



**THIRTY-SEVENTH  
REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE  
CONFERENCE OF HEADS  
OF GOVERNMENT  
OF THE  
CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY**



**DECISIONS**

**CHAIRPERSON:**

**Hon. Roosevelt Skerrit  
Prime Minister  
DOMINICA**

**VENUE AND DATE:**

**Georgetown  
GUYANA**

**4-6 July 2016**

Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat

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DECISIONS

HGC/2016/37/DEC.4

REGIONAL SECURITY

*Having considered Paper HGC/2016/37/4 in Caucus, and having received presentations from the Honourable Keith Rowley, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and Head of Government with lead responsibility for Crime and Security and Mr. Francis Forbes, Executive Director of CARICOM IMPACS;*

THE CONFERENCE:

**Recognised** and **commended** the important role of IMPACS in the Community's effort to address crime and security;

**Recommitted** to deeper and broader cooperation on regional security;

**Approved** a review of the CARICOM Crime and Security Strategy (CCSS) in light of the emergent threats to the Region's Security;

**Emphasised** the importance of aligning national security plans to the CCSS, in order to avoid duplication of intervention support and to facilitate accurate monitoring, evaluation and reporting of progress against the CCSS goals;

**Requested** that Member States support successful and effective implementation of the projects that require the participation of a number of government ministries and/or agencies working in close collaboration;

**Mandated** that Meetings of the Legal Affairs Committee (LAC) be convened urgently to treat with the outstanding regional security instruments, in particular those legal instruments which seek to address cross-border crime, improve the operation and effectiveness of APIS, implement the ACIS, and secure maritime and airspace cooperation;

**Prioritised** the completion of the CARICOM Arrest Warrant Treaty (CAWT) and mandated that Member States submit comments or confirmations of policy positions on it to the Secretariat by 1 October 2016, to facilitate review by the LAC and submission for adoption and signature by Heads of Government at the Twenty-Eighth Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference in February 2017;

**Urged** Member States which are in default with regard to signature of/accession to key security instruments to address this situation;

**Encouraged** Member States to commit to bringing into force the Protocol to incorporate CONSLE as an Organ of the Community by signing and ratifying it, as soon as possible;

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**Also requested** Member States to make every effort to pay their arrears to IMPACS;

**Recalled** the decision of the Twenty-Sixth Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government held in February 2015 on options for addressing the sustainable financing of the Region's security architecture, including that of the Border Security Fee;

**Further requested** Member States to enhance the sharing of intelligence among themselves and with Third States;

**Also recognised** the importance of presenting a regional unified position for resource mobilisation to the United States to address security issues;

**Further recognised** the importance of concurrently mobilising resources at national and regional levels to address security.

**HGC/2016/37/DEC.5**

**CARICOM SINGLE MARKET AND ECONOMY  
(CSME)**

***HGC/2016/37/DEC.5.1***

***Free Movement and Facilitation of Travel within  
the Caribbean Community***

***Having considered Paper HGC/2016/37 in Caucus and having noted that -***

- (i) previous decisions related to free movement and the facilitation of travel have not been fully implemented by Member States;***
- (ii) this has resulted in nationals experiencing difficulties when travelling within the Region and, as a result, the objectives of the free movement regimes and of regional integration are not being fully achieved;***
- (iii) a refusing Member State should inform the home Member State of the refusal of its national and the reasons for same;***
- (iv) written reasons for a refusal of entry should be furnished to Community nationals but that national security concerns may limit the amount of information that can be given to the Community national;***

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### THE CONFERENCE:

**Affirmed** the principle that persons are to be treated with dignity at ports of entry;

**Reiterated** that Member States must submit statistics annually to the Secretariat on the refusals of entry and the operation of the free movement regimes and that these statistics must be submitted by 31 January of the following year;

**Agreed** that relevant security information and intelligence should be submitted by Member States to IMPACS to strengthen APIS, the regional watch list and regional border security regimes;

**Also agreed** that a Member State refusing entry to a CARICOM national shall share, directly with the Member State whose national was refused, information regarding reasons for refusal of entry particularly where the refusal is on the grounds of national security and where such reasons and the matters considered are of a sensitive nature;

**Urged** Member States, in compliance with Article 9 of the Treaty, to take all appropriate measures to give effect to the free movement regimes;

**Mandated** that the CARICOM Committee of Ambassadors complete the Protocol for adoption by the next Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference, taking into particular consideration the procedures required where a CARICOM National is denied entry on the grounds of national security;

**Also mandated** that the Secretariat convene a meeting of Chief Immigration Officers, CARICOM Ambassadors, IMPACS and other relevant officials, to address the challenges being experienced by Community nationals travelling throughout the Region.

