

ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES (ACS)
10TH SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE AND/OR GOVERNMENT
30th May 2025

DECLARATION OF MONTERÍA

"United for Life: Towards a More Sustainable Greater Caribbean"

We, the Heads of State and/or Government of the Member States of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), gathered at the 10th Summit of the ACS, in the city of Montería, Republic of Colombia, on 30th May 2025:

- i. **Celebrating** enthusiastically the 30th Anniversary of the establishment of the ACS, constituted on 24th July 1994;
- ii. **Convinced** of the validity and relevance of the principles and objectives outlined in its Convention, **we highlight** the fundamental role of the ACS as an organization for consultation, cooperation and concerted action with the objective to advance towards Greater Caribbean unity, integration, coordination and sustainable development;
- iii. **Resolved** to define the ACS Strategic Vision, which once agreed upon, will update a vision, mission and principles, fully aligned with the nature of the Association, and appropriate to the needs and priorities of its Member States, and which will lay the foundation for a comprehensive Strategic Plan 2025-2035 with the objective of consolidating and enhancing its impact, making its work more coherent, relevant and strategic, and enabling it to respond more effectively to the challenges of the region, while promoting sustainable development, integration and cooperation for the benefit of the Greater Caribbean;
- iv. **Expressing** our thanks on this 30th Anniversary to the 29 Observer Countries who support the development work of the ACS in its areas of focus and **looking forward** to greater and deeper collaboration to secure the sustainable development aspirations of the citizens of the Greater Caribbean, **we acknowledge** with appreciation the support of the Republic of Korea for the flagship Sandy Shorelines Project, that of the Republic of Türkiye for the Regional Network of Artisans in Tourism of the Greater Caribbean, and of the Republic of Serbia for the first Strategic Planning Exercise of the ACS;

- v. **Continuing** in like manner, the partnerships/cooperation initiatives of the ACS with its several observer organisations and social actors, which are fundamental to the successful implementation of the ACS Plan of Action 2022-2028 which, in addition to establishing strategic objectives for the five focal areas of the ACS, places emphasis on the critical crosscutting development themes of protection and conservation of the environment, of respect and protection of all human rights, food security, sustainable agriculture, the incorporation of a gender lens, community participation, engagement with youth, women, the elderly, the differently abled, Indigenous Peoples, and other groups in a situation of vulnerability. Likewise, **we highlight** the importance of digital transformation, private sector participation, support to micro, small and medium enterprises, risk analysis and management;
- vi. **Convinced** of the relevance of the United Nations Pact for the Future, we recognise that we are facing a moment of profound global transformation and increasing catastrophic risks, while living in a time of hope and opportunity to foster renewal and progress, especially for those living in conditions of poverty and vulnerability, and we must redouble our efforts to achieve a secure, peaceful, just, equitable, inclusive, sustainable and prosperous world. This requires a new commitment to international cooperation and multilateralism, based on respect for international law and guided by trust and solidarity for the benefit of all;
- vii. **Resolved** to promote further deepening of financial and technical cooperation, and mobilisation of resources to achieve the ideals of the ACS for a sustainable Greater Caribbean;
- viii. **Noting:** a) the proclamation of the Second International Decade for People of African Descent (2025-2034), of the United Nations, an enabling framework for deepening political dialogue and action on restorative justice; (b) the process towards an International Declaration on the Protection, Promotion and Full Respect for the Human Rights of People of African Descent, at the request of the United Nations.

