

Organisation of African,
Caribbean and Pacific States
(OACPS)



L'Organisation des États
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**1st EXTRAORDINARY INTER-SESSIONAL SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE AND
GOVERNMENT OF THE OACPS¹**

***Transcending the COVID-19 Pandemic: Building Resilience through Global
Solidarity.***

A Background Note on the

**1st Extraordinary Inter-Sessional Summit of the Heads of State and
Government of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States
(OACPS)**

Theme:

**Transcending the COVID-19 Pandemic: Building Resilience through Global
Solidarity**

¹ Organisation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States

1.0 BACKGROUND

1. The global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and its socio-economic impact on the entire world population requires the global community to work together to address the consequences to human health and disruptive effects on an interconnected world economy. The devastating COVID-19 pandemic is reshaping our world and exacerbating inequalities in our societies. Together, we must ensure coordinated and inclusive response and recovery efforts, to build economies and societies that are healthy, equitable, safe, clean, and resilient.
2. The COVID-19 pandemic is threatening the recent advances in health and progress towards global sustainable development goals. There is therefore an urgent need to work with global health leaders, partners and governments, to ensure that the global response to COVID-19 includes lessons learned from the fight against other epidemics and communicable diseases, particularly the protection of vulnerable populations.
3. As said by Peter Sands, Executive Director of the Global Fund. "It's not just a battle against one particular virus, it's a commitment to make everyone safe. It's about finishing the fights we haven't yet won, and winning the new fight against COVID-19, as well as preparing ourselves for fights against pathogens as yet unseen." Sands added. "We need global health security that protects everyone, from new threats and old, that is grounded in rights and that simultaneously recognizes the role of science and the equally important role of communities. We must unite to fight."
4. In his media briefing on 27 May 2020, the WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros said "The human cost of COVID-19 has been devastating, and the so-called lockdown measures have turned lives upside down. But the pandemic has given us a glimpse of what our world could look like if we took the bold steps that are needed to curb climate change and air pollution."
5. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative effect on all economies in the world, particularly in terms of commodity prices, fiscal revenues, foreign exchange receipts, foreign financial flows, food supply chains, travel restrictions, the travel, hotel and tourism industries, and labour markets.
6. The COVID-19 crisis is stretching the already challenged health systems in many of our countries, which also lack the required medical equipment, test kits, and protective gear that are in high demand worldwide and difficult to source. It is expected that COVID-19 cases will overwhelm health facilities. This will adversely affect patients with high-burden communicable and non-communicable diseases, who will lack access to adequate care. This could result in increased morbidity and mortality.

7. It should be noted that the main objectives of the Africa Joint Continental Strategy for COVID-19 pandemic are:
 - a) Coordinate efforts of Member States, African Union agencies, World Health Organization, and other partners to ensure synergy and minimize duplication.
 - b) Promote evidence-based public health practice for surveillance, prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and control of COVID-19.
8. Also, the CARICOM Heads of Governments at their Virtual Meeting held on 15 April 2020, agreed on a joined-up response to the multiple challenges posed by the Coronavirus to public health, the regional economy, food security and other issues.
9. The Pacific Islands Forum Foreign Ministers met virtually on 7 April 2020 and invoked the Biketawa Declaration, to collectively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic as a major crisis to *The Blue Pacific* – its peoples, wellbeing and economies. As an immediate priority, they established a Pacific Humanitarian Pathway on COVID-19, following two weeks of consultation with senior officials, regional agencies and development agencies through the Forum.

2.0 RESPONSE OF THE OACPS TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

10. The 9th Summit of the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) was held in Nairobi in December 2019. H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya assumed the Office of the President of the Summit of the OACPS Heads of States and Government during the Summit. The outcome of the 9th Summit themed "***Nguvu ya Pamoja Declaration***" had a number of key deliverables that Members and the Secretariat of the OACPS are to pursue.
11. Among the deliverables in the outcome include the actualisation of the revised Georgetown Agreement, deepening of relations with the European Union (EU), expansion of the strategic partners, including the private sector. Conclusion of the negotiation of a new Partnership agreement with the EU, to replace the Cotonou Partnership Agreement was identified as priority.
12. Not long after the Summit, the Corona virus 2019 (COVID-19) emerged. In addition to disrupting the flow of engagement in pursuance of common goals and objectives of the OACPS, the COVID-19 has brought about new and real challenges the world over with negative serious consequences on the economic, social and political situations amongst and within the OACPS Members. The pandemic has affected the working of the OACPS Secretariat as well.
13. It is in view of the above that the President-in-Office of the 9th Summit of Heads of State and Government in consultation with other regional leaders from Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific, proposed to convene extraordinary intersessional Summit of the OACPS.

