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Statement

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On Behalf of the Caribbean Community
(Caricom)

Agenda Item 14:
“Culture of Peace”

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Mr. President

On behalf of the 14 Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), it is an honour for me to address this General Assembly on agenda item 14, Culture of Peace.

CARICOM takes this opportunity to thank the Secretary General for the report prepared and submitted to guide our consideration of this agenda item.

CARICOM also wishes to thank UNESCO and the various UN entities that are committed to promoting the values of the Culture of Peace.

Mr. President

We live in an era of increasing globalization and deepening interdependence. As CARICOM itself is the essence of cultural diversity, we recognize the importance of promoting inter-religious and intercultural dialogue. CARICOM believes that peaceful resolution of conflicts and differences is crucial to social and economic development.

Disparities among and within countries remain a global concern. Poverty and social and income inequality has persisted, causing a growing resentment and intolerance. CARICOM believes that the Post-2015 Development Agenda will need to address the increasing inequalities between countries, and ensure that globalization benefits all countries and not just a selected few.

Consistent with its Charter obligations, the United Nations has to be a force for equality and fairness in the context of an inequitable system of Globalization. The United Nations must work to ensure that rules apply evenly, effectively and consistently among all actors in our global family.

Mr. President
The report of the Secretary General notes that in increasingly diverse and interconnected societies, cultural and religious differences are at the forefront. People need to be equipped with the capacities necessary to thwart hate speech, challenge stereotypes and promote the peaceful coexistence in diversity. People need to be educated on the basic principles of peace, tolerance, co-operation, peaceful dialogue, and mutual respect for all. CARICOM believes that nowhere is it more important to promote these values, than among our youth.

Secretary General Ban Ki-moon declared “Through education, we teach children not to hate. Through education, we raise leaders who act with wisdom and compassion. Through education, we establish a true, lasting culture of peace.”

Mr. President

CARICOM strongly believes that education, which causes a fundamental shift in how we view reality, is a powerful weapon against oppression. Education empowers. 17 year old Pakistani education activist Malala Yousafzai, who recently received the Nobel Peace Prize award, is a shining example of this. In Malala's Nobel Peace Prize speech she said:

"Why is it that countries which we call "strong" are so powerful in creating wars, but so weak in bringing peace? Why is it that giving guns is so easy but giving books is so hard? Why is it that making tanks is so easy, but building schools is so difficult? As we are living in the modern age, the 21st century, we all believe that nothing is impossible. We can reach the moon and maybe soon will land on Mars. Then, in this, the 21st century, we must be determined that our dream of quality education for all will also come true. So let us bring equality, justice and peace for all. Not just the politicians and the world leaders, we all need to contribute. Me. You. It is our duty.”

It is CARICOM's hope that through peace education, we can create a mindset of tolerance and cooperation and create an enduring culture of peace.

I thank you