



WELCOME REMARKS

BY

**AMBASSADOR COLIN GRANDERSON
ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE
CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY**

AT THE

**WORKSHOP FOR LDCS/SIDS IN THE CARIBBEAN
REGION – “ENGAGING WITH THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS
COUNCIL THROUGH THE LDCS/SIDS TRUST FUND:
ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES AND LESSONS
LEARNT”**

**GEORGETOWN, GUYANA
19-20 NOVEMBER 2018**

- ❖ His Excellency Mr Moses Nagamootoo, Acting President and Prime Minister of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana
- ❖ H.E. Vojislav ŠUC, President of the UN Human Rights Council;
- ❖ Mr Eric Tistounet, Chief, Human Rights Council Branch
- ❖ Ms.Fatou Camara Houel, Coordinator, LDCs/SIDS Trust Fund
- ❖ Ms Tanaka, UN Resident Representative

- ❖ Distinguished Members of the Diplomatic Corps and International Organisations

- ❖ Distinguished Participants;

- ❖ Ladies and Gentlemen;
- ❖ Members of the Media

Good morning.

I am greatly honoured to have the opportunity to offer welcome remarks on behalf of the Caribbean Community Secretariat at this formal opening of the Workshop for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Caribbean Region.

I wish to extend the Community's thanks and appreciation to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana for their contribution to the convening of this Workshop, of which the CARICOM Secretariat is delighted to be a co-sponsor. It represents the first of three workshops of the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund to Support the Participation of

LDCs and SIDS in the work of the Human Rights Council. I, also, wish to thank you, our distinguished participants, for your presence and your commitment to the strengthening of human rights.

The Caribbean Community commends the Secretariat of the Voluntary Technical Assistance Trust Fund working under the umbrella of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for the support provided to LDCs/SIDS of the Caribbean region and worldwide. Its work has ensured that the voices and perspectives of the smallest members of the international community are heard in the UN Human Rights Council. Your assistance in helping to build the capacity of Caribbean States in the area of human rights promotion and protection has been invaluable and deeply appreciated. We were pleased also that, over time, through the aid of the Trust Fund, there has been full participation of CARICOM Member States in the regular sessions of the Human Rights Council. We look forward to our continued partnership, which will no doubt be strengthened by the election, for the first time, of a Caribbean Small Island Developing State, The Bahamas, to the Human Rights Council. Congratulations, also, to our fellow Small Island Developing State, Fiji, which will serve on the Council for the first time as well. I would not be surprised to learn that there is a link between the sensitisation and capacity building work done by the Trust Fund over the years and the assumption of responsibilities by these two SIDS on the Human Rights Council,

As this Workshop seeks to evaluate the achievements, identify the challenges and build on the lessons learned to recommend improvements for the Trust Fund, it does so against the backdrop of this year's celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which sets the common standard for all people and nations. It does so against the backdrop of our efforts towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. It does so also as a testament to the Caribbean Community's commitment and determination for the promotion and protection of human rights. In this latter regard, I wish to mention that in addition to its embrace of international conventions on human rights of the United Nations and the Organisation of American States, CARICOM's normative moorings on human rights are codified in the Community's Charter of Civil Society, adopted by CARICOM Heads of Government in 1997.

In closing, I welcome you, once more, to this Workshop, the outcomes of which will undoubtedly contribute to the advancement of work in the important area of human rights. Moreover, I thank you for your significant contributions as the promotion and protection of human rights underpin the democratic traditions of the Caribbean Community.

Best wishes for a stimulating workshop.

Thank you.