We Declare:

Article I Towards a more Sustainable Greater Caribbean

1. **Reiterate** our commitment to maximise actions in favour of the sustainable development of the Greater Caribbean, through the five areas of operation of the ACS: protection of the Caribbean Sea, disaster risk reduction, trade facilitation, sustainable tourism and air, maritime and digital connectivity;

Article II Cooperation

- 2. Reaffirm** that cooperation is an essential instrument to achieve the sustainable development of the Greater Caribbean, as well as for the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), highlighting the criticality of multi-actor and multi-level strategic partnerships in achieving efficient and mutually beneficial sustainable development cooperation;
- 3. Commit** to promoting International Cooperation Conferences (ICCs) as an instrument of the ACS for identifying areas for action and tools for resource mobilisation;
- 4. Invite** ACS Observer Countries, and other institutions, particularly multilateral development banks and cooperation agencies to actively participate and support the Association in the consolidation of strategic projects that contribute to making the Strategic Vision of the Association a reality in the areas of trade, transport, tourism, the environment, and disaster resilience, to the benefit of the Membership of the ACS;
- 5. Recognise** the contribution of the ACS Associate Members to the achievement of the cooperation objectives of the Greater Caribbean through their remarkable work as Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Committees and Commissions for which they are elected and **welcome** a strengthening of their role and involvement in the concrete implementation of projects developed within the framework of the ACS Action Plan;
- 6. Commit**, particularly in the context of the 30th Anniversary of the Association, to support joint efforts by the Secretariat and Member States to leverage the mobilisation of resources for the implementation of the 2022-2028 Action Plan;
- 7. Execute as approved** by the Ministerial Council in 2024, an annual meeting of ACS Associate Members;

Article III Economic Integration for Sustainable Development of the ACS

- 8. Reaffirm** the need for regional systems that facilitate trade and transport, as well as external regional economic relations with greater integration to enhance socioeconomic resilience and optimise opportunities for growth, and development. In this regard, **we highlight** the importance of an open, transparent, inclusive, non-discriminatory, and fair multilateral trading system based on the rules of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and **we commit** to supporting the optimal functioning of the Network of Trade and Investment Promotion Organisations of the Special Committee on Trade Development and External Economic Relations;

- 9. Prioritise** digital transformation including through investment in research, innovation, digital literacy and capacity building to advance the productive, creative, and service industries of the Region and better manage delivery and accessibility to public goods and services, placing special emphasis on transport and logistics, digital access, and commerce as enablers of sustainable economic growth and socio-economic resilience;
- 10. Commit** to continue the efforts to enhance connectivity and mobility amongst peoples and countries of the Greater Caribbean, and in this context, undertake the development of land, air, and maritime transportation links to maintain and bolster a space that is conducive to the promotion of trade, investment, tourism and the movement of goods and services and people in the Region;
- 11. Encourage** the development of digitization tools that strengthen connectivity and trade facilitation amongst Members, significantly boosting efficiency in trade, resource management and service delivery, thus contributing to more cohesive regional integration and a more competitive business environment;
- 12. Recognise** the extraordinary value that the Latin American and Caribbean Space Agency has for the sustainable development of the Greater Caribbean;
- 13. Highlight** the role that Artificial Intelligence (AI) can play in promoting sustainable development by improving productivity, and essential services such as health, education and access to these services. AI can also improve resource management and environmental sustainability efforts. **Emphasise** the importance of the Global Digital Compact and the role of multilateral cooperation in facilitating digital transformation and as such, develop strategies to reduce digital disparities between and within countries and improve data collection and management, while ensuring that AI advances are in line with universal values, human rights, and ethical standards, within a framework of data governance, risk-based and differentiated according to national capacities, as well as recognising the importance of gender equality and the protection of people in vulnerable situations child protection the digital environment;

Article IV Food Security and Energy Security

- 14. Recognise** the interconnected challenges of food security, nutrition and sustainability, underlining the importance of transforming and strengthening the capacities of agrifood systems, and of leveraging advanced technologies to enhance resilience within the Greater Caribbean region where economic constraints and the climate crisis impact food security and disproportionately affect persons in vulnerable situations. **We underscore** the need for additional sources of funding, including innovative climate finance and a blueprint for an adequate system to transport food products, to strengthen resilience, reduce vulnerabilities and ensure equitable access to safe and nutritious food for all;

