET AND ECONOMY:

6.1 Report from the Fifteenth Meeting of the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (PMSC-CSME)

DECISION

Having considered Paper HGC/2025/48/6.1 entitled “Report from the Fifteenth Meeting of the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (PMSC-CSME)”;

Noting the status of implementation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy;

THE CONFERENCE:

Reiterated the urgency of advancing the implementation of the CSME.

6.2. Proposed Amendment to The Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (RTC) – Schedule 1 on The CARICOM Rules of Origin

DECISION

Having considered Paper HGC/2025/48/6.2 entitled “Proposed amendment to the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (RTC) – Schedule I on the CARICOM Rules of Origin”;

Recognising the need for greater flexibility in the amendment procedure for the Rules of Origin;

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

THE CONFERENCE:

Agreed to amend the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas to allow for an amendment of Schedule I (“List of Conditions to be Complied with as Provided under Article 84 of the Treaty and the Rules regarding Community Origin”) to be effected by a decision of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED - Trade) taken by an affirmative vote of all Member States participating in the CSME, and for such amendment to enter into force as determined by the COTED;

Requested that the Secretariat prepare a draft text for consideration and adoption by the Conference at its Forty-Ninth Regular Meeting in July 2025.

6.3 Matters Relating to Transportation: Maritime and Air

DECISION

Having considered, in Caucus, Paper HGC/2025/48/6.3 entitled “Matters Relating to Transportation: Maritime and Air” as well as a verbal presentation on regular and fast ferry services for the Caribbean;

THE CONFERENCE:

Agreed that the CARICOM Private Sector Organization (CPSO) and the ferry operators would discuss matters related to the operations of the ferry service including the infrastructure requirements and report to the Chair of the Conference within six weeks;

Also agreed to the establishment of an Open-Ended Working Group, chaired by the Hon. Amery Browne of Trinidad and Tobago, with representation from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, to address obstacles to the movement of goods and people in the Region including the mutual recognition of driver’s licenses; the insurance products to cover vehicles in multiple countries, and the harmonisation of customs and phytosanitary regulations for the movement of goods, and that the Open-Ended Working Group shall report to the Conference in six weeks;

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

Further agreed that the Region should closely monitor the negotiations in the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), particularly those on the IMO 2023 Strategy on the Reduction of Green House Gas Emissions from Ships (GHG Levy), to ensure that its interests are taken into account and to take common positions where appropriate.

6.4 Exchange with Executive Chairman of Sandals Resorts International

DECISION

*Having considered, in Caucus, a presentation from Mr. Adam Stewart, Executive Chairman of Sandals Resorts International on the **Tourism Industry in the Caribbean**;*

THE CONFERENCE:

Noted the significant contribution of the Sandals Group to the development of the Tourism Sector in the Region and **accepted** the offer of its Executive Chairman to allow the hotel chain to serve as a laboratory for the practice of Tourism in the Region;

Agreed that the Secretariat and the CPSO would undertake a granular study of the linkages between the Tourism, Agriculture, Manufacturing, Entertainment and Cultural sectors in the Region. The study would try to identify the twenty (20) most important products used by the Tourism Sector from each of the other sectors;

Recommended that the Sandals Group convene a session in collaboration with the Director of Hospitality Training in Barbados and other regional hospitality training institutes to standardise hospitality across the Region;

Also noted the offer made by the Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL) to the Sandals Group to address their staff to assist in ensuring that workers are aware of their rights and responsibilities;

Requested that the Sandals University, the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association, and the CPSO discuss the '*greening*' and digitalization of the tourism industry and provide an update to the Conference at its Forty-Ninth Meeting.

