

## **TENTH UK-CARIBBEAN FORUM: ACTION PLAN**

At the conclusion of the 10<sup>th</sup> UK-Caribbean Forum, held virtually on 18 March 2021, the Foreign Ministers of the United Kingdom and Caribbean countries, welcoming the Communiqué signed at the Forum, also agreed on the following Action Plan for a two-year period up to 2023, when the next full Forum meeting is currently envisaged.

This Action Plan is intended to allow for a strategic and sustained approach to the UK-Caribbean relationship, based on ambitious, yet focussed and realistic commitments. It serves as a road map for the practical implementation of the Communiqué and sets out the enhanced commitments of both the UK and Caribbean Forum countries for a renewed and strengthened partnership.

To this end, Ministers of the United Kingdom and Caribbean Governments agreed that:

- it is important to act together for mutual benefit and the global common good, based on their many shared values, at a time of unparalleled challenges, particularly around the COVID-19 global pandemic and climate change, and that;

- this Action Plan will remain a standing agenda for review at quarterly meetings between Caribbean High Commissioners based in London and the Minister for the Caribbean at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). Together, they will agree joint action in cases where specific objectives are at risk of not being met.

The parties recognise that the value of the UK-Caribbean Forum lies in concrete and practical follow-up to commitments made at its meetings. Therefore, the parties will conduct a full audit of achievements against the Action Plan goals after the first year and immediately prior to the next Forum.

### **Specific areas of joint action**

#### **1. Recovery from the Covid 19 pandemic**

1.1 The UK will maintain its significant financial commitment of £548m to the COVAX facility.

1.2 The UK will consistently make the case internationally for Caribbean countries to benefit from vaccination roll-out, including through the COVAX facility as part of its approach to equitable access, and additionally as a means to restart tourism to the region. The UK will remain committed to facilitating further access to, and the timely, fair and equitable distribution of, vaccines, including through COVAX.

1.3 The UK will use its position on Boards of the multilateral and regional development banks to ensure they can offer appropriate concessional and other “soft” loan packages to help expand vaccine coverage

1.4 The UK will work with Caribbean countries to support economic recovery and resilience in the region, while tackling gender and other inequalities, including through action across the international system to tackle long-term challenges around

debt and access to finance, recognising the unique vulnerabilities that Caribbean Small Island Developing States face.

1.5 Caribbean countries will work to ensure that the vaccine roll-out is a success, for example by prioritising their most vulnerable citizens, and through effective public communications campaigns to encourage vaccine acceptance.

1.6 The UK will work with the Caribbean to support pandemic preparedness in the region, to help in ensuring that it is better prepared to respond to future pandemic or other global health emergencies.

## **2. Bilateral and regional cooperation**

2.1 The UK intends to remain one of the largest bilateral donors to the Caribbean region, including through a £21m contribution to the Caribbean Development Bank's Special Development Fund, for the period 2021-24.

2.2 The UK will maintain its recently expanded permanent diplomatic presence in the Caribbean, while delivering on current aid commitments, including for the UK-Caribbean Infrastructure Fund and support on climate resilience and disaster risk reduction; inclusive economic recovery; and governance and security.

2.3 The UK will continue to offer Chevening, Commonwealth Scholarships and Commonwealth Distance Learning Scholarships for Caribbean students to study at post-graduate level in the UK, noting that over 400 Caribbean students have benefitted in this way since 2015.

2.4 The British Council will focus its work in the Caribbean region, on an inclusive basis, in supporting skills of young people in schools, on developing creative enterprise and in enabling up to 15,000 more people to gain UK professional and university qualifications up to 2024.

2.5 The UK will continue to provide humanitarian, military and technical support, both to plan for, and respond to, natural disasters in the Caribbean, particularly hurricanes. The UK's Royal Navy will continue to work in the region on counter-narcotics operations, counter-illicit trafficking operations, and on disaster relief, including hurricane response.

2.6 The UK will continue to work closely with CDEMA to enhance regional cooperation.

2.7 The UK's Ministry of Defence will endeavour to hold another Chiefs of Defence Staff conference during 2021 and will support the establishment of a Caribbean Military Academy in Jamaica.

2.8 The UK commits to erect a monument to the Windrush generation at Waterloo Station in central London, with the target date of Windrush Day in June 2022.

2.9 The UK similarly commits to keeping both the Windrush Scheme and the Windrush Compensation Scheme open for as long as necessary in order to provide documentation and compensation to those who need it.

2.10 The UK will work with external partners to establish clear criteria for disbanding the Windrush Scheme, and will notify stakeholders and communities in good time before considering closing either of the Schemes.

2.11 Additionally, the UK commits £500,000 to the Windrush Grassroots Fund, applications for which are being managed in two phases during 2021, and overseen by a third party, Voice4Change England.

2.12 The UK also commits up to £500,000 to the Windrush Day Grant Scheme 2021 to celebrate and commemorate the Windrush generation and their descendants.

### **3. Trade and commercial relations**

3.1 The Caribbean countries which have not yet done so will make every effort to ratify the CARIFORUM-UK Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) and will strive to ensure the terms of the EPA are implemented, while taking account of capacity constraints in small jurisdictions.