### ***HGC/2016/37/DEC.5.2***

### ***Status of the CSME***

***Having considered Paper HGC/2016/37/5.2,***

### THE CONFERENCE:

**Recommitted** to the implementation of all elements of the CSME regime by Member States;

**Agreed** that the comprehensive review of the status of the CSME should be completed urgently and submitted for further consideration at the Twenty-Eighth Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference in February 2017;

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**Mandated** the Council for Finance and Planning (COFAP) and the Legal Affairs Committee (LAC) to meet urgently and regularly to address critical matters for the implementation of the CSME.

### **HGC/2016/37/DEC.5.3**                      **Report of the CARICOM Commission on the Economy**

*Having considered Paper HGC/2016/37/5.3, which provided a brief overview of regional economic developments as well as initiatives being pursued by the Commission, and highlighted those areas which require Member States' early attention or concurrence to allow for further technical analysis or implementation,*

#### **THE CONFERENCE:**

**Acknowledged** the need for more aggressive pursuit of joint actions (regional public goods) directed towards removing the binding constraints which impede growth and competitiveness of CARICOM States so as to build more sustainable and resilient economies;

#### ***With respect to Fiscal Sustainability including Debt Management,***

**Agreed** to the re-design of the **debt advocacy programme** to include preparation of an advocacy strategy, an advocacy narrative, and briefings to Ambassadors in strategic capitals (*via* a technical consultancy to be commissioned by the Secretariat) who would then be responsible for leading consultations with strategic partners;

**Also agreed** that Member States would advise their Ambassadors about their role in the roll-out of the debt advocacy programme prior to the briefings to be conducted under the technical consultancy;

**Supported** the proposal that each highly indebted Member State would prepare a national debt refinancing and/or debt rescheduling plan targeted at reducing their debt servicing and that this initiative should be led by the Committee of Central Bank Governors (CCBG) in collaboration with the Financial Secretaries and/or Directors of Finance. The findings from the IDB study on Member States' Public Debt Profiles and Restructuring/Refinancing Options could be used to inform the preparation of the National Plans;

**Accepted** the recommendation that Member States should agree to have ECLAC pursue the Debt Swap initiative, to the extent feasible, on behalf of the Region;

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**Further agreed** to consider the adoption of a **regional fiscal responsibility framework** and, in this regard, concurred with the proposal to conduct the additional technical work required to allow for the specification of the regional model;

***With respect to Resource Mobilisation,***

**Agreed**, that with regard to the use of concessionary resources to refinance commercial debts in order to unlock fiscal space to undertake investments in infrastructural development projects, Member States would embark on political level discussions with the Chinese Authorities. The alternative would be to delegate a specific Member State to undertake this task;

**Encouraged** Member States to approach the Green Climate Fund (GCF) for immediate access to the up to US\$1.0 million grant funding (per developing country) for capacity building initiatives to facilitate the preparation of national climate mitigation and adaptation projects. In addition, Member States should utilise the services of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) to secure project funding from the GCF;

***With respect to Private Sector Stimulation and the Business Regulatory Environment,***

**Endorsed** the conceptual underpinnings of the **Regional Investment Promotion Strategy (RIPS)** (promotion of the Caribbean as a single economic/investment space to potential investors in a bid to have Member States considered on the long list of possible investment destinations) and **also encouraged** Member States to convey their approval of the components of the Strategy to the CARICOM Secretariat by **31 July 2016** to allow for the commencement of the implementation plan;

**Also supported** the proposal to give consideration to the **formulation and roll-out of a regional export promotion/development strategy as a complement to the RIPS** to build capacity to identify and showcase the investment opportunities which could be pursued in Member States;

**Also acknowledged** that with regard to the business climate in Member States, the regional level priorities for which action plans for the design, implementation, evaluation and sustaining of reform measures should be formulated were identified as –

- (i) human capital within the context of a skilled and trained workforce;
- (ii) access to, and cost of finance; and
- (iii) improving various indices on the Ease-of-Doing Business rankings;

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**Received** an update from The University of the West Indies (UWI) on the efforts being made to assist the Community to address the shortage of critical development skills required to drive innovation and allow the emergence of a sustainable growth trajectory for Member States;

**Further acknowledged** the importance of unlocking major bottlenecks towards achieving a sustainable growth trajectory in CARICOM States and that critical factors in this regard include –

- (i) establishing the legal, regulatory and institutional framework to promote the development of renewable energy sources; and
- (ii) expediting the implementation of the Roadmap for the Single ICT Space.