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

**7. ADVANCING THE CARICOM AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS AGENDA:
PRIORITISING REGIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY**

DECISION

Having considered Paper HGC/2025/48/7 entitled “Advancing the CARICOM Agri-food Systems Agenda: Prioritising Regional Food and Nutrition Security”;

Acknowledging the continued hard work of the Special Ministerial Task Force on Food Production and Food Security (MTF);

Cognisant of the challenge facing the Region and the world with regard to food and nutrition security;

Welcoming the resource mobilization initiatives which are being undertaken by the MTF;

Concerned about the continued effects of climate change on agricultural production;

THE CONFERENCE:

Endorsed the Report of the Special Ministerial Task Force on Food Production and Food Security (MTF) as presented;

Agreed to the continuation of the 25 by 2025 Initiative to 2030;

Noted that the following would be needed to reach the agreed targets by 2030:

- Greater funding and provision of funding for regional food security from Member States;
- Reform of the Rules of Origin and Common External Tariff (CET) Regime and Suspensions;
- Greater Involvement and Investment Support from the Region’s Private Sector Entities;

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

- Total and complete removal of non-tariff barriers to regional trade in agricultural products;
- Full adoption of digitalization in Regional Agri-Food System;
- Enactment of cross-cutting regional policies to support the sector to include Investment, establishment of business and the movement of people;

Encouraged take-up of the proposed agricultural insurance product, which is being offered to Member States for the benefit of agricultural stakeholders;

Welcomed the projects announced by Guyana in support of increased food and nutrition security across the Region.

8. CLIMATE CHANGE INCLUDING CLIMATE FINANCE:

8.1 Report on the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP 29)

8.2 Preparations for the Thirtieth Meeting of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP 30)

DECISION

Having considered Paper HGC/2025/48/8.1 entitled “Report on the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP29)” and Paper HGC/2025/48/8.2 entitled “Preparations for the Thirtieth Meeting of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP 30)”;

Noting the outcomes from and the positions advocated by CARICOM at COP 29;

Reiterating the importance of coordinated and strategic efforts in order to reinforce regional priorities during the UNFCCC-COP meetings;

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

THE CONFERENCE:

Agreed that there will be sustained high-level political and diplomatic engagement in the lead-up to COP 30;

Also agreed that there will be targeted outreach to the current and incoming COP Presidents to underscore CARICOM's priorities;

Noted the need to nominate pursuant to Article 6.4 and Article 6.8 (of the Paris Agreement) National Designated Authorities (DNA's) to receive up-to-date information from the UNFCCC and to move into a state of readiness, now that Article 6 had entered into implementation mode;

Also noted that the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on Sustainable Development will convene, at the appropriate times in the COP 30 preparation cycle, to consider recommendations from negotiators, regional institutions and the CARICOM Special Envoy on Climate Change.

9. EXCHANGE WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM CIVIL SOCIETY, LABOUR, PRIVATE SECTOR AND YOUTH

DECISION

Having considered the presentation from the CARICOM Youth Ambassador;

Noting the engagement with the CARICOM Private Sector Organization (CPSO) and the Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL) with respect to Agenda Item 6;

THE CONFERENCE:

Welcomed the presentation from the CARICOM Youth Ambassador which advocated for more forums and opportunities where young people can freely share ideas, concerns, and aspirations;

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

Reiterated its commitment to the ongoing inclusion of young people in the work of the Community and **requested** that, within three (3) months, the CARICOM Youth Ambassadors meet and prepare a short paper in collaboration with the CARICOM Secretariat, on the enhanced role of young people in the Community.

10. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION OF THE FORTY-FIFTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE (JULY 2023, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO) ON FREE MOVEMENT (Caucus)

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Agreed that, by 31 March 2025, the remaining two (2) Member States will expedite signature of the Protocol on Enhanced Cooperation, to enable its provisional application, so as to permit the introduction of full Free Movement among those Member States ready to move ahead by 1 June 2025;

Also agreed that the implementation of full Free Movement by a decision under the Protocol on Enhanced Cooperation will include the minimum guarantees for primary and secondary education and emergency and primary health care;

Further agreed that those Member States that intend to implement full free movement by 1 June 2025 to so notify the Secretariat.