15. Advocate for cooperation on renewable energy and for the fair, equitable and orderly transition to low-carbon energy sources. Likewise, **emphasise** the importance of diversifying energy sources, finding affordable energy solutions, promoting the transition to the use of renewable resources, and improving regional infrastructure. **We recognise** that cooperation to develop collective sustainable energy projects and the promotion of energy efficiency are crucial to reduce vulnerability to fluctuations in international prices and the challenges of the climate crisis;

Article V The Caribbean Sea, Climate Change and Disaster Resilience

16. Call for coordinated regional action within the framework of the designation of the Caribbean Sea as a Special Area in the Context of Sustainable Development to strengthen the protection and preservation management of the Caribbean Sea, with particular attention to: addressing the economic, social and environmental impacts of climate change and other emerging threats, including the gradual reduction of pollution from plastics and microplastics and the coordinated management of sargassum and mangroves, in accordance with the commitments that States adopt in the International Legally Binding Instrument on Plastic Pollution and the coordinated management of sargassum and mangroves, reefs, seagrasses, coastal areas and aquifer. **We support** harmonised regional policies to gradually eliminate plastic and microplastic pollution. **We commit** to advocate for these issues that reflect our common position in key international fora, including the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC) in June 2025, during the 80th session of the UN General Assembly in September 2025, COP30 on Climate Change in November 2025, and other venues for addressing related issues over the coming years, in order to secure wider recognition and support;

17. Reaffirm our commitment to the protection and conservation of the Caribbean Sea and its designation as a special area in the context of sustainable development by the United Nations General Assembly and reiterate the paramount importance of the Caribbean Sea Commission (CSC) in advancing these causes with the collaboration of regional academic institutions of international stature whose expertise will be of great value, such as the National Autonomous University of Mexico, in updating the Report on the Caribbean Sea as a Special Area, and making optimal use of this designation. In this regard, we welcome the convening of the United Nations Ocean Conference which will be held in June 2025 in Nice, jointly hosted by the governments of France and Costa Rica;

18. Reaffirm our commitment to the protection and conservation of the Caribbean Sea and **underscore** the importance of the mandate of the Caribbean Sea

Commission, recognised by the ACS Heads of State and Government, in the Final Declarations agreed in Havana (2016), Managua (2019) and Antigua Guatemala (2023), as well as the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/79/204 'Towards the sustainable development of the Caribbean Sea for present and future generations', to promote its sustainable use. **We urge** the Caribbean Sea Commission to strengthen its work programme, with specific objectives and targets for the implementation of the designation of the Caribbean Sea as a Special Area in the Context of Sustainable Development, as agreed in the aforementioned UN General Assembly resolution. **We call upon** the ACS Secretariat to provide the necessary support for its achievement, and to report periodically to the Executive Board of the Ministerial Council on its progress and challenges to achieve it;

19. Recognise the efforts made by the Republic of Colombia in the organisation of the 16th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) which were held in the cities of Cali, Colombia and Rome, Italy. **We highlight** the adoption of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement), under the auspices of the United Nations on June 19th, 2023;

20. Recognise that the Greater Caribbean countries continue to be vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, which include extreme climatic events and prolonged droughts, intense hurricanes, severe flooding, deforestation, soil degradation, biodiversity loss, rising sea levels, coastal erosion, sargassum crisis, and ocean acidification, among others. We specifically refer to the passage of Hurricane Beryl which had devastating impacts on Greater Caribbean States, and **reiterate** solidarity with the affected states to rebuild in the wake of these tragedies, -which have benefited from, the support of the international community and the Member countries and Associate Members of the ACS;

21. Commend the work that is being undertaken by many of the Member States of the ACS within the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) as that Forum pursues its agenda of South-South cooperation in addressing the Climate Crisis, and **encourage** all climate vulnerable member states of the ACS to join the CVF;