3.2 The UK will ensure continued duty-free and quota-free access to its market for Caribbean countries' products.

3.3 The joint institutions envisaged under the EPA will be set up and begin meeting for the first time later in 2021, including a first CARIFORUM-UK EPA Joint Ministerial Council, and a preparatory senior officials meeting, to agree on a roadmap towards fulfilling the potential of the agreement, including on digital trade and renewables.

3.4 A new UK-Caribbean business-to-business round table will be established, with a view to it meeting for the first time by the end of 2021, and with the aim of fostering a stable business environment and increasing bilateral trade.

3.5 The UK and Caribbean countries will strive to identify opportunities to use the significant capacity available for export credit financing support to the region through UK Export Finance, the British Government's export credit agency, in order to promote bilateral trade and investment activities. UKEF's risk appetite for individual Caribbean markets will be significant (up to £4bn) with the ability to provide local currency financing on a case-by-case basis.

3.6 The UK Trade Envoy for the Caribbean will visit the region, as the post-pandemic situation allows, to promote greater two-way flows of trade and investment; and a UK Minister will attend the meeting of the CARIFORUM-UK EPA Joint Ministerial Council. The Trade Envoy will promote the benefits and opportunities of two-way trade with the Caribbean in the UK itself.

3.7 The UK and Caribbean countries will undertake to promote and expand UK-Caribbean trade flows.

3.8 All parties commit to further reducing market access barriers for one another's exporters. In particular, the UK and the Caribbean will explore solutions to ensure that their respective trade and non-trade related regulations do not hinder each other's services exports, including through discussion of visa issues and mutual recognition of qualifications.

#### **4. Cooperation against organised and economic crime**

4.1 While ensuring full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the UK and Caribbean countries will continue to collaborate on serious and organised crime and common security matters, including to meet fully global standards for tax transparency and anti-corruption measures, counter-terrorism, and for tackling illicit finance and cyber-crime. The UK will work with CARICOM IMPACS to support regional security cooperation.

4.2 Likewise, they will continue to cooperate through their regular exchange of information on common security matters, including criminal deportations. They will work together on denying and depriving criminals of the proceeds of crime through robust asset recovery legislation, financial investigations and criminal prosecutions.

4.3 The UK and Caribbean countries commit to continue working towards addressing any deficiencies identified against the Financial Action Task Force's global standards for combatting money laundering, terrorist financing, and WMD proliferation financing.

4.4 The UK and Caribbean countries commit to support the important work of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force.

4.5 The UK will look to continue cyber capacity building funding in the region and intends to base a dedicated regional cyber officer in Jamaica to support work underway on international cyber, digital and technical policy discussions, including discussions at the United Nations on State behaviours and norms.

#### **5. Values and international cooperation**

5.1 The UK and Caribbean countries will actively seek closer alignment of their positions in all relevant multilateral fora.

5.2 The UK and Caribbean countries will aim jointly both to support the rules-based international system, and to uphold sustainable development, democracy and human rights, which underpin open societies and good governance, as set out in key documents such as the Commonwealth Charter, the Charter of the Organisation of American States, and the Charter of the United Nations.

5.3 The UK and Caribbean countries, will whenever possible, support each other's candidates for election to international bodies.

5.4 The UK and Caribbean countries commit to support efforts to promote media freedom internationally.

5.5 The UK and Caribbean countries will collaborate to advance gender-equality and inclusion, including by empowering women and girls; preventing and responding to gender-based violence; and supporting equality of access to economic, social and political opportunities, rights, services, and at least twelve years of quality education.

5.6 The UK and Caribbean countries will support efforts to ensure that the Organisation for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons holds to account those who use such weapons illegally.

5.7 The UK likewise commits to advocate for action to address the unique challenges facing Small Island Developing States including on access to concessional finance, at the United Nations, Commonwealth, G7, G20 and elsewhere.

## 6. **Climate change**

6.1 The UK will ensure an inclusive process ahead of, and at, COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021 and keep Caribbean countries updated on its plans.

6.2 The UK will strive to ensure that the countries of the region are given a voice and a platform to address issues that are of greatest concern to them.

6.3 Caribbean countries will leverage their collective, influential 'moral voice' for climate action in order to press the big emitters to step up.

6.4 Caribbean countries, building on the CARICOM Moment of Ambition and the Climate Ambition Summit, will continue to develop and publish ambitious updated Nationally Determined Contributions, Long Term Strategies consistent with these, and Adaptation Communications before COP26.

6.5 Caribbean countries will implement the terms of the LATAC Bridgetown Declaration of 2 February 2021.

6.6 Additional key areas for joint action will include:

- a) promoting a green, inclusive and resilient recovery that leaves no one behind;
- b) accelerating and scaling up progress to support Adaptation and Resilience, including through the Early Action Partnership and the Coalition on Climate Resilient Investment, to minimise, avert and address environmental loss and damage;
- c) championing inclusive and gender-responsive climate action and finance, including by addressing the disproportionate impact of climate change on people living in poverty, women and girls, people with disabilities and other marginalised communities, and centring their needs, priorities and leadership in climate action.
- d) seizing opportunities on Energy Transition and Clean Transport, and;
- e) protecting and restoring biodiversity and the marine environment.

6.7 The UK and Caribbean countries will use the forthcoming Climate Development Ministerial as an opportunity for the UK and Caribbean to build a shared approach through 2021 on issues such as access to, and the quantity and quality of, climate finance; responding to climate impacts; and fiscal space and debt sustainability.