**HGC/2016/36/DEC.6**

### **CITIZENSHIP-BY-INVESTMENT PROGRAMMES (CIPs)**

*Having considered Paper No HGC/2016/37/6 in Caucus, and particularly the Legal Opinion and Addendum (Attachment I and II) submitted by the CARICOM Secretariat on the treatment of citizens by investment under the Revised Treaty;*

*Having noted the positions and concerns expressed by several Member States;*

#### **THE CONFERENCE:**

**Reviewed** and **adopted** the decisions arising from the discussions in Caucus;

**Agreed** that this decision would be regarded as a sensitive decision pursuant to Rule 27.4 of the Rules of Procedure for Meetings of the Conference, and should not be disclosed in Plenary or recorded in the Summary of Recommendations and Conclusions and shall not be made public.

DECISIONS

HGC/2016/37/DEC.7

CORRESPONDENT BANKING

*Having considered Paper HGC/2016/37/7 on Correspondent Banking in Caucus, and*

*Acknowledging that Correspondent banking is an important global public good and that the current de-risking strategy being employed by Correspondent Banks, which effectively delinks countries or regions from the international payments systems, is not only discriminatory but counterintuitive to good public policy;*

*Noting that CARICOM Member States are particularly hard hit by this de-risking strategy which inter alia, promotes financial exclusion with the attendant higher transactions costs; inhibits international commerce and can inadvertently create serious security concerns;*

*Noting also the continued compliance of the Region with FATF Guidelines and Global Forum Standards regarding greater financial information flows between States consequent to the adherence of Member States to the Common Reporting Standards (CRS) and to the bilateral agreements under the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA);*

*Noting further that the Central Bank of Barbados, under the aegis of the Committee of CARICOM Central Bank Governors, has commissioned a follow up study on de-risking which , inter alia, will cover the status of the Caribbean legal, regulatory and risk frameworks and processes vis-à-vis international standards and best practice and the impact of all de-risking activities;*

*Also acknowledging the intention of The Bahamas and Saint Lucia to participate in the Committee of Ministers of Finance on Correspondent Banking,*

THE CONFERENCE:

Agreed that the Region must continue its robust and unrelenting advocacy on the issue of Correspondent Banking and that the Committee of Ministers of Finance on Correspondent Banking should maintain the current high level engagement and immediately lobby the US Congress with the assistance of the services of an international lobby firm which it should engage;

Also agreed to the hosting of a Global Stakeholder Conference on the Impact of the Withdrawal of Correspondent Banking on the Region which should include Correspondent Banks, Respondent Banks, Regulators both regional and from the United States, Canada and Europe; International Development Partners; and representatives from Civil Society;

## DECISIONS

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**Mandated** that a stay on further de-risking be requested pending resolution of the problems which are driving the heightened risk aversion towards transactions emanating from Caribbean banks;

**Called** for the rebalancing of the sanctions regime against correspondent banks to allow space for the continued participation of Caribbean respondent banks in the global payments system given their peculiar circumstances;

**Also mandated** that the CARICOM Secretariat spearhead an impact assessment of CARICOM–US trade, cognisant of the study being commissioned by the Committee of Central Bank Governors.