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

11. SECURITY ISSUES (Caucus):

11.1 Follow-up from the Second Regional Symposium on Crime and Violence as a Public Health Issue (November 2024, Guyana) – Implementation of the George-Bridge Declaration

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Adopted the working definition of Crime and Violence as a Public Health Issue;

Also adopted the George-Bridge Declaration of the Second Regional Symposium on Crime and Violence as a Public Health Issue;

Supported the aims of the Needham's Point Declaration;

Agreed to intensify efforts at a holistic, Region-wide approach to crime and violence as a public health issue that includes mental health interventions and support systems, in particular for children affected by violence; measures to reverse the decline in civility and constructive conflict resolution; collaboration with Ministries of Education including on initiatives aimed at at-risk youth; a focus on violence and systemic failure endured by women; and economic reintegration of convicts; noting that the Secretariat is coordinating this work through the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) and the Council for National Security and Law Enforcement (CONSLE);

Also agreed that, notwithstanding the social considerations, the changing nature of crime is such that certain acts of violence in the public space must now be designated as acts of terror;

Further agreed on developing dedicated regional responses to the specific challenge of the proliferation of the criminal enterprise of organised crime;

Agreed to appoint Mr. Godfrey Smith, former Attorney General of Belize as High-Level Representative on Law and Criminal Justice, supported by a multi-disciplinary team of technical experts, including those seconded from contributing Member States, and **approved** the Terms of Reference to design and lead implementation of a Strategic Plan

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

to improve and modernise Criminal Justice Delivery Services across the Caribbean Community as one element of the holistic, Region-wide approach.

12. THE SITUATION IN HAITI (Caucus)

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Agreed to the continued support to Haiti through the Haiti Good Offices mechanism of the Eminent Persons Group (EPG);

Approved the budget of **US\$505,820** for the continuation of the activities of the Eminent Persons Group for a period of 12 months.

13. GEOPOLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

13.1 Report on the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on External Negotiations (Caucus)

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Noted the implications of the announced changes in US Trade Policy for CARICOM trade and economic prospects;

Agreed to a common strategy of non-adversarial policy engagement with the United States administration, including at the highest political level, on matters of mutual interest, including trade and investment opportunities, hemispheric security, and the protection of the Region;

Also agreed that the Community should take steps to safeguard its market access with key partners, strengthen internal trade arrangements and further diversify its external trade arrangements;

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

Further agreed that the Prime Ministerial Sub Committee (PMSC) on External Negotiations should meet in the next six (6) weeks to consider the further studies to be completed by the Secretariat, and present scenarios and recommendations for the Community's consideration.

13.2. Report from the Caribbean Meteorological Organisation

DECISION

Having considered Paper HGC/2025/48/13.2. entitled "Report from the Caribbean Meteorological Organisation" and its Attachment;

Noting the oral reports from the CARICOM Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH) and the written report from the Caribbean Meteorological Organisation (CMO) on the impacts of the reduced funding to be received following the decisions taken by the United States Administration;

THE CONFERENCE:

Requested the Secretariat to undertake an urgent analysis of the deficit that would occur due to the impacts of the reduced funding and to consider these issues in a meeting between the Secretariat and Regional Institutions;

Also requested that the affected regional institutions provide updated reports on the resources required to address the projected deficits;

Supported the approach proposed by the CIMH to access satellite technology to address the climate and weather impacts relevant to the Region including from other regions.

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

14. ECONOMIC ISSUES:

14.1 CARICOM Commission on the Economy (Caucus)

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Committed to accelerate the implementation of the remaining recommendations from the Commission on the Economy;

Agreed to focus efforts on raising the level of investment aimed at fostering innovation to increase competitiveness, diversify supply chains, and re-ignite growth;

Also agreed to move quickly to build out the regional capital market and to finalise the revised Industrial Policy;

Noted that the CPSO will be undertaking a consultancy study on the benefits and possibilities of a regional stock exchange;

Further agreed to strengthen cooperation as well as continue to build out bilateral and multilateral relationships with third countries to advance the interests of the Community.

