**on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of**

 **the human rights council**

**remarks by**

**h.e. a. missouri sherman-peter**

**ambassador/permanent observer**

**for the caribbean community to the**

**united nations, new york**

**at the**

**launch of the exhibition**

***ensuring that the voices of all united nations***

 ***member states are heard***

**voices of the beneficary delegates of the voluntary technical assistance trust fund to support the participation of least developed countries (ldcs)**

 **and small island developing states (sids) in the**

**work of the human rights council**

**palais des nations**

**area outside room xx**

**15 june 2016**

**6:00 p.m.**

**high-level sponsors:**

**h.e. mr. john quinn permanent representatiave**

**of australia to the united nations in geneva**

**h.e. ms. patricia o’brien permanent representative**

**of ireland to the united nations in geneva**

**office of the united nations high commissioner**

**for human rights, geneva**

**please check against delivery**

Thank you, Ambassador Quinn.

I join you in recognizing the presence here of Ms. Kate Gilmore, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, H.E. Ms. Natasha Stott Despoja, Australian Ambassador for Women and Girls, and H.E. Ms. Patricia O’Brien, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations. Excellencies, LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund Awardees, Ladies and Gentlemen, a good evening to all.

As CARICOM Permanent Observer to the United Nations, New York, I am honoured to participate in the launch of this Exhibition on the Voluntary Trust Fund for the Participation of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the work of Human Rights Council, and to join Ireland, the first donor, and Australia, the main contributor to the Fund, in this Event. I bring best wishes from Secretary-General Irwin LaRocque and the CARICOM Secretariat.

It is opportune that this Exhibition takes place during the historic 10th Anniversary of the Human Rights Council. CARICOM is pleased that at this universally attended 32nd Session of the Council, SIDS from our region without Permanent Missions in Geneva, have taken their seats among the full 193 United Nations member states, to contribute to the critical work of the Council.

This Exhibition makes an impressive statement. It is a statement that speaks loudly and clearly about the constructive engagement among a dynamic Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, LDCs and SIDS committed to making their contribution to the promotion and protection of human rights globally, and supportive donor countries. CARICOM regards this constructive engagement, and its positive results, as a prime example of a unique and effective partnership in action.

Input from all United Nations member states is central to making the Human Rights Council an effective body. The skillful and effective management of the LDCs/SIDS Fund has permitted delegates representing twelve of CARICOM’s fourteen member states to participate in the work of the Human Rights Council. Most of our member states would have been unable to participate in the Council’s work without the generous donations that have been made to the Fund.

CARICOM is fully vested in the work of the Human Rights Council, which is linked to our regional priorities. The CARICOM Strategic Plan 2015-2019, approved by the Conference of Heads of Government in July 2014, states, “We have an abiding respect for human Rights and the rule of law, and take action to ensure social and economic justice for the people of the Community”. These are values and perspectives that our member states bring to the work of the Council.

 The CARICOM voices speaking from this Exhibition about the Trust Fund and participation in the Human Rights Council are among those of the eight (8) women and one (1) man that, up to March 2016, have represented their countries with awards from the LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund. Their voices have been joined by high-level officials from the region, including at the Ministerial level, and from the CARICOM Secretary–General and CARICOM Ambassadors. We urge you all to listen to our CARICOM voices.

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CARICOM thanks the donors and managers of the Trust Fund for the assistance its member states continue to receive. I take this opportunity to recognize and thank Ms. Fatou Camara Houel, Coordinator of the Trust Fund, for her commitment to the successful achievements of the Fund’s goals and objectives. Our CARICOM region is gratified that additional donors have come forward. We look forward to the Fund’s continued support to sustain the participation of LDCs/SIDS, including those of CARICOM, in the work of the Human Rights Council.

I thank you.