



CARICOM
CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY

A Community for All



**CARICOM Caucus of Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives to the OAS
DRAFT Statement in Observance of the International Day of Education 2021**

The third International Day of Education is being observed this year under the apt theme: ‘Recover and Revitalize Education for the COVID-19 Generation’ in an education landscape ravaged and rearranged by the impact of this global public health emergency on traditional in-person instruction. Public, private, civil society, community and family leaders throughout our region have worked assiduously during this pandemic to address infrastructural, instructional and institutional inadequacies that have threatened to leave the most vulnerable of our students behind, further compound existing socio-economic disparities, and hinder the advancement and achievement of our region’s sustainable development goals.

Deficiencies in students’ capacity for remote learning, multiple challenges faced by teachers in delivering education via the virtual modality, and extraordinary demands for parental support have emerged as barriers to inclusive and equitable quality education for all, as mandated in Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4). The absence of reliable access to the basic amenities of electricity and internet connectivity has impeded instruction, with students with special education needs and those requiring behavioural and mental health support being among the most marginalized.

Caribbean Small Island and Developing States are responding swiftly to recover from the challenge of managing the delivery of effective home-based learning and to revitalize post COVID-19 education by pursuing, procuring and providing 21st century technology, teaching aids, learning resources and training to teachers and school administrators, and various forms of support to students and families. Supported by our valued partners, including our Caribbean Diaspora in the United States, our countries have made great strides in enabling our respective school systems to pivot and adapt to the accelerated digital learning environment. We remain steadfast and committed to mitigate the disruption of education for our COVID-19 generation.

Recognizing the vital role of education in building resilient, inclusive, sustainable and equitable societies, the CARICOM Caucus of Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives to the Organization of American States (OAS) embraces this opportunity to advocate for and promote our learning heroes, innovation and financing as essential pillars in advancing education’s role in enhancing peace and development. In this first year of the United Nations’ declared Decade of Action, we recommit to keeping education at the center of our CARICOM Human Resource Development 2030 Strategy, as we prepare to function in new ways in the post COVID-19 era.

The CARICOM Caucus joins the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in commemorating the International Day of Education 2021, reaffirming our support for the commitment of our national leaders to the recovery and revitalization of universal education throughout the Caribbean Community of nations.

Washington, D.C. 24 January, 2021