GOVERNMENT OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Statement for the Executive Board of UNDP

on behalf of CARICOM

by

H.E. Dr. Walton Webson,
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on

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Mr. President,

I deliver this statement as Chair of the CARICOM caucus in New York for the month of September and October.

At the onset I wish to extend on behalf of CARICOM, our delegations gratitude to UNDP and especially the team focusing on Latin America and Caribbean States for a comprehensive presentation of the draft country programme for the sub-region of Barbados and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), in addition to the country programmes for Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, our respective governments unreservedly welcomes these country programmes.

Over the years, the partnership between CARICOM countries and UNDP has produced remarkable results due to the fact that UNDP has always aligned its programmes with the sub-regions development priorities and goals, resulting in workable partnerships that we value as individual countries and as a sub-region as a whole.

Mr. President,

UNDP is presenting the draft country programmes for our sub-regional countries at a very critical time. In 2014 we adopted the SAMOAPATHWAY resulting from the third international conference on Small Island Developing States, a partnership by the international community in ensuring that Small Island States are able to achieve sustained development.

In July last year world leaders adopted the Addis Ababa Action Agenda setting new and concrete arrangements for financing for developing countries.
The adoption of the 2030 agenda and the sustainable development goals last year September signaled a new path to sustainability for all.

And in December we adopted the monumental Paris Agreement, highlighting our governments commitment to ending the adverse effects of climate change.
Mr. President,

The new country programme for the countries within CARICOM during this transformative period lays the foundation for renewed partnerships between the sub-region of Barbados and the OECS, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and UNDP.

Our countries were well encouraged by the extensive consultations between UNDP and our respective governments during the drafting of the country programmes, noting that the draft programme documents are aligned with our regional development prospects and each country’s national development plans. The country programmes underscores important areas for our countries, for example, economic development, employment, crime and prevention, climate reliance, gender empowerment and social protection.

Our region also recognizes that our country programme documents are aligned to the United Nations Development Framework (UNDAF). We also notes UNDP’s commitment to providing support at the national level and targeted interventions when needed.

Mr. President,

Equally, while notable achievements have been made through partnership with UNDP, challenges still remain. All of the countries under the new country programme are unfairly classified as middle-income countries, were are highly indebted and our vulnerabilities to internal and external shocks far surpassed any other regions; at the same time we are facing new challenges to our economic development such as the Zika virus and the issue of de-risking.

It is our sub-region hope that UNDP will continue constructive engagement with our governments as we continue to build upon our partnerships and implement the new country programmes.

I Thank You.