14.2 Regional Telecommunications Strategy (Caucus)

DECISION

Having considered matters related to a “**Regional Telecommunications Strategy**” including the *Report of the CARICOM Working Group to Review Models to Achieve a Caribbean Gigabit Society by 2023 (“CARICOM Working Group Report”)*;

Noting that the top four (4) largest over the top (OTT) traffic generators (Google, Meta, TikTok and Netflix) account for approximately 70 % of mobile data traffic in the Region;

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

Also noting the *OTT/Network Operators Commercial Agreements: Indicative Guidelines for Negotiation* set out in the *CARICOM Working Group Report - Appendix B: Principles of Negotiation (OTT Indicative Guidelines for Negotiation)*;

Further noting the goal set out in the *CARICOM Working Group Report* is to ensure that all people of the Caribbean have access to 5G mobile broadband networks and Fiber to the Home (FTTH) connections of at least 100 Mbps down upgradable to Gigabit speed of 1 Gbp (for Fibre connections) at affordable prices, for employment, social services, and global competitiveness by 2030 (*Caribbean Gigabit Society by 2030*);

Recognising that achieving the goal of a *Caribbean Gigabit Society by 2030* is critical to digital transformation of key sectors and digital development and seizing the opportunities for social and economic growth;

THE CONFERENCE:

Welcomed the Report by the CARICOM Private Sector Organization (CPSO), on behalf of the CARICOM Working Group established to review and develop strategies for achieving a Caribbean (Caribbean Community) Gigabit Society by 2030;

Agreed, in principle, that all traffic generators that derive commercial benefit from the digital economy, should contribute fairly and equitably, (guided by the *OTT Indicative Guidelines for Negotiation*) to the infrastructure investment required to carry their data;

Recommended a Sub-Committee of the Heads of Government, chaired by the Lead Head of Government with responsibility for Science and Technology (including ICT), and including the Premier of Bermuda, and the Chair of the Conference, convene a meeting with network operators, OTTs, Ministers with responsibility for ICT and the CARICOM Working Group to advance a more equitable contribution ('fair share') to the telecommunications network operations and the additional investment in network capacity required to achieve CARICOM's goals of a 'Caribbean gigabit society by 2030';

Also recommended the establishment of a Committee, comprising the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU), CARICOM Competition Commission (CCC), national Competition and Telecommunications Regulators, and the CARICOM Secretariat with support from competent international institutions, such as the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and others, to develop draft harmonised policy

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

recommendations (where these do not exist under other regional frameworks), for active participation in the digital economy on:

- (i) Data and privacy protection;
- (ii) Cybercrime and cyber security; and
- (iii) Digital Trade;

Mandated the CARICOM Working Group to expand its work to include:

- (i) determination of the 5G Mobile Broadband and Fixed Broadband targets to achieve the Caribbean Gigabit Society by 2030; and,
- (ii) public stakeholder consultations;

Also agreed to receive a report from the Lead Prime Minister with responsibility for Science and Technology (including ICT), with technical guidance on the 'Caribbean Gigabit society 2030', at the Forty-Ninth Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government.

15. FINANCING AND GOVERNANCE OF THE COMMUNITY (Caucus)

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Agreed to the preparation of a Paper to review the past work on CARICOM Governance and articulate a set of Governance Arrangements to deepen functional cooperation, consider a political arm to engage the international community in the context of growing global uncertainty; and to establish a mechanism to provide for the automaticity of financing for the Secretariat and other regional institutions;

Noted that the preparation of the Paper would be undertaken within existing resources;

Mandated that the Paper should be prepared by the end of May 2025;

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

Underscored the necessity of improved communications and public relations to ensure that the everyday person in the Community is made aware of the significance of CARICOM.

16. BORDER ISSUES:

16.1 Belize-Guatemala (Caucus)

DECISION

Having considered, in Caucus, the territorial dispute between Belize and Guatemala;

Taking note of the Belize-Guatemala and Belize-Honduras cases before the International Court of Justice (ICJ);

THE CONFERENCE:

Commended the parties on seeking a peaceful resolution to all legal claims against Belize's land and insular territories and any maritime areas pertaining to those territories;

Called on all Parties to abide by and implement the ICJ decision when delivered;

Reiterated the importance of Belize, Guatemala and the Organization of American States (OAS) continuing to fully implement the existing Confidence Building Measures;

Also reiterated their call for both countries and the OAS to finally fulfil their commitment to design a mechanism of co-operation for the Sarstoon River and maritime spaces;

Expressed appreciation for the role of the OAS in accompanying the process and called on the international community to increase support for the OAS Office in the Adjacency Zone;

Reaffirmed their steadfast support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of Belize.

