CARICOM statement
at the adoption of draft resolution A/68/L.3
New York, 20 September 2013

Mr. President,

I have to honour to address the Assembly today on behalf of the Members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) at the adoption of the draft resolution on the extension of the intergovernmental process of the General Assembly on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system.

At the outset please allow me to acknowledge the Permanent Representatives of Indonesia and Iceland, and their teams, for their skillful leadership of this intergovernmental process and hard work throughout in facilitating the deliberations, and in ensuring that the relevant documentation was always prepared for our consideration.

CARICOM welcomed the intergovernmental process of the General Assembly on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system, pursuant to the adoption of General Assembly resolution 66/254. Our Member States have participated actively and constructively throughout this process.

It is fundamental for Member States to address the serious challenges with which the human rights treaty body system is faced and to make concrete proposals to guarantee the effective functioning of the treaty bodies. Strengthening the system in all its aspects will contribute to not only an improvement of the system but also to safeguarding the basic tenets of human rights.

We regret, however, that we were unable to conclude negotiations in the time allocated due in part to the lack of information and concrete figures on crucial matters.

The consideration in the intergovernmental process of strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the treaty body system, provided a useful and much needed opportunity for all Member States and other stakeholders to seriously address the challenges faced by the system, due to, among other factors, increased ratification of treaties and the adoption of additional human rights treaties with the associated need for increased financial and other resources.
Mr. President,

In addressing the challenges for States Parties it is crucial, in particular for small States like those in the Caribbean, to build national capacity in order to fulfill their reporting obligations.

While in our States mechanisms are in place that are responsible for human rights reporting, limited human and financial capacity compromises our ability to present national reports within the timeframes established in the Treaties to which our countries are Parties.

Throughout the process CARICOM has repeatedly stressed the importance of the inclusion of appropriate provisions for capacity building in the outcome of our discussions. On those occasions the region also requested concrete information on elements for a capacity building strategy and how this strategy would be financed.

We note OP 4 of this draft resolution regarding the mandate provided to the Secretary General to provide a comprehensive and detailed cost assessment by 15 November 2013.

In this regard CARICOM would like to stress that all efforts should be made by the Secretariat to provide Member States with all of the information requested to inform the remainder of the process.

Failure to do so will necessitate a further deferral to finalize this intergovernmental process and would surely further compromise the functioning of the human rights treaty body system.

In closing Mr. President, I would like to pledge the support of the CARICOM Member States for their continued constructive participation in this process.

We kindly request to include this statement in the official records of the meeting.

Thank you.