

**MESSAGE FROM THE HON. MINISTER OF FINANCE, GUYANA, MR. WINSTON JORDAN, ON THE OCCASION OF THE EIGHTH OBSERVANCE OF CARIBBEAN STATISTICS DAY, 15<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2016**

The Regional Observance of Caribbean Statistics Day has become firmly entrenched in the statistical calendar of every one of the member states of Caricom and the wider Caribbean. Today, Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October, our Region celebrates the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Observance of Caribbean Statistics Day. Guyana, led by the Bureau of Statistics is, once again, in the forefront of celebrating this occasion with other sister Statistical Offices.

As Minister of Finance, with portfolio responsibility for National Statistics, today's observance is another cherished milestone. It is the second year that I have had the privilege to convey to the nation, the region and the wider world my warmest congratulations on the continued and sustained work of the Regional Statistical Community. The importance of official statistics can never be ignored. In addition to helping decision makers shape informed policies that impact the lives of our people, improved data sources, sound statistical methods, new technologies and strengthened statistical systems enable better decisions that redound to the benefit of all our citizens.

I fully endorse this year's theme, ***“Improving the Lives of People – Advancing the Action Plan for Statistics in CARICOM”***. The collective intent of member Governments of the region to move Statistics to its deserved central role in decision making at all levels of our societies was manifested in the consideration of “The ACTION PLAN FOR STATISTICS IN THE CARIBBEAN” as a substantive Item on the Agenda of Caricom Heads of Government, at their Thirty-Seventh Regular meeting, in Georgetown, over the period 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> July. The full endorsement of the Action Plan by the Caricom Heads of Government is a hallmark achievement for Regional Statistics, equal in importance as the establishment of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS) by the Common Market Council of Ministers, back in 1974, as a major support body for regional decision and policy making within Caricom and the wider Caribbean. I am aware that the SCCS, the highest regional decision-making body for the

implementation of Statistical programmes, will once again convene shortly. Buoyed by the knowledge of regional governmental support at the highest level for the Action Plan in Statistics, there are great expectations about the Meeting's outcome.

I can strongly identify with the main goals of the endorsed Action Plan, among them being “the strengthening of National Statistical Systems (NSSs) specifically National Statistical Offices (NSOs), the upgrading of the Information and Communication Technology Base for the NSSs and NSOs, the Promotion of careers in Statistics, starting from the Primary and Secondary schools, endorsing and promoting a Caribbean Association of Professional Statisticians (CAPS), a Regional Approach to the development of the National Statistical System.”

It will be recalled that immediately upon assumption of Office, in May 2015, the Government approved the provision of adequate and permanent office space for the Bureau of Statistics to execute its operations, for the first time in its almost 60 year history, coupled with major technical support from our multilateral partners.

From my perspective and that of Government, the official support for the development and advancement of Statistics is unwavering. I urge continued cooperation among the partners and stakeholders to ensure that the necessary technical capacity, competence and capability are built; new data sources are explored and innovative processes are applied in the pursuit of a comprehensive information system for sustainable development. I extend warmest felicitations to the Chief Statistician and his staff, the Programme Manager, Statistics, and staff of the Caricom Secretariat, and all sister statistical offices on this 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Observance of Caribbean Statistics Day.

**WINSTON JORDAN**  
**Minister of Finance**  
**15<sup>th</sup> October, 2016**