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

16.2 Guyana-Venezuela (Caucus)

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Received an update on developments concerning the Guyana/Venezuela controversy;

Noted with grave concern, both the statements made by the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the Chairman of the National Electoral Council of Venezuela on January 27, 2025, declaring their intention to conduct elections in the Essequibo region of Guyana on April 27 2025, for a “Governor” and “Legislative Council” of the so-called “Guayana Esequiba State,” which Venezuela illegally purported to “annex” last year;

Underscored that the convening of any such elections in Guyana’s territory would be contrary to general principles of international law, the United Nations Charter, the December 1, 2023, Order of the International Court of Justice and the agreements reached in the Joint Declaration of Argyle for Dialogue and Peace between Guyana and Venezuela;

Urged Venezuela not to attempt to carry out elections, or to intrude in any other way, in Guyana’s sovereign territory;

Condemned the attack on 17 February 2025, perpetrated by an armed group of men from Venezuela on members of the Guyana Defence Force (GDF) while they were carrying out their lawful business along the Guyana/ Venezuela border;

Welcomed the submission by Venezuela of its counter-memorial on April 8, 2024, on the merits of the case regarding the validity of the 1899 Arbitral Award that had determined the boundary between British Guiana and Venezuela, and the submission of the Reply by Guyana on December 9, 2024 and **encouraged** Venezuela to submit its Rejoinder, the final written pleading in the case, on August 8, 2025, in compliance with the Court’s scheduling Order;

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

Reiterated and underscored their unequivocal and unwavering support for the maintenance of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Guyana and for the judicial process before the Court as the means for resolving the controversy peacefully, finally and in accordance with international law.

17. UPDATES ON CANDIDATURES:

17.1 Candidature of Suriname to the post of Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS) (Caucus)

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Restated its commitment to unanimous support for Minister Albert Ramdin of Suriname in the election on 10 March 2025 to the post of Secretary General of the Organisation of American States.

17.2 Candidature of Guyana to Director-General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA) (Caucus)

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Supported the candidacy of Dr. Muhammad Ibrahim of Guyana for the position of Director-General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) at elections to take place in November 2025.

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

17.3 Candidatures from The Bahamas

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Noted the schedule of candidatures presented by The Bahamas and agreed that these would be considered by the Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR).

18. RECOMMENDATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO POSITION OF PRESIDENT, CARIBBEAN COURT OF JUSTICE (CCJ) (Caucus)

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Confirmed, pursuant to Article IV(6) of the Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ), the appointment of the Honourable Mr. Justice Winston Anderson as President of the Caribbean Court of Justice as recommended by the Regional Judicial and Legal Services Commission (RJLSC);

Conveyed appreciation to the Honourable Mr. Justice Adrian Saunders for his sterling service to the Region as President of the Caribbean Court of Justice.

19. UPDATE FROM THE BAHAMAS ON CONSULTATIONS WITH ASSOCIATE MEMBERS (Caucus)

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Received the report made by The Bahamas on consultations with the non-independent and Associate Members of the Community, which provided a comprehensive overview of the critical challenges and developments across various territories and shared priorities including on governance, constitutional reform, security, migration, economic resilience, and climate financing;

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

Endorsed the Report prepared by the United Nations Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (C-24 Report) of August 2024;

Agreed that self-determination should be included within the CARICOM reparations agenda;

Underscored that Associate Members should benefit from technical and strategic support in addressing crime and irregular migration challenges; be included in concessional financing mechanisms and climate resilience funding, and agreed to undertake advocacy towards that end;

Expressed support for Bermuda’s full membership aspirations and for enhanced regional collaboration for Associate Members.