22. Recognise the blue economy as vital and the imperative of continuing to promote efforts towards the designation of the Caribbean Sea as a Special Area in the Context of Sustainable Development, while safeguarding marine ecosystems that are crucial in addressing climate change. As a region heavily reliant on ocean resources, advancing the blue economy is key to both climate resilience and long-term economic welfare for our communities. Additionally, **we also welcome** the establishment of the Sargassum Sub-Commission as a result

of the remarkable work of the CSC to foster a coordinated regional response to sargassum, based on paragraph 14 of the Declaration of Antigua Guatemala, 2023, as an emerging risk in the Greater Caribbean region and **we recognise** therefore the work done in the region which will be presented in Nice, in the context of UNOC 3, the initiative of the Dominican Republic and Guadeloupe to strengthen the coordination and regional capacity to act;

23. Reaffirm our commitment to enhance dialogue and improve coordination and cooperation mechanisms among States to effectively address migration dynamics, in particular the movement of people caused by the adverse effects of natural disasters and climate change, environmental degradation, and loss of biodiversity, through continuous collaboration and the exchange of good practices. In this regard, we **renew** the call by the 8th ACS Summit for the formulation of a Common Agenda for Migration for the Greater Caribbean which expresses our shared solidarity and vision on this topic¹;

24. Reaffirm our commitment to the promotion of regularized channels that guarantee safe, orderly and regular migration, while promoting respect for and protection of the human rights of all people in a context of human mobility, regardless of their migratory status, in countries of origin, transit, destination and return. We also emphasize the need to strengthen international cooperation to confront and combat the crimes of smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons, reiterating our shared vision of solidarity in the face of these challenges;

25. Reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, as the framework for addressing the global climate crisis. We stand united in advancing ambitious climate actions that align with our collective goal of keeping the global average temperature increase to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, and continuing efforts to limit this temperature increase to 1.5°C, ensuring a sustainable and resilient future for all persons;

26. Recognise the efforts of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan in hosting the 29th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP29). The ACS expresses its concern regarding the limited scope of Decision 1/CMA.6 on the establishment of the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on Climate Financing particularly regarding the needs of developing countries in addressing climate change and **insists** on the guarantee of increased financial flows from developed countries to developing countries recognising the need to provide

¹ Reservation of Dominican Republic reflected on page 15.

public resources based on highly concessional subsidies with a minimum allocation floor for financing which is solely grant and concessional based, framed to reflect the urgency of transformative action before 2030 and commensurate support needed for all developing countries, considering reforming the international financial architecture including the reform of governmental institutions and multilateral development banks to widen and strengthen the participation of developing countries in international economic decision making with the objective of achieving increased financing and improved conditions and access and avoid further indebtedness, taking into account debt burdens and the special circumstances of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Middle Income Countries (MIC), and Least Developed Countries (LDCs);

- 27. Support** the Initiatives in the region including the Bridgetown Initiative , the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States (ABAS), the Expert Review on Debt, Nature and Climate, aimed at strengthening the region's economic and climate resilience, increasing fiscal space, alleviating debt burdens, improving financing conditions for developing countries, mobilising of new, additional and predictable quality financial resources, promoting sustainable development and implementing policies aimed at climate justice and inclusive growth and **urge** the formulation of a specific plan for Middle Income Countries. **Recall** that the Initiatives are closely aligned with the work and objectives of existing UN processes on the financing for development agenda, including 'Financing for development in the era of COVID-19 and beyond';
- 28. Encourage** assistance to Associate Members to help advance their sustainable development and climate resilience under the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States (ABAS) and look to the United Nations Development System to develop a specific, inter-agency, comprehensive, system-wide response plan for middle-income countries;
- 29. Agree** that there are significant benefits to be gained through technological innovations as the role of technology in combating climate change, including renewable energy sources, carbon capture and storage, and advancements in energy efficiency is an important element in climate mitigation, adaptation and disaster risk reduction and **urge** support for the development and adoption of endemic climate technologies in developing countries, which are essential for implementing climate actions aimed at mitigating and adapting to climate change;

