Mr. President, Distinguished Members of the Board,

I am very pleased to submit for your consideration and approval the draft Regional programme document for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2014-2017.

The overarching objective of this Regional Programme is to tackle multiple, enduring and pervasive inequalities that cannot be addressed through isolated actions. It draws from the fact that despite a decade of progress. The inequality challenge in the region remains as a critical obstacle to further social, political and environmental progress.

The proposed programme aims at reducing persistent income and non-income poverty and exclusion, lowering levels of vulnerability and conflict, building sustainable development practices, and strengthening democratic governance, while acknowledging the region’s diversity of countries (middle-income countries, small island developing States and least developed countries).

It also builds upon the findings and recommendations of the independent evaluation of the previous regional programme which concluded that UNDP has made relevant contributions to the development in the region. It also highlighted several key critical
lessons that have inspired and been embedded in the proposed program, such as:

a. The need to focus on fewer priorities where UNDP brings a regional added value;
b. To engage governments and other partners – especially United Nations Agencies and other sub-regional organizations.
c. To rethink our approach to the Caribbean;
d. To focus more on upstream initiatives;
e. To mainstream areas such as gender and HIV/AIDS; and
f. Finally, to support more strategically triangular and South-South cooperation, as well as knowledge management.

The proposed programme gives special attention to the Caribbean sub-region, prioritizing interventions in areas agreed between the CARICOM and the United Nations Development Group LAC, such as: institutional strengthening, climate change, human security, HIV and women’s political participation. The Regional Programme envisages specific support to strengthen the preparation of countries from the Caribbean for the SIDS conference in Samoa.

Mister President, I would like to provide some indicative regional interventions, linked to each of the four selected outcomes, aimed at fostering an analysis, providing policy guidance, systematizing and sharing knowledge and good practices, and building capacities.

✓ On outcome 1: Inclusive and sustainable growth and development, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded: (a) promotes fiscally sustainable universal social protection floors;
(b) capacities to address the multidimensional aspects of poverty; (c) support to the post-2015 agenda in the region and (d) foster sustainable natural resources management, climate change mitigation and adaptation;

✓ For Outcome 2: Through citizen’s participation, the rule of law and accountability, stronger systems of democratic governance:

(a) Promote citizen’s empowerment - with participation of women, youth, indigenous peoples and afro-descendants - in political and electoral processes public policy-makers; b) Laws and policies for effective response to HIV (with particular emphasis in the Caribbean); (c) effective regulatory frameworks for extractive industries; and (d) implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption.

✓ Outcome 3. Reducing gender inequality and promoting women’s empowerment:

Besides incorporating gender into all other outcomes as a cross-cutting issue, the regional programme will support public policies that (a) advance women’s economic empowerment and inclusion; (b) accelerate women’s participation in decision making; and (c) promote the inclusion of women in the economic sphere.

✓ Outcome 4. Countries ability to reduce the likelihood of conflict and lower the risk of natural disasters, including those resulting from climate change:

Interventions in: (a) dialogue and multi stake holder consensus building; (b) social cohesion and citizen security at regional, national and sub-national levels; (c) disaster preparedness and
recovery planning, including ecosystem adaptation; and risk reduction.

In all outcome areas, the capacity development, knowledge management, and innovation for development challenges will be part of all interventions, while South-South cooperation will be the mechanism for effective collaboration across countries, both within and outside the region. South-South cooperation will be leveraged through knowledge management tools to collect, systematize, and transfer experiences, and by building capacities in programme countries for optimal use of development collaboration.

The regional programme is based on the understanding that development involves many partners and that no effort at the outcome level can be achieved by UNDP alone. UNDP will build and expand existing partnerships with sub-regional organizations, including bilateral, NGOs and the private sector, with priority given to UN organizations.

We would like to stress that the regional programme complements UNDP Country Programmes and will remain flexible to respond to new development challenges that may emerge, such as the post-2015 agenda.

Finally, the total amount of financial resources needed to implement this regional programme is estimated at $46 million, with core resources expected to be $14 million over the 2014-2017 period. An investment of 5 per cent of regular resources will be made for monitoring and evaluation.

I thank you Mr. President.