### HGC/2016/37/DEC.8

### BORDER ISSUES

#### HGC/2016/37/DEC.8.1

#### *Belize-Guatemala Relations*

*Having considered the matter in Caucus;*

#### THE CONFERENCE:

**Issued** the following Statement on the border issue -

*“Heads of Government received an update on the most recent developments between Belize and Guatemala.*

*Heads of Government expressed their full support for the Government of Belize as it enters the process of dialogue and welcomed the decisions of the Governments of Belize and Guatemala to engage in the design and development of a mechanism of cooperation for the Sarstoon River, which marks Belize’s southern boundary. They urged them to complete this at the earliest opportunity.*

*Heads of Government expressed support for the continuous and critical role of the Organisation of American States (OAS) in the process aimed at resolving the dispute arising from Guatemala’s claims and further calls on the international community to continue supporting the OAS office in the Adjacency Zone. The Conference of Heads of Government also supports the efforts of Belize and Guatemala to move deliberately to fully implement the special agreement of 2008 between Belize and Guatemala to submit Guatemala’s territorial, insular and maritime claims to the International Court of Justice.*

## DECISIONS

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*The Heads of Government emphasised their unflinching support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of Belize.”*

**Noted** the expression of appreciation by Belize for the assistance and support in its time of need provided by CARICOM, in particular Jamaica, Guyana and Barbados;

**Also noted** the need for support for the funding of the Organisation of American States (OAS) Office in the Adjacency Zone.

### **HGC/2016/37/DEC.8.2**

### **Guyana-Venezuela Relations**

*Having considered the matter in Caucus;*

#### **THE CONFERENCE:**

**Issued** the following Statement -

*“Heads of Government received a report on recent development in the relations between Guyana and Venezuela. They also received a report on the current efforts of the Secretary General of the United Nations proposing a way forward to the two countries towards a decisive end to the controversy.*

*Heads of Government noted with appreciation that the Secretary General of the United Nations attaches the highest priority to finding a solution to the controversy which arose out of Venezuela’s contention that the Arbitral award of 1899 which definitively settled the land boundary between Guyana and Venezuela is null and void.*

*In that regard they signalled their full confidence in the Secretary General to exercise urgently his authority under the 1966 Geneva Agreement for a choice of options that would bring the controversy to a definitive and judicial conclusion that would be beneficial not only to Guyana but the Caribbean Community as a whole.*

*Heads of Government reiterated their full support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all CARICOM States and their entitlement to rights regarding maritime zones under international law.”*

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**Noted** that the letter setting out the grave concerns of the Community with regard to the impact of Decree No. 1.787 of 26 May 2015 and revised Decree No. 1.859 of 6 July 2015 of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on their maritime zones had been conveyed to President Nicolas Maduro. The Decrees proclaimed four Comprehensive and Operational Defence Maritime and Insular Zones that impinged on the maritime territory of a number of CARICOM Member States;

**Reiterated** that the Venezuelan decree, which purported to annex parts of the maritime space of several CARICOM states, was a regional issue and not limited to the maritime territory of Guyana.

### **HGC/2016/37/DEC.9                      ACTION PLAN FOR STATISTICS IN THE CARIBBEAN**

*Having considered Paper HGC/2016/37/9,*

#### **THE CONFERENCE:**

**Noted** the challenges and issues faced throughout the CARICOM Region in the production of statistics;

**Endorsed** the Action Plan for Statistics presented by the Member State of Grenada consisting of actions recommended to be taken by Governments which would result in better development outcomes and greater prosperity to all CARICOM people;

**Also endorsed** the Action Plan for Statistics in the Caribbean that would, in part -

- (i) **strengthen** the National Statistical System in countries that will address funding of the National Statistical Office (NSO) and other producing agencies, staffing, legislation, education, training and development of the current staff;
- (ii) **enable** the upgrading of the IT infrastructure in the National Statistical Offices and Systems in relation to the production and dissemination of statistics;
- (iii) **promote** careers in statistics through greater infusion of statistics in the education system to lead to the development of data scientists;
- (iv) **also promote** the professionalization of statistics in CARICOM;
- (v) **support** a regional approach to the development of statistics;

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**Agreed** that for the purposes of statistical work at the international level of the United Nations statistical system, that the Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community write to the Secretary-General of the United Nations requesting that CARICOM be viewed as an undividable grouping within the Latin America and Caribbean area since this is fundamental relative to the integration movement through the CSME and the unique challenges that are faced particularly as Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

**HGC/2016/37/DEC.10**      **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION  
TECHNOLOGIES FOR DEVELOPMENT  
(ICT4D)**

**HGC/2016/37/DEC.10.1**      ***Sustainability of C@ribNET***

*Having considered Paper HGC/2016/37/10.1 in Caucus,*

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Received** the presentation on the Draft Sustainability Plan;

