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THIRD INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

Pacific regional seminar on the implementation of the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism: towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Non-Self-Governing Territories: social, economic and environmental challenges

**Saint George's, Grenada
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STATEMENT BY

THE REPRESENTATIVE OF

THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Presentation to C-24 Committee
Role of the United Nations system in providing development assistance
to Non-Self-Governing Territories

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(CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY)

First, let me begin by thanking the members of the committee for the invitation to be here today. I have consulted with my UN colleagues in the Caribbean and the Pacific and will endeavor to provide a brief overview of the main activities of the UN Country Teams in the non-self-governing territories that are the subject of this meeting. This includes activities in Tokelau in the Pacific, and in Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat, and the Turks and Caicos Islands. According to our records, the UN does not have significant development programming in the other ten non-self-governing territories. I am also very pleased that Dale Alexander of ECLAC is here to speak about the support of the UN's regional commissions.

In the Caribbean, UN agencies continue to collaborate with all of the non-self-governing territories, with the exception of the USVI. I would add that not every UN agency works in every territory.

The UN programmes according to its Multicountry Sustainable Development Framework 2017-2021 covering 18 countries and territories— a “Caribbean UNDAF” in other words. It has four main priorities: A Healthy Caribbean, A Sustainable and Resilient Caribbean, A Cohesive, Safe and Just Caribbean, and An Inclusive, Equitable and Prosperous Caribbean. Anguilla, BVI and Montserrat were fully engaged in the development of the MSDF, and Turks and Caicos Island has also come on board. They will benefit from its programming wherever possible. I should also add that our work with Anguilla, BVI and Montserrat is aided by their membership in the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States.

The UN is quite active in the Caribbean non-self-governing territories. Let me give some examples of what the UN agencies are doing:

UNICEF has focused on five main areas in its work with Anguilla, BVI, Montserrat and Turks and Caicos.

One, support towards legislative reforms has entailed an assessment of the compliance of laws in the four OTs vis-à-vis the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Based on the gaps identified, UNICEF supported legislative reform in Montserrat, British Virgin Islands and public education on legislative reform in Anguilla for public education on legislative reform. Through UNICEF support, the UK OTs developed multi-agency child abuse protocols were developed, approved by Cabinet and launched in the VI (UK) and Anguilla, and drafts were produced in TCI and Montserrat. Training on the protocols and their provisions has been convened for frontline personnel in the health, education, and juvenile justice sectors, as well as religious leaders and parents.

Two, child and gender sensitive budget analysis and fiscal space studies were conducted in BVI and Montserrat. This provided an opportunity for multi-sector dialogue on the national budget and priority setting.

Three, capacity development of front-line service providers in Anguilla, BVI, and Montserrat in how to identify, refer and care for child abuse victims, and build resilience of children; and assessments of the Child Protection Systems in Anguilla, BVI, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands.

Four, support towards the education sector reform including development of Education Sectoral Plans in TCI and Anguilla in close collaboration with OECS; dissemination of the Out-of-School Children study in TCI, the adoption and use of the Child Friendly Schools framework in Anguilla and Montserrat with expansion to TCI and BVI in 2017; and development and implementation of Early Childhood Development policy, plans and standards in Anguilla, Montserrat, BVI, and TCI.

Five, evidence generation, focused on child poverty analysis, Migration study focusing on access to basic social services for migrant populations, capacity building for SDG monitoring and ongoing strengthening of Administrative data systems to bridge data gaps.

2017 Hurricane Irma response

Following Hurricane Irma and Maria, UNICEF deployed technical staff to provide in-country support for relief and recovery in Anguilla, BVI and TCI. Assistance focused on four areas:

- support for the reopening of early childhood development (ECD) facilities and schools, and the establishment of temporary learning spaces
- provision of psycho-social support for children and frontline workers (teachers, social workers)
- access to child protection services and necessary information on preventing harm, violence and health-related risks in post-emergencies
- provision of, and access to, safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) supplies

PAHO/WHO has just signed a first PAHO/WHO strategy for technical cooperation with the six UK OTS in the Caribbean which will be in place until 2022. The first priority will be mental health.

I will note some highlights, based around PAHO's three main strategic areas of support across the region. These are:

Promote health and well-being throughout the "life course"

Strengthen health systems governance, organization and management to achieve universal health

Build safe, healthy and resilient environments

In Anguilla, this includes work on the WHO STEPwise approach to Surveillance (STEPS) – a simple, standardized method for collecting, analysing and disseminating data; training in EPI info software, supporting the introduction of the HPV Vaccine, and conducting the Global school-based student health survey (GSHS). In addition,

PAHCO/WHO has supported the development of a Chemical and Radio-nuclear plan, and a lab strengthening exercise conducted with St. Maarten.

In the British Virgin Islands, there has been an assessment of radiation safety in medical practice and draft guidelines developed, support for a universal health care road map, and a draft human resources for health policy, as well as a reassessment of the Port Health system and the development of a Chemical and Radio-nuclear plan.

In Bermuda this includes:

Support with procurement of vaccines, and social mobilization, as well as with cold chain management.

Development of policies and plans such as the Mental Health Policy and Plan, the Development of a Plan for the Prevention of Obesity in Childhood and Adolescents; and technical guidance in the development of the National Nutrition Policy and National Infant and Young Child Feeding policy.

Support for the development of a Health Workforce Strategy.

Support for a joint CARPHA/PAHO table top simulation exercise for public health emergency in 2016, and upcoming work on a Mass Casualty Event, infection prevention, and control.

In Cayman Islands, this includes support with the procurement of vaccines, as well as training for health care workers in surveillance for vaccine preventable diseases

On the policy front in the Cayman Islands, the Draft Mental Health Policy and Plan was supported, and there has been a review of policies, practices, regulations etc. that impact obesity, physical activity and nutrition, as well as technical guidance in supportive framework for infant and young child feeding and BFHI implementation.

In Montserrat, there has been support for the integration of mental health into primary health care, and a review and revision of the Infection Control Manual.

In Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI), PAHO/WHO support includes accessing high quality and affordable anti-retroviral medication and vaccines, and assistance with preparations to introduce HPV vaccine. Technical assistance is being provided to develop a National Tuberculosis manual to strengthen programmatic aspects of handling HIV/TB co-morbidities. Technical support is also being provided on breast feeding practices, and to develop a school food policy.

Throughout the last few years, PAHO/WHO has also worked intensively with the Ministries of Health and other main actors in the area of elimination of mother to child transmission of HIV and congenital syphilis. This work culminated in December 2017 when Anguilla, Montserrat, Cayman and Bermuda being declared by WHO to have eliminated mother to child transmission of these two viruses. We are now working with all the islands to maintain the status and look forward to eliminating other diseases in the near future.

2017 Hurricanes Irma and Maria response

PAHO/WHO supported the Turks and Caicos Islands, the British Virgin Islands and Anguilla with prepositioning staff as the islands faced the onslaught of both hurricanes Maria and Irma. As soon as the PAHO/WHO staff could move safely they started providing support to the islands to do damage assessment and initial repairs to ensure that the health facilities were up and running as quickly as possible. Initial support was also provided to ensure that vector control was maintained and that the vaccination program could continue after problems were identified with the cold chain storage of vaccines. Vaccines and essential medicines were provided to all affected islands and in Anguilla the environmental health unit, which was completely destroyed, was resupplied with equipment and

chemicals as well as vehicles. This ensured that there was no surge in vector borne diseases on the island. In BVI work was also initiated on the home for the elderly which sustained damage to the roof structure. The