20. REPARATIONS (Caucus)

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Agreed to the principle of Reparatory Justice that is developmental and intergenerational over a long period;

Also agreed to take advantage of the valuable opportunities for advocacy and public engagement presented by the observance of a Second International Decade for People of African Descent (2025-2034); the bicentenary of the imposition of the independence ransom imposed on Haiti in 1825; and the declaration by the African Union of 2025 as the year for “Justice for Africans and People of African Descent Through Reparations;”

Further agreed to strengthen collaboration with the United Nations (UN) Permanent Forum on People of African Descent, the UN Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent and other relevant human rights bodies in the United Nations system, to ensure tangible outcomes from the Second International Decade for People of African

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

Descent, especially in relation to reparatory justice, human rights, well-being and development;

Requested the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee (PMSC) on Reparations to advise on priority activities to mark the commencement of the Second International Decade for People of African Descent, the bicentenary of Haiti's independence ransom and the African Union Year for "Justice for Africans and People of African Descent Through Reparations" for consideration at the Forty-Ninth Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government;

Welcomed the opportunity for mature dialogue at the level of Heads of Government with the European Union, opened by engagement with the President of the European Commission during the Forty-Eighth Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government in Barbados;

Agreed to engage with the Church of England and **noted** the importance of King Charles' report on the involvement of the Royal Family in the transatlantic slave trade, due in 2026;

Requested an advisory report on the quantum of compensation that would be appropriate and proportionate.

21. UPDATE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES ON INDIGENISATION (Caucus)

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Received a report from the Vice-Chancellor of The University of the West Indies which requested approval for the creation and adoption of an inter-governmental treaty that will replace the Royal Charter that currently forms the constituent instrument establishing The University of the West Indies;

Noted that the treaty will be signed and ratified by all contributing countries to the University and that this process will enable seamless continuation of the University's operations under a treaty-based governance;

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

Agreed that The University of the West Indies could proceed as outlined above.

23. DATES OF FORTHCOMING INTER-SESSIONAL AND REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE CONFERENCE

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Accepted the offer from Jamaica to host the Forty-Ninth Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community on 6-8 July 2025 in Montego Bay, Jamaica;

Agreed in principle to the proposed dates for the Inter-Sessional Meetings of the Conference for 2025.

24. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

24.1 Situation of Education in the Region (Caucus)

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Received a presentation on the concerns of parents on the administration of examinations by the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC);

Urged the relevant parties to meet urgently with the representatives of the parents association to address concerns;

Agreed to establish a CARICOM Education Transformation Commission to address education in the Region and requested comments on a draft Terms of Reference for the Commission by 3 March 2025.

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

24.2 Guyana Digital School

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Welcomed the video presentation on the Guyana Digital School which will train students on Artificial Intelligence and other subjects relevant to the digital age and which will commence on 1 March 2025;

Expressed appreciation for the offer by the Government of Guyana for students of the Region to access the Guyana Digital School;

Requested that Guyana provide further information on the Digital School for circulation.

25. DIGITAL SKILLS COMMISSION

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Noted the proposed establishment of a *Regional Digital Skills Commission to drive the implementation of digital skills development initiatives* to function as a central coordinating body, fostering collaboration among governments, educational institutions, private sector stakeholders, and international development partners;

Also noted that the CARICOM Digital Skills Commission will play a pivotal role in enhancing Digital Skills, Workforce Development, and Capacity Building in the Region.

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

26. REPORT FROM THE TWENTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE PRIME MINISTERIAL SUB-COMMITTEE (PMSC) ON CRICKET (NOVEMBER 2024)

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Noted the developments which had taken place in West Indies Cricket since the convening of the Twenty-First Meeting of the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee (PMSC) on Cricket;

Expressed concern that partisan political conduct involving regional cricket administrators could adversely affect regional cricket being contrary to the International Cricket Council (ICC) procedures and regulations;

Conveyed appreciation to Dr. the Hon. Keith Rowley, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, for his chairmanship of the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on Cricket;

Agreed that His Excellency Dr. Irfaan Ali, President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana would be the new chair of the PMSC on Cricket;

27. GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE ISLANDS SUMMIT 2025, BASSETERRE, ST. KITTS AND NEVIS

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Noted that the second Global Sustainable Islands Summit 2025 (GSIS) will be held in St. Kitts and Nevis from 27-29 May 2025 to further discussions on innovative solutions for small island sustainable development, with a continued emphasis on renewable energy, climate resilience, and sustainable practices.

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

28. REGIONAL POPULATION COMMISSION

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Noted the status of the proposals for the establishment of the Regional Population Commission.

