

STATEMENT BY:

H.E. KEISHA MCGUIRE, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF GRENADA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

ON BEHALF OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN AREA

ITEM 4 (A): COUNTRY PROGRAMME DOCUMENTS - EASTERN  
CARIBBEAN AREA MULTI-COUNTRY PROGRAMME DOCUMENT

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Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 8 UN member states that make up the Eastern Caribbean Area covered by the Multi-Country Programme Document (MCPD): Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago. We would also like to acknowledge that the programme document applies to the four British Overseas Territories in the region as well: Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

We further welcome and acknowledge the presence here today of the Director-General of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), Dr. Didacus Jules, and echo and join in the comments made in his intervention.

At the outset, I wish to say on behalf of this group of countries how much we appreciate and value the work UNICEF does in our countries individually and in our region as a whole. For small countries like ours, in extraordinarily difficult times such as these with the COVID-19 pandemic ongoing two years now, this support plays an important and vital role in providing support to the government and people as we strive together to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

We are pleased to see that the MCPD and the actions it proposes recognize one of the truly debilitating paradoxes that many of our Caribbean countries have to contend with: that despite relatively high performance in terms of human development, these gains are fragile, just as the countries of this region, because of their small size are peculiarly vulnerable to economic downturn and environmental threats such as climate change. It is for this reason that our countries, along with other small island developing states, have been arguing for the use by the global community of a vulnerability index to better measure the realities of our economic and environmental situation and to craft the policies to address it.

The actions the MCPD contemplates are rightly framed within the context of the national and regional development plans, the SDGs and, critically for small island developing states, the SAMOA Pathway. It is also vital that UNICEF continues to work hand-in-hand with national governments, regional organisations and other stakeholders. Because of our geography and history, Caribbean countries have developed strong regional institutions which now house considerable expertise and enjoy the confidence of the peoples of the region. It is important that UNICEF continues to hone these linkages.

Finally, Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, we note that there appears to be a sizable increase in the resources being deployed in the MCPD, compared to the previous period. Naturally, we welcome this development and express our appreciation to all who have made this possible. It is indeed much needed and we look forward to accelerated implementation and increased programming to meet and address the myriad of challenges that we face and make concrete progress in achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in our individual countries and collectively as a region.

Mr. President, my brother Rodrigo, you have, as always, provided exemplary, open-minded leadership and the 8 member states for whom I have the honour to speak today salute you and our sister country of Costa Rica for this.

I thank you.

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