**Expressed concern** that the Plan was heavily premised on external donor assistance which was not secured;

**Agreed** that the services of Cable and Wireless to C@ribNET be terminated by **30 July 2016**;

**Requested** the Community Council Working Group to engage Cable and Wireless on the elimination of the debt;

**Mandated** that the operations of CKLNA be wound-up in three (3) months.

**HGC/2016/37/DEC.10.2**      ***Roadmap for a Single ICT Space***

*Having considered Paper HGC/2016/37/10.2,*

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Received** the presentation on the Draft Roadmap for the Single ICT space and considered the issues raised therein;

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**Mandated** the COTED–ICT to meet before the end of September 2016 to consider the ICT Roadmap and make recommendations to the Conference;

**Also mandated** that the ICT Cluster continue to develop the integrated work plan, including existing and planned initiatives and financial projections, and submit to the COTED-(ICT) before the end of May 2017;

**Requested** that Member States cooperate with the ICT Cluster by providing information with regard to existing and planned initiatives and resources available;

**Agreed** to receive the integrated work plan and information related to existing and planned initiatives and financial projections by the July meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government in 2017.

### HGC/2016/37/DEC.11

### CRICKET

*Having received a presentation from Dr. the Rt. Honourable Keith Mitchell, Prime Minister of Grenada and Chairman of the Cricket Governance Committee, and having considered Paper HGC/2016/37/11 on cricket as a public good in Caucús,*

#### THE CONFERENCE:

**Decided** to re-establish the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on Cricket (PMSCC) on the following terms:

- (i) there shall be one Cricket Committee which shall be known as the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on Cricket;
- (ii) the PMSCC shall comprise the Prime Ministers of Barbados, Jamaica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines and will be chaired by the Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, on the understanding that membership of the Sub-Committee shall be open-ended;
- (iii) the Terms of Reference of the PMSCC shall now include the Terms of Reference of the Cricket Governance Committee;

**Considered** the two legal opinions on Cricket **as a public good** and **agreed** to refer this and other matters being addressed by the Cricket Governance Committee to the PMSCC;

**DECISIONS**

**Expressed** appreciation to the Prime Minister of Grenada, Dr. the Rt. Honourable Keith Mitchell, for his untiring efforts in furtherance of the development of West Indies Cricket.

**HGC/2016/37/DEC.12 CARICOM-CUBA RELATIONS**

*Having considered Paper HGC/2016/37/12,*

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Agreed** that CARICOM should leverage its longstanding relationship with Cuba and seize the trade, business and investment opportunities presented by this geopolitical shift in the hemisphere;

**Urged** that every effort be made to conclude negotiations for a Second Protocol to the Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement to allow for signature before the end of 2016;

**Requested** that Member States' Ministries of Tourism and regional tourism entities further explore the possibilities of multi-destination tourism and other forms of relationships with Cuba in the area of tourism;

**Reiterated** the call for the lifting of the US trade and economic embargo on Cuba.

**HGC/2016/37/DEC.13 RELATIONS WITH THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

*Having considered Paper HGC/2016/37/13 in Caucus,*

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Reaffirmed** the grave concern of the Caribbean Community with regard to the human rights situation of Dominicans of Haitian descent rendered stateless by the decision of the Constitutional Court of the Dominican Republic on nationality;

**Agreed** to –

- (i) **continue** the Region's advocacy on this issue in international for a and bilateral meetings;

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- (ii) **have** the issue placed on the agenda of international fora as appropriate;
- (iii) **mandate** the CARICOM Secretariat to prepare a report on the conditions under which displaced Dominicans of Haitian descent were living in Haiti and propose practical measures to assist;
- (iv) **engage** directly, as appropriate, with the Dominican Republic and to use such opportunities to address the matter of statelessness and the required remedies;
- (v) **review** from time to time this policy of principle and pragmatism so as to assess its effectiveness.

