

**MESSAGE BY THE MINISTER OF FINANCE,**  
**HONOURABLE WINSTON JORDAN,**  
**ON THE TENTH OBSERVANCE OF CARIBBEAN STATISTICS DAY,**  
**MONDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2018.**

On this the 10<sup>th</sup> observance of Caribbean Statistics Day, I take great pleasure in celebrating with the statistical community, the achievements made in advancing statistics across the region through National Statistical Offices and the Bureau of Statistics in Guyana.

As Minister with portfolio responsibility for the Bureau and overall National Statistics, I am aware that this is the fourth occasion on which I have the honour of addressing the nation on Caribbean Statistics Day, which in a very short space of time, has become a permanent fixture in the statistical calendar of the Bureau and all other statistical offices in the Caribbean Region.

“Building Resilience of the Caribbean Community”, the theme of this year’s celebration, is timely given the current and impending challenges facing the region. It is my unwavering position that the ability of our region to grow and prosper continuously, must be supported by several pillars, with strengthened policy coordination and implementation being foremost among them. One of the premier instruments in the construct and maintenance of these pillars has been our national statistical systems led by the National Statistical Offices of each Member country within the Caribbean Region.

At this stage of our development as a community of Caribbean Nations within the context of current global development dynamics it is imperative that we dedicate greater focus to resilience building policies and programmes within and among our nations. We can only do this effectively if there is information and data to guide targeted interventions which support desired development outcomes. Strengthening our statistical and analytical capacities at national, sectoral, regional and even at community levels is at the core of empowering our countries to chart evidence-based paths towards achieving an improved quality of life for all our citizens.

Thus, it is with much pride, that I can attest to this Administration’s commitment to prioritising the institutional capacity strengthening of the National Statistics Office and National Statistical System, as evidenced by

**the launching of Guyana's National Strategy for the Development of Statistics in April 2018. Indeed this policy priority is fully in harmony with the endorsements of the highest regional decision-making forum, the Caricom Heads of Government, of the 'Action Plan for Statistics' in 2016, the preparation of 'A Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics' in 2017, and the 'Strategic Framework for Regional Framework for the Development of Statistics in Caricom at the 39<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of Heads in July 2018, in Jamaica.**

**These incremental and continuous advances in Statistics strengthen my view that Statistics has been and will continue to be important in fostering regional cooperation and integration. As a government, we recognise that statistics plays a critical role in the crafting our own medium term national development strategy along a green development trajectory as well as our Region's commitment to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our regional development needs as well as our localising of the SDGs have generated new demands for data and information to assess our progress in achieving our national goals. In Guyana, we have instituted a Quarterly Labour Force Survey and we are currently preparing to have the 18<sup>th</sup> round of the Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey which will provide data on 11 of the 17 SDGs.**

**It would be remiss of me not to mention the meaningful support that is currently being provided by our development partners to bolster our National Statistical System, which I look forward to being continued, as we work to strengthen national and regional statistical capacity. South-South cooperation through the initiatives of Directors of Statistics in the Region is equally imperative. Just a few days ago, a team from the Bureau of Statistics, was hosted by Trinidad's CSO, who are assisting the Bureau as it prepares for the incorporation of the Oil & Gas sector, as work commences on rebasing our National Accounts.**

**On the 18<sup>th</sup> October, the annual Meetings of the Caricom Advisory Group on Statistics, and the annual Meetings of Directors, the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS) and the Regional Census Coordinating Committee (RCCC) will convene in Montserrat. I wish Directors productive deliberations buoyed by the clear decisions of support given by the Heads of Government and I remind all, that data-driven evidence-based policy decisions are at the heart of resilience building for our countries.**

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**Winston Jordan, Minister of Finance, 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2018.**