3.0 OBJECTIVE

14. The objective of the Summit will mainly be three-fold, that is to;
- a) Access the current global situation of COVID-19 with particular focus on its effects and consequences to the OACPS Members.
 - b) Review opportunities and actions for immediate responses to COVID-19 pandemic.
 - c) Identify opportunities for global solidarity and action.

4.0 THEME

15. The theme of the virtual Summit is proposed as: ***“Transcending the COVID-19 Pandemic: Building Resilience through global solidarity”***

5.0 DATE AND TIMING

16. We propose that the virtual Summit be held on **3th June 2020**. The Summit will be split in two segments as follows.
- a) The first segment will involve a dialogue among OACPS Heads of State and Government.
 - b) The second segment will involve consultations between OACPS Heads of State and Government and Development Partners.

6.0 MAIN FOCUS AREA

17. The main focus of the Summit will be on the following. The current global situation focusing on COVID-19 and its effects and consequences to the OACPS Members. The key issues will include;
- a) Key strategic responses:
 - Management and control of the spread of COVID-19
 - Social, economic, political and environmental consequences of the pandemic on OACPS Members
 - b) Key strategic actions to mitigate the Pandemic in the OACPS regions by:
 - The African Union
 - CARICOM
 - Pacific States
 - c) Immediate post COVID-19 opportunities:
 - Identifying and activating key strategic partner
 - Resources targeted at key recovery opportunities, including key economic sectors such as:
 - Agriculture and food security
 - Aviation

- Trade
 - Tourism
 - Banking and finance, among others.
- d) Global solidarity and actions being taken to address the pandemic including by the:
- United Nations
 - G20
 - EU
 - World Bank
 - Regional development/financial institutions

7.0 ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS

18. The virtual Summit will be held on the **Zoom platform** and to be chaired by H.E President Uhuru Kenyatta in his capacity as President-in-Office of the OACPS 9th Summit of Heads of State and Government.
19. The meeting will be designed such that during the 1st segment comprising of Heads of State and Government, the discussion will focus on identifying key challenges and opportunities, and agree on urgent outcomes/actions as well as the way forward.

8.0 EXPECTED OUTCOMES/DELIVERABLES

20. In line with the theme of the Summit, outcomes are expected to address the following;
- a) Building Resilience
- i. Strategies for saving lives from the scourge of COVID-19 and related challenges.
 - ii. Sharing best practices in pandemic management.
 - iii. Safety nets- Supporting vulnerable populations including women, and children from the adverse effects of the pandemic including by ensuring food security, stability of educational systems and overall security.
 - iv. Keeping businesses operational through prevention of excessive economic disruptions, including ensuring sustained supply and demand chains, liquidity flows as well as addressing solvency issues.
 - v. Supporting the financial sector through sound and appropriate fiscal and monetary policies.
 - vi. Ex-ante prescription-such as investments in good healthcare systems and infrastructure.

- b) Keeping Economies functioning and Rebooting for Strong Recovery
 - i. Modeling the post COVID-19 scenarios.
 - ii. Coordinated monetary and fiscal policy frameworks to stimulate growth.
 - iii. Facilitation of national and regional stimulus packages to support the most vulnerable.
- c) Global Solidarity and actions
 - i. Harnessing International support, including emergency financing, technical assistance, moratoriums on debt repayment.
 - ii. Systematic and sustained international support for stimulus packages.
 - iii. Revitalization of the multilateral system, including through emphasizing the need for a reversal of the retreat from multilateralism.

21. The outcome will be the President-in-Office Communiqué that will focus on;
- i. Reaffirmations of solidarity and cooperation among Member States and regions of the OACPS;
 - ii. The importance of collective measures and approaches towards addressing COVID-19 pandemic and related challenges;
 - iii. The need for additional international and multilateral responses to the COVID-19 pandemic;
 - iv. Adaptation strategies for sustaining livelihoods and economic activity, during and after the COVID-19 crisis;
 - v. Coordinated monetary and fiscal policy frameworks to kick-start growth;
 - vi. Call for capacity building, in addressing pandemics like COVID-19;
 - vii. Call for policy responses designed to help those and in most need, so that the burden does not fall on those least able to bear;
 - viii. Call for collective actions. COVID-19 is a systemic and global challenge, which can only be addressed if all countries come together and work towards common objectives.