**HGC/2016/37/DEC.14**

**EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH SPECIAL GUEST  
- PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHILE,  
HER EXCELLENCY MICHELLE BACHELET**

*Having received the Presentation of Her Excellency Michelle Bachelet, President of the Republic of Chile, and having considered Paper HGC/2016/37/14;*

**THE CONFERENCE:**

**Extended** a warm welcome to the President of Chile, Her Excellency Michelle Bachelet;

**Viewed** the visit as a symbolic and significant one and an opportunity to explore the possibilities for further meaningful cooperation between CARICOM and Chile and to extend the framework of the relationship to include political dialogue;

**Received** a presentation in which the President of Chile highlighted the excellent ties between CARICOM and Chile and the need for both parties to work towards the strengthening as well as the expansion of relations;

**Agreed** that the areas identified for cooperation, included but were not limited to institutional and capacity building, climate change, disaster management, trade and investment, sports and marine pollution, were of interest to CARICOM;

**Noted** the solidarity and willingness of Chile to advocate on behalf of CARICOM on issues of concern to the Community such as Correspondent Banking;

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Took note of the invitation of President Bachelet, in her capacity as President Pro Tempore of the Pacific Alliance from July 2016, to CARICOM to become an Observer of that grouping.

**HGC/2016/37/DEC.15**

### **RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR MEETINGS OF THE CONFERENCE<sup>1</sup>**

*Having considered Paper No. HGC/2016/37/15 and the draft Rules of Procedure for Meetings of the Conference,*

*Noting that there were four (4) outstanding policy issues to be determined by the Conference, namely,*

- (i) In relation to Rule 4 [Quorum], whether only Heads of Government should be counted for the purpose of determining whether a quorum exists for any Meeting of the Conference, or whether a person designated to represent a Head of Government under Rule 10.2 should also be counted for the purposes of the quorum;*
- (ii) In relation to Rule 19 [Conduct of Meetings], whether the Conference should be able to determine that a Meeting of the Caucus should, in exceptional circumstances, comprise Heads of Government only;*
- (iii) In relation to Rule 32, [Publication of Decisions], whether all decisions taken by the Conference should be published, except those which have been deemed to be confidential in accordance with Rule 27.4; and*
- (iv) In relation to Rule 27.4 [Recording and Confirmation of Decisions] whether the Conference may determine that sensitive decisions taken in Caucus should, in exceptional circumstances not be disclosed in Plenary or recorded in the Summary of Recommendations and Conclusions.*

#### **THE CONFERENCE:**

##### **Agreed -**

- (i) in relation to Rule 4,** the question of whether only the Heads of Government should be counted for the purpose of determining whether a quorum exists for any Meeting of the Conference is deferred for the further consideration of the Conference at its Twenty-Eighth Inter-Sessional Meeting to be held in February 2017. The Conference shall also at that Meeting consider the appropriate level

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<sup>1</sup> Approved Rules of Procedure available as a separate document.

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of representative to be designated for the purpose of Article 11.2 of the Revised Treaty;

- (ii) **in relation to Rule 19**, that Meetings of the Conference in Caucus should ordinarily comprise the Heads of Government and one Adviser but the Conference may, in exceptional circumstances, determine that Meetings in Caucus should be attended by the Heads of Government only or the Heads of Government plus such number of representatives as the Conference may determine. Accordingly, sub-rule 3 of Rule 19 is to be amended as follows:

*“3. The Conference may also decide to consider Agenda items in Caucus, that is, Heads of Government accompanied by one adviser. In exceptional circumstances the Conference may determine that an Agenda item may be considered in Caucus comprising Heads of Government only, or Heads of Government plus such number of advisers as the Conference may determine.”;*

- (iii) **In relation to Rule 32**, the Secretariat shall publish on its websites all decisions taken by the Conference except those decisions which have been deemed to be confidential. Accordingly Rule 32 is amended as follows:

*“The Secretariat shall publish on its website, all decisions taken by the Conference except those decisions which have been deemed to be confidential in accordance with Rule 27.4.”;*

- (iv) **In relation to Rule 27.4**, the Conference may in exceptional circumstances determine that the content of sensitive decisions taken in Caucus should not be disclosed in Plenary or recorded in the Summary of Recommendations and Conclusions. Accordingly sub-rule 4 of Rule 27 of the draft Rules of Procedures is adopted in its current form;

**Decided** that the revised draft of the [Rules of Procedure](#), (attached) and which incorporates the above amendments shall, with the exception of sub-rule 2 of Rule 4, be the Rules of Procedure of the Conference, effective 6 July 2016.

