

**Organisation of African,
Caribbean and Pacific
States (OACPS)**



**Organisation des Etats
d'Afrique, des Caraïbes et
du Pacifique (OEACP)**

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Virtual Summit, 3 June 2020

**COMMUNIQUE OF THE PRESIDENT-IN-OFFICE OF THE
1st EXTRAORDINARY INTER-SESSIONAL SUMMIT OF THE HEADS OF
STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE ORGANISATION OF
AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC STATES (OACPS)**



The virtual 1st Extraordinary Inter-Sessional Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), chaired by His Excellency Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta, President-in-Office of the OACPS Summit, and President of the Republic of Kenya.

03 June 2020.

1. The 1st Extraordinary Inter-Sessional Summit was held under the theme, ***"Transcending the COVID-19 Pandemic: Building Resilience through Global Solidarity"***. The objective of the Summit was to create a platform for dialogue among the OACPS leaders on the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Summit provided a strategic opportunity for exchanging views on the various interventions adopted by the three main Regions of the OACPS since the onset of the pandemic. The Summit also proposed a set of measures and approaches to manage the spread and the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The OACPS also engaged with strategic development partners on common strategies and synergies.
2. The Summit was addressed by H.E. Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta President of the Republic of Kenya and President-in-Office of the OACPS; H.E. Mr. James Marape, Prime Minister of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea (Troika Member of the OACPS Summit); H.E. Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa in his capacity as President of the African Union; The Honourable Mia Amor Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados in her capacity as Chair of the CARICOM Community; H.E. Mr. Kausea Natano, Prime Minister of Tuvalu in his capacity as Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum; H.E. Mr. Adama Barrow, President of the Republic of the Gambia (President of the OACPS Council of Ministers); H.E. Mr. Denis Sassou Nguesso, President of the Republic of Congo (Council Bureau Member); H.E. Mr. Danny Faure, President of the Republic of Seychelles (Council Bureau Member); H.E. Mr. Umaro Sissoco Embaló, President Guinea Bissau (Council Bureau Member); H.E. Mr. Edgar Lungu, President of Zambia (Council Bureau Member); H.E. Mr. Frank Bainimarama, Prime Minister of Fiji (Council Bureau Member); The Most Honourable Andrew Holness, Prime Minister of Jamaica (Council Bureau Member); H.E. Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda (Special Guest); H.E. Dr. Tedros-Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organisation (WHO); and H.E. Mr. Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti, Secretary-General of the OACPS. In attendance also were H.E. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, President of Zimbabwe; H.E. Dr. Keith Christopher Rowley, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago; and H.E. Dr. Ralph E. Gonsalves, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and The Grenadines.

The 1st Extraordinary Inter-Sessional Summit of the OACPS;

3. **Noted** with concern the rapid global spread of the COVID-19 Pandemic and its devastating social-economic impact on the entire world population, and subsequent economic slowdown which has led to closure of industries, aviation, tourism and trade sectors while at the same time affecting global supply chains leading to reshaping the world, aggravating inequalities and increasing the poverty levels among our societies.
4. **Reaffirmed** the importance of solidarity and commitment to intra-OACPS cooperation and emphasized the important contribution of South-South, North-South and Triangular cooperation in responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic. In this regard, the Summit underscored the potential of intra-OACPS cooperation in promoting the sharing of knowledge, good practices, and development solutions. **Underlined** the need to recover together, since recovery in one country has a bearing on another.
5. **Appreciated** the commitment of health and other front-line workers in efforts towards the control of the spread of COVID-19 infections, and the management and treatment of the disease within Members and Regions of the OACPS, and also expressed condolences for the lives lost due to the Pandemic.
6. **Reaffirmed** its commitment to the promotion of global health security that protects everyone against old and emerging health threats caused by virulent pathogens and non-communicable diseases which are often comorbidities.
7. **Pledged** to mobilize human, financial and technical resources to strengthen national and regional health systems to counter the short- and medium-term impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic. **Emphasized** the promotion of strategies that lead to wealth and employment creation, strengthening of health systems in pursuit of achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC), and the promotion of research, technology and innovation. **Highlighted** the need for a Marshall Plan given the devastating social and economic impacts to OACPS Member States, especially for Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