29. CARIFESTA XV

DECISION

THE CONFERENCE:

Noted the updates from the Government of Barbados on the hosting of CARIFESTA XV on 22-31 August 2025 under the theme "*Caribbean Roots - Global Excellence*";

Encouraged Member States to give full support and confirm their participation in CARIFESTA XV by the end of March 2025.

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

Annex I

AGENDA

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1. WELCOME
2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA
3. SIGNATURE BY MARTINIQUE OF AGREEMENT TO JOIN CARICOM AS AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY
4. RATIFICATION OF REPORTS:
 - 4.1 Report from the Forty-Sixth Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government (February 2024)
 - 4.2 Decisions from the Thirty-Ninth Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government (September 2024)
5. **EXCHANGES WITH SPECIALLY INVITED GUESTS**

International Organisations

- 5.1 H.E. Mr. Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations
- 5.2 H.E. Ms. Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission
- 5.3 Rt. Hon. Patricia Scotland, KC, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth

Financial Institutions/Agencies

- 5.4 H.E. Professor Benedict Oramah, President, Afreximbank
- 5.5 H.E. Sergio Díaz-Granados, Executive President, Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF)
- 5.6 Mr. Daniel Best, President, Caribbean Development Bank

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

ITEMS FOR DECISION

PLENARY

6. CARICOM SINGLE MARKET AND ECONOMY:

- 6.1 Report from the Fifteenth Meeting of the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (PMSC-CSME)**
- 6.2 Proposed amendment to the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (RTC) - Schedule 1 on the CARICOM Rules of Origin**
- 6.3 Matters Relating to Transportation: Maritime and Air**
- 6.4 Exchange with Executive Chairman of the Sandals Group**

7. ADVANCING THE CARICOM AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS AGENDA: PRIORITISING REGIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

8. CLIMATE CHANGE INCLUDING CLIMATE FINANCE:

- 8.1 Report on the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP 29)**
- 8.2 Preparations for the Thirtieth Meeting of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP 30)**

9. EXCHANGE WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM CIVIL SOCIETY, LABOUR, PRIVATE SECTOR AND YOUTH

CAUCUS

10. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION OF THE FORTY-FIFTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE (JULY 2023, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO) ON FREE MOVEMENT

11. SECURITY ISSUES:

- 11.1 Follow-up from the Second Regional Symposium on Crime and Security as a Public Health Issue (November 2024, Guyana) – Implementation of the George-Bridge Declaration**

12. THE SITUATION IN HAITI

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

13. GEOPOLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

**13.1 Report on the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on External Negotiations
(Requested by Jamaica)**

13.2. Report from the Caribbean Meteorological Organisation

14. ECONOMIC ISSUES:

14.1 CARICOM Commission on the Economy

14.2 Regional Telecommunications Strategy

15. FINANCING AND GOVERNANCE OF THE COMMUNITY

16. BORDER ISSUES:

16.1 Belize-Guatemala

16.2 Guyana-Venezuela

17. UPDATES ON CANDIDATURES:

17.1 Candidature of Suriname to the post of Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS)

17.2 Candidature of Guyana to Director-General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA)

17.3 Candidatures from The Bahamas

18. RECOMMENDATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO POSITION OF PRESIDENT, CARIBBEAN COURT OF JUSTICE (CCJ)

19. UPDATE FROM THE BAHAMAS ON CONSULTATIONS WITH ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

20. REPARATIONS

21. UPDATE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES ON INDIGENISATION

Summary of Confirmed Decisions

STATUTORY ITEMS

22. CONFIRMATION OF DECISIONS OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH REGULAR MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE
23. DATES OF FORTHCOMING INTER-SESSIONAL AND REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE CONFERENCE
24. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:
 - 24.1 Situation of Education in the Region (Caucus)
 - 24.2 Guyana Digital School

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/NOTING

PLENARY

25. DIGITAL SKILLS COMMISSION
26. REPORT FROM THE TWENTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE PRIME MINISTERIAL SUB-COMMITTEE (PMSC) ON CRICKET (NOVEMBER 2024)
27. GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE ISLANDS SUMMIT 2025, BASSETERRE, ST. KITTS AND NEVIS
(Requested by St. Kitts and Nevis)
28. REGIONAL POPULATION COMMISSION
29. CARIFESTA XV

^^^