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**HGC/2016/37/DEC.16**      **BRITAIN'S EXIT FROM THE EU (BREXIT)**

*Having considered Paper HGC/2016/37/16;*

THE CONFERENCE:

Took note of the presentation by the Secretariat on Brexit;

Agreed to immediately engage in dialogue with the United Kingdom regarding the relations and the maintenance of a preferential trade relationship;

Reiterated the importance of the Community's solid and long-standing relationship with the United Kingdom.

**HGC/2016/37/DEC.17**      **UPDATE ON THE HEALTH SITUATION IN THE REGION, INCLUDING THE PROGRESS ON THE PORT-OF-SPAIN DECLARATION ON NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (NCDs)**

*Having received an Intervention from Prime Minister of St. Kitts and Nevis, Dr. the Honourable Timothy Harris, on Health, HIV/AIDS and Human Resource Development (HRD),*

THE CONFERENCE:

*With regard to NCDs,*

Urged Member States to adopt the goal of one hundred per cent (100%) smoke free public spaces by September 2017 throughout CARICOM and to implement the COTED ratified standard for tobacco labelling;

Also urged Member States to implement a regulatory regime for the compulsory food labelling of all commercially manufactured foods;

Mandated that the CARICOM Secretariat and CARPHA along with the UWI Law Faculty, CROSQ and other Partners, provide Member States with the necessary technical support for the establishment of these regulatory regimes;

## DECISIONS

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**Requested** Member States to consider and implement regimes to curb the advertising of harmful foods and beverages especially to children and **advocated** for the inclusion of nutrition education in school curricula;

**Emphasised** the importance of public education and physical exercise in addressing relevant risk factors for NCDs;

**Also requested** all Member States to support policies which promote harm reduction such as taxation of tobacco, alcohol, salty and sugary foods and trans-fat containing foods as a fiscal measure to support the health and other social sectors;

**Agreed** to convene a Regional Multi-sector Taskforce jointly managed by the Chairs of the COHSOD and the COTED to promote and monitor the progress of implementation of the above priorities adopted by the Conference with an obligation to provide annual updates to the Annual Meeting of the Conference;

**Also agreed** to re-examine, in the long term, the promotion of regional sufficiency in indigenous foods;

### ***With regard to HIV/AIDS,***

**Committed** to collective action in advocating for global and national HIV investment to address remaining gaps in funding to support ending the AIDS epidemic in the Region;

### ***With regard to ZIKA,***

**Recognised** that ZIKA virus transmission had become generalised with severe neurological complications having been observed by at least two (2) Member States (**Jamaica and Suriname**);

### ***With regard to the 'Every Caribbean Girl, Every Caribbean Woman (ECGECW) Initiative,***

**Endorsed the CARICOM 'Every Caribbean Girl, Every Caribbean Woman (ECGECW) Initiative'** intended to address key sexual and reproductive health concerns of girls and women in the Caribbean, which has been accepted as part of the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) portfolio of innovative projects to address some of the world's most pressing challenges.

## DECISIONS

### HGC/2016/37/DEC.18 POLITICAL SITUATION IN SURINAME

*Having received a presentation, from the President of the Republic of Suriname on the ongoing political situation in that Member State and having discussed the matter in Caucus;*

#### THE CONFERENCE:

**Expressed appreciation** for the update provided by the President of Suriname on the current situation in Suriname;

**Recognised** that the current situation in Suriname was an internal matter to be determined by the Government and People of the Republic of Suriname;

**Affirmed** the right of the People and the Government of the Republic of Suriname to resolve this situation in accordance with the Constitution and other laws of Suriname and the decisions of the National Assembly;

**Acknowledged** the commitment expressed by the President of Suriname that actions by his Government would respect the Constitution of the Republic of Suriname and the decisions of the National Assembly.

### HGC/2016/37/DEC.19 ISSUES RELATED TO CLICO/BAICO

*Having received a presentation from the Prime Minister of St Vincent and the Grenadines on the history of the matter concerning the resolution of BAICO's obligation in the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU) and having discussed this matter extensively in Caucus;*

#### THE CONFERENCE:

**Noted** the information provided by the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago that the Minister of Finance of Trinidad and Tobago would be making a statement to the Parliament on Friday, 8 July 2016 on matters related to CLICO/BAICO and that Trinidad and Tobago would respond to Member States of the ECCU on the matter sometime after the sitting of Parliament;

**Welcomed** the proposal from the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago that the Minister of Finance of that Member State and the Member States of the ECCU should meet on this matter at some time after the statement to Parliament;

## DECISIONS

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**Also noted** the information provided by the Prime Minister of Barbados that the matter was in the courts of Barbados and therefore *sub judice*, and that the Government of Barbados would communicate with the Member States of the ECCU once the court has given its pronouncement;

**Acknowledged** the commitment of the Prime Minister of Grenada that no further action would be taken in respect of the request for consultations with Trinidad and Tobago until after 22 July 2016.