8. **Recognized** the integral role that the private sector can play across Members of the OACPS in revitalizing the post COVID-19 economies.
9. **Urged** the Development Partners and Philanthropic Organizations to strengthen their efforts towards the containment of the spread of the COVID-19 Pandemic through research and innovation activities, deepening of international collaboration and investment in essential medical technologies, COVID-19 diagnostics and therapeutics, and vaccines, as their speedy and equitable distribution across the globe. This can be achieved through support and working with existing regional mechanisms such as the Pacific Humanitarian Pathway of the Pacific Islands Forum, the Africa Joint Continental Strategy for COVID-19 Pandemic of the African Union, and the Outcome of the 10th Special Emergency Meeting of the CARICOM Community Heads of Government for the response to, and recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic, held on 05 May 2020.
10. **Acknowledged** the unique situation of SIDS in addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic, noting their vulnerability to climate change, their small populations and high dependence on singular economic sectors such as tourism that has been adversely affected by this global pandemic. **Called** for a global approach towards control, management and treatment of the COVID-19 as well as revitalization of the tourism and hospitality sectors within the SIDS.
11. **Noted** with concern the heavy debt burden among the Members of the OACPS, which is aggravated by the negative impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic, and the cost as well as limited access to international financial markets. **Welcomed** the decision of the G20 to suspend debt payments and requested that the G20 extends this decision to all Members of the OACPS. **Encouraged** debt cancellation, or at least, the activation of the debt standstill mechanism provided for in Article VIII Section 2 of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Agreement.
12. **Acknowledged** that the vast majority of the Members of OACPS depend on agricultural production which has been disrupted due to a shift in global supply and demand chains leading to an increase in domestic prices, and the collapse in exports resulting in extreme difficulties for the persons in vulnerable situations. **Called** for coordinated support that will address food insecurity and facilitate rural development, and **Urged** developed countries to promote fair and equitable agricultural policies to ensure that Members of the OACPS are not hampered when exporting their agricultural products to developed countries.

13. **Urged** Member States to cooperate in expanding and modernizing the agriculture and agribusiness sectors through the adoption of innovative and modern farming technologies so as to increase productivity and competitiveness, as well as improve value chains. **Emphasized** the importance of empowering actors along the value chain, notably small-holder farmers, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), and women entrepreneurs.
14. **Appealed** to development partners and Members of the OACPS to contribute to the various continental and regional mechanisms, including the ACP Endowment and Trust Fund (ACP-ETF), created to address the socio-economic impact of pandemics such as COVID-19. **Noted** that these mechanisms are effective tools in times of crises and exogenous shocks, such as those caused by pandemics.
15. **Recalled** the commitment to multilateralism as enshrined in the **Nairobi Nguvu ya Pamoja Declaration**, and underlined that multilateralism is an effective way of engagement that ensures global health security and enhances pandemic preparedness, prevention and response.
16. **Expressed** concern with regard to the unilateral publication of the European Commission's list of High Risk Third Countries on Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing as this will adversely affect the economic recovery of many Members of the OACPS in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic. **Appealed** to the European Union (EU) to place a moratorium on its implementation to allow concerned Members of the OACPS to dialogue and foster closer collaboration with the European Commission to address their respective strategic deficiencies identified by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). Called for lifting of sanctions and a blockade imposed on some of the Members' of the OACPS.
17. **Expressed** appreciation for the contribution of International and Regional Organizations in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. **Called** for the continued engagement with, and resourcing of these Organizations, including the World Health Organization (WHO), to assist Members' of the OACPS in their mitigation and preparedness for future pandemics.
18. **Noted** that the Cotonou Partnership Agreement was coming to an end, and **Called** for the integration of proposed modalities for prevention, preparedness, and recovery measures from pandemics in the Post-Cotonou dispensation.

19. **Welcomed** the renewed commitment to discuss global economic governance with a view to addressing the structural imbalances in the international economic system.
20. **Condemned** the actions of racism, discrimination, xenophobia and all forms of intolerance and injustice, as well as the death of Mr. George Floyd in Minneapolis, United States of America. **Hailed** diversity as a source of strength, and advocated for the promotion of mutual understanding among peoples.

The 1st Extraordinary Inter-Sessional Summit of the OACPS, held consultations with strategic Development Partners, including the Secretary-General of the United Nations, President of the European Council, President of the Republic of France and Prime Ministers of Norway, Canada and Australia, respectively, on the need to support COVID-19 recovery efforts of the Members of the OACPS. In this regard, the Development Partners;

21. **Called** for global solidarity and action in addressing global health threats and emergencies, and pledged their solidarity and support for recovery efforts of Members of the OACPS, and in particular for the G20 debt relief initiatives.
22. **Agreed** on the necessity of mitigating the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic for the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
23. **Hailed** the on-going research efforts towards the discovery of a COVID-19 vaccine and requested that the COVID-19 vaccine be a global public good.

In response to the Statements made by the Development Partners, the OACPS Summit;

24. **Acknowledged** the High-Level event on Financing for Development in the era of COVID-19 and beyond convened in May 2020, which identified six interdependent areas of concrete actions on enhanced support, emergency responses and recovery, namely, a) enhancing global liquidity, b) preventing debt crises in all countries at risk, c) engaging with private creditors on joint debt relief efforts, d) aligning global financial systems with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), e) ending illicit financial flows, and f) rebuilding differently and better.

25. **Called** for increased access to Special Drawing Rights (SDR) of the IMF to address financial fallout, lauded the G20 call for debt moratorium, and **Requested** the inclusion of private lenders in discussions on debt sustainability.
26. **Called** also for renewed commitment by Member States towards the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development.
27. **Reiterated** the support of the OACPS for the WHO and its Director- General.

In conclusion, the President-in-Office and Chair of the 1st Extraordinary Inter-Sessional Summit, expressed appreciation to all the Heads of State and Government and Development Partners who participated in the deliberations. He further acknowledged the OACPS Committee of Ambassadors, and the OACPS Secretariat under the leadership of the Secretary-General, H.E. Georges Rebelo Pinto CHIKOTI, for organizing the Summit.

Done on 3 June 2020