



**MESSAGE FROM
THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY
(CARICOM), AMBASSADOR IRWIN LAROCQUE,
ON THE OCCASION OF CARIBBEAN STATISTICS DAY
15 OCTOBER 2012**

Monday, 15 October 2012 marks the fourth observance by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) of **Caribbean Statistics Day**, which is aimed not only at raising the profile of statistics and statisticians across the Region but also at recognising the crucial role of statistics in the advancement of the daily lives of the people of our Community.

The theme for this year is “***Working together to Improve Statistics in the Twenty-First Century and Beyond***”. This theme, which is also the motto of the CARICOM Advisory Group on Statistics (AGS), underscores the need for collaborative actions and the building of partnerships to enable the investment of adequate resources in statistics. This is critical to sustaining improvement in its production and use and also to maximise available resources.

Undoubtedly, statistics play a vital role in facilitating and monitoring sustainable economic and social development. From daily decision-making of governments, businesses and individuals to the monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the conduct of opinion polls and surveys of living conditions and the execution of population and housing censuses, statistics provide the information required to facilitate decisions that can lead to business growth, poverty alleviation, and the engendering of a better quality of life for all our citizens.

The CARICOM Secretariat continues its thrust to strengthen statistical capacity in member countries with the support of International Development Partners (IDPs) such as the European Union (EU), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), the Organisation for Economic and Development (OECD) based Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21) and many other regional and international organisations.

Some key regional outputs that have been realised over the last few years with the support of the IDPs include: a Draft Model Statistics Bill; a common questionnaire for the compilation of Statistics on International Trade in Services and trained personnel in

a number of areas including sampling, census data processing and in the preparation of strategic planning for statistical development.

Despite these achievements, however, there are still critical data gaps, problems with the quality and timeliness of the statistics that are produced and with the level of detail and attributes that are required. Statisticians across the Region are encouraged to continue to bridge the gaps in the data and in its timeliness, which will ensure that users of statistics are provided with accurate, reliable and timely statistics for decision-making.

I applaud the Governments of the Region that continue to invest in statistics as a priority. I also express the Community's appreciation to the International Development Partners for their continuing support in this area.

I commend statisticians across this Region for their continued dedication and commitment as we acknowledge the crucial role of Statistics in the development of the lives of all of the citizens of our Community.