**HGC/2016/37/DEC.20**

**CARIBBEAN COURT OF JUSTICE**

*Having discussed this matter in Caucus, and having considered,*

- (i) *The outstanding proposal from the Regional Judicial and Legal Services Commission (RJLSC) for revision of the Pension Rules for the Judges of the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ);*
- (ii) *The information contained in the Sixth Biannual Report (2016) on the Adequacy of the Caribbean Court of Justice Trust Fund (CCJTF);*

### THE CONFERENCE:

**Agreed** in principle that the Pension Rules for the Judges of the CCJ should be reviewed and revised to reflect pension arrangements appropriate for judges of a regional court;

**Mandated** the Bureau to consider a mechanism to review the proposed Pension Rules and make appropriate recommendations to the Conference for consideration at its Twenty-Eighth Inter-Sessional Meeting in February 2017;

**Acknowledged** the assessment of the Board of Trustees of the CCJTF that further capital injection was required urgently to secure the prolonged life expectancy of the Fund;

**Also mandated** the Bureau to consider the matters concerning the replenishment of the CCJTF and advise the Conference as a matter of urgency.

DECISIONS

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**HGC/2016/37/DEC.21      TRIBUTE TO MR. PATRICK MANNING,  
FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF TRINIDAD  
AND TOBAGO**

**THE CONFERENCE:**

Agreed to issue the following Tribute:

*“Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community expressed their deep sadness at the passing of the former Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Patrick Manning, who died on Saturday, 2 July 2016 prior to the Meeting of the Conference.*

*Mr. Manning displayed the finest qualities of regionalism and had an unswerving commitment to building his country and the wider CARICOM. His progressive ideas for strengthening the regional integration movement led to many initiatives which redounded to the enhancement of the sense and spirit of the community among our Member States.*

*Mr. Manning’s genuine desire to create a more equitable Community led to such initiatives as the Petroleum Stabilisation Fund which he established as a facility to provide Member States with financial assistance. This was a tangible demonstration of goodwill to and solidarity with Member States faced with high oil prices from which his country benefitted.*

*His view of Trinidad and Tobago’s role in CARICOM went beyond the financial as he routinely rendered unselfish and immediate support to Member States in times of natural disasters.*

*As Lead Prime Minister for Security in the CARICOM quasi-cabinet, he oversaw the security arrangements for the Cricket World Cup 2007 and his proposals led to the formation of the CARICOM Task Force on Crime and Security. The implementation of its recommendations improved the nature and quality of co-operation in that area leading to the establishment of very important agencies and institutions which continue to serve and protect the Community’s security interests. It also resulted in Security Cooperation being adopted as the fourth pillar of our integration movement.*

## DECISIONS

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*Mr. Manning's deep concern about the ravages of Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases, as highlighted by the Region's experts, led to the historic regional summit on the issue. As we approach the 10th Anniversary of the Port-of-Spain Declaration on NCDs, we recall that his vision of the dangers posed by these scourges spurred the Community to be at the forefront of a successful proposal for a United Nations High Level Meeting on NCDs.*

*His humanity and personal interest in the well-being of others were outstanding attributes of his character and were highly appreciated by all, both within and outside the Community. His invaluable contribution to our Community stemmed from his conviction that integration was the most viable option for the sustainable development of our small states and the improvement of the lives of our people.*

*Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean Community have lost a truly remarkable person and statesman whose legacy of committed service to country and Region left an indelible mark on the history of this Region and will remain a treasured memory.*

*Heads of Government expressed their deepest condolences to the family of Mr. Manning and the Government and People of Trinidad and Tobago."*

**HGC/2016/37/DEC.23**

**DATE OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH INTER-SESSIONAL MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE**

### THE CONFERENCE:

**Agreed** that the Twenty-Eighth Inter-Sessional Meeting of the Conference will be held in Guyana in February 2017 on a date to be determined following consultations.