Article VI Public Health

30. Commend the Republic of Cuba for the tremendous contribution it has made to many of the national public health systems of the member states of the ACS through the work of its Medical Brigades, and **express** our concern regarding any action that limits the work of the Brigades;

31. Commit to strengthening local capacities of public healthcare to deal with emergencies. **Advocate** for the education and training of health-care professionals, as well as the improvement of infrastructure and resources needed for a quick, effective and inclusive response. Investment in local capacities would not only contribute to better preparedness, but will also strengthen community resilience to potential health crises;

Article VII Youth and Exchange

32. Congratulate the sportsmen and women of the Greater Caribbean region on their performance at the 2024 Olympics and Paralympic Games in Paris, France. **We celebrate** the athletes who, for their outstanding performance, won gold, silver and bronze medals, which highlights the talent and capacity of our region, projecting an image of excellence and perseverance on the international stage;

33. Urge governments to align national youth strategies and policies with the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring the effective participation of young people, particularly those in contexts of greater vulnerability, **aware of** the importance of guaranteeing the best conditions for young people in the Greater Caribbean to face current challenges, such as the climate crisis, inequalities and conflicts, and **recognising** that they are holders of rights and play a leading role as key actors in development and the necessary reforms;

34. Recognise that the Young Professionals Programme is a valuable opportunity to train and integrate youth into the Association and its operations, allowing them to expand and share knowledge of the Greater Caribbean through cross-cultural exchange, and technical capacity-building. These experiences also foster greater ownership of the vision and mission of the ACS. We also **celebrate** the ACS-France Volontaires and ACS-Korea Internship Programmes as instrumental initiatives to foster talent and cross-cultural exchange;

Article VIII Promoting Equity and Inclusion of Greater Caribbean Communities

- 35. Reaffirm** our commitment to promote equality, equity and inclusion of all communities in the Greater Caribbean, with special attention to marginalised and excluded populations, as fundamental pillars for sustainable development and social cohesion throughout the region, and as key drivers for economic and social progress;
- 36. Recognise** the vital importance of conserving and preserving the oral traditions, in accordance with the uses and customs of Indigenous Peoples and Afro descendants in the Greater Caribbean, including the various Creole languages which form an integral part of Caribbean culture, as an expression of the right to autonomy of said communities. These traditions represent invaluable cultural heritage that enrich the identity and social cohesion of these communities;
- 37. Support** the ten-point Action Plan of the Reparations Commission of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and **applauds** this Commission's efforts to correct injustices resulting from the genocide of the native people of the Caribbean and the Trans-Atlantic trafficking of enslaved Africans and slavery, which are counted amongst the most atrocious crimes against humanity, and **reaffirming**, in turn, the urgent need to request and implement efficient measures for reparation, restitution, compensation, indemnification or other in kind measures at a national, regional and international level;
- 38. Emphasise** the need to implement policies that ensure equal opportunities for all persons. Promoting equality and equity means ensuring that the benefits of development are accessible to all and for existing disparities to be eliminated;
- 39. Recognise** the contributions of all Caribbean, Indigenous and Afro-descendant women, adolescents and girls to the development of our societies and countries. **We reaffirm** the importance of guaranteeing the necessary conditions for the full period of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as for the elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against them. **We commit** to improve their conditions to expand their opportunities and ensure their equal access to equitable and quality education, secure digital technology and their full participation in decision-making spaces, this will allow us to build a more prosperous, sustainable, just and equitable region;
- 40. Commit** to the empowerment of marginalised and excluded communities whose rights have been violated, through training, education and economic development programmes that ensure their capacity to participate fully in

cultural, social, and economic life; as well as foster equitable representation of diverse groups at all levels of public administration and in the process of policymaking to ensure that the voices of all groups in society are heard and respected.

Article IX Decent Work

41. Undertake the commitment of articulating policies for the fulfilment of the fundamental principles and rights of workers as enshrined in international law, and national legislation, such as freedom of association, the elimination of all forms of forced or obligatory labour, the effective abolition of child labour, the removal of workplace discrimination, and the promotion of safe and healthy work environments;

42. Recognise that innovation and technological development have significantly transformed human activities, presenting challenges and opportunities for human rights. We therefore **declare** our firm commitment to harness these opportunities, to protect decent work and to address the challenges associated with technological transformation in the world of work, to ensure just transitions in the digital economy and to promote labour protection strategies;

Article X Commitment to the purposes and the principles of the United Nations Charter and the Greater Caribbean as a Zone of Peace and Cooperation

43. Reiterate our commitment to and respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of International Law and, consistent therewith, our commitment to the maintenance of international peace and security; the promotion of friendly relations and solidarity among nations; the promotion of international cooperation; the sovereign equality of States; the fulfilment, in good faith, of obligations undertaken; the peaceful settlement of disputes; the prohibition of the threat of use or use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of any State, and non-intervention in their internal affairs. These are indispensable requirements to preserve the Greater Caribbean as a Zone of Peace and Cooperation, in accordance with the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace. We further recall our commitment as parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (The Tlatelolco Treaty), and reiterate our deep concern about the threat posed to humanity by the existence

of nuclear weapons, as well as their humanitarian impact, and we unequivocally condemn any threat of their use, whether explicit or implicit;

44. Welcome the 11th Anniversary of the signing of the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, adopted in Havana on 29th January 2014, and **recognise** the full validity of its principles;

45. Reject the application of unilateral coercive measures contrary to international law, including listings and attestations that negatively affect the livelihoods of the population, impacting on the full enjoyment of human rights, national efforts towards the economic and social development of ACS Member States, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Peace, and Prosperity of the Greater Caribbean. In this regard, we **call for** the removal of Cuba from the US State Department's unilateral list of countries alleged to be sponsors of terrorism. **We also call for** Panama to be removed from the European Union's list of non-cooperative countries in tax matters, as well as from the list of non-cooperative countries in the fight against money laundering and the financing of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction²;

46. Reiterate the call to the Government of the United States to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade of extraterritorial dimensions that it imposes on the Republic of Cuba, which has escalated to unprecedented levels which is severely affecting the well-being of the Cuban people.

47. Recognise the importance of political and social stability for the well-being of the Haitian people and for the sustainable development of the Greater Caribbean as a whole; **reaffirm** our unwavering support to and solidarity with the Government and People of Haiti, the first Caribbean country to break free of slavery and attain their independence, in the face of the multidimensional crisis that has been aggravated by violence and criminal activities of organized criminal groups; **reiterate** our support for national, regional and international efforts, including those led by CARICOM, and the Kenya-led Multinational Security Support Mission³ to find peaceful, inclusive and sustainable solutions to the crisis; and **underscore** the importance of a Haitian-led dialogue process, the strengthening of coordinated humanitarian assistance, and sustained engagement that upholds the sovereignty of Haiti, respecting the dignity, rights and agency of the Haitian people;

² Reservation of Costa Rica reflected on page 15.

³ Reservation of Venezuela reflected on page 15.

Article XI Afrodescendants and Indigenous peoples

- 48.** Reparative justice welcome with great hope a) the announcement by the President of France to create a joint Franco-Haitian commission to examine the common past, including the impact of the 150 million franc 'indemnity' that, in 1825 Haiti was forced to contract; b) the dialogue between victims of the transatlantic slave trade and enslavement and descendants of the perpetrators, as well as the desire of the latter to contribute to historical reparations, held in the framework of the 4th session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on People of African Descent, PFPAD, which took place in New York from 14 to 17 April this year; c) the decision of Colombia to promote the creation of a multi-donor fund for historical reparations to the people of Haiti, announced in the framework of the aforementioned session of the PFPAD. We encourage other nations to contribute to these efforts;
- 49. Renew** our commitment to the formulation and adoption of an International Declaration on the Protection, Promotion and Full Respect for the Human Rights of People of African Descent, which is being advanced at the request of the United Nations, which should give special relevance to restorative justice, climate and environmental justice, and digital justice and artificial intelligence, within the framework of the recognition of the individual and collective rights of Afro-descendant individuals and peoples. **We commit** to ensuring the fair and equitable participation of Afro-descendants in national, regional, and multilateral forums and instances relevant to the creation or consolidation of the legal, institutional, and instrumental architecture of artificial intelligence and its governance, as appropriate;
- 50. Urge** the creation of a group in the ACS to address the rights of Afro-descendants and other groups such as Indigenous peoples and the explicit recognition of these groups as protectors of nature at the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, COP16;
- 51. Commit** to promoting the participation of Afro-descendants, Indigenous peoples and other Caribbean groups in the mechanisms of the Association of Caribbean States, supporting their integration in strategic initiatives for sustainable development, inclusive economic growth, joint management of ecosystems, cultural preservation, education, science and technology, the strengthening of regional connectivity through maritime and air transport, the promotion of community-based eco-tourism, and the preservation of their languages and cultural heritage, in harmony with the priorities of the ACS Plan of Action 2022-2028;

Article XII Privileges and Immunities

- 52. Urge** Member states that have still not ratified the ACS Protocol on Privileges and Immunities, to continue their efforts for prompt ratification;
- 53. Examine**, once the ACS Protocol on Privileges and Immunities enters into force, the feasibility of issuing a Travel Document for ACS Officials to achieve simpler and smoother mobility at the regional level in the framework of official ACS missions.

Article XIII Appreciation and Welcome

- 54. Express** our deepest gratitude to the President of the Republic of Colombia, His Excellency Gustavo Francisco Petro Urrego and to the Government and People of Colombia for their warmth and hospitality and for the excellent arrangements made for the convening of this 10th Summit of the Association of Caribbean States;
- 55. Extend our congratulations** to the Republic of Honduras for holding the Pro Tempore Chairmanship of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), for the period 2024-2025, and the organisation of the IX Summit reflecting the commitment to integration, cooperation and sustainable development of Latin America and the Greater Caribbean. We also salute the incoming Pro Tempore Chairmanship of the Republic of Colombia (2025-2026) in assuming this responsibility, assuring our full support and wishing them success in performing this function.
- 56. Thank** His Excellency Rodolfo Sabonge, Secretary-General for the period of 2020-2024, for his dedicated service, bold, visionary and dynamic leadership, and unwavering commitment to advancing the mission and objectives of the ACS;
- 57. Commend** the ACS Secretariat under the leadership of Her Excellency Noemí Espinoza Madrid, the current Secretary-General, whose laudable professional experience, purposeful, clear and steadfast efforts enrich the Greater Caribbean and its process towards sustainable development, cooperation and action;
- 58. Welcome** the Chairperson of the Ministerial Council of the Association of Caribbean States for the period 2025-2026, His/Her Excellency Minister of Foreign Affairs XX in XX and extend to him/her best wishes for success during his/her tenure at the helm of the Association.

Reservations

Paragraph 23

The Dominican Republic consents to the publication of this paragraph in accordance with *Ministerial Agreement 16/18, approved by the XXIII Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on March 16, 2018*, and places on record its reservation regarding the application of the following sentence: *"In this regard, we renew the call of the 8th ACS Summit for the formulation of a Common Agenda for Migration for the Wider Caribbean that expresses our solidarity and shared vision on this issue."*

Paragraph 45

Costa Rica consents to the publication of this paragraph in accordance with *Ministerial Agreement 16/18, approved by the XXIII Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on March 16, 2018*, and places on record its reservation in relation to the application of the paragraph.

Paragraph 47

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela consents to the publication of the paragraph in compliance with *Ministerial Agreement 16/18, approved by the 23rd Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on March 16, 2018*, and places on record its reservation in relation to the application of the following phrase: *"and the Kenyan-led Multinational Security Support Mission"*