



**Statement from The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency  
At the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction**

**Cartagena, Columbia**

**20-22 June 2018**

Salutations

The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency is pleased to participate in the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2018 in Cartagena, Columbia. I also take this opportunity to express thanks to the Government of Columbia for the excellent hosting arrangements for the Regional Platform 2018. This event is happening at a critical juncture in CARICOMS efforts to implement the Sendai Framework Priorities through the Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy. Recall that the Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy is an Integrated Risk Management Strategy that seeks to achieve Caribbean Resilience to Natural and Man-Induced Hazards including those affected by Climate Change and Variability.

During September 2017 several of the CARICOM Countries experienced the fury of Hurricanes Irma and Maria, two devastating Category 5 Hurricanes that left over 37 dead in its wake and social and economic damage and losses ranging from 10%-226% of Gross Domestic Product. These events have again brought a sharp focus on the urgency of the affected countries to pursue efforts to build “back smarter and better” but more importantly it has underscored the need for countries especially Caribbean Small Island Developing States to accelerate efforts at building resilience.

Impact in Dominica, Barbuda, The British Virgin Islands, Turks and Caicos and Anguilla has also served as a reminder of the urgent need for Governments to address the underlying risk drivers. In fact CDEMA, having looked analytically at

the decades of impact in the region, has determined that its Regional Resilience Agenda may need to focus sharper attention towards investments into five critical areas in an effort to achieve the future desired states of ***“Safer More Resilient and Sustainable Caribbean Communities”***. The five areas identified are: Enhancing social protection for the most vulnerable; Safeguarding Infrastructure, Economic Diversification; Environmental/Ecosystems Protection and Enhanced Operational Readiness. The pursuit of this focused and accelerated agenda will also require the harmonization of Disaster Risk Management Programming with that targeting Climate Change Adaptation efforts for greater efficiency and effect as both are aimed at achieving greater human security and development resilience.

**This sharpen focus is on advancing the Development Resilience Agenda is especially urgent** as Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Less Developed Coastal States (LDCS) already face disproportionately high disaster risks. It is further suggested that as a result of a changing climate average annual losses associated with tropical cyclone winds alone are projected to increase by as much as US\$1.4 billion by 2050.

The CDEMA Mechanism exists to support the governments of the region in all facets of the delivery of a Comprehensive Disaster Management Agenda and is a pioneering and unique arrangement that does not exist in a similar way in any other part of the world. We are quite pleased with the joint efforts undertaken with UNISDR to better harmonize reporting within the Caribbean and we remain committed to reporting on progress in the implementation of the priorities of action. In this regard the Region has produced a Caribbean Assessment Report that captures the performance of the Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy over the period of implementation 2014-2016.

In closing Chairman, CDEMA and Caribbean Community (CARICOM) remains commitment to the intent of the Sendai Framework and further commits its resources towards efforts aimed achieving Development Resilience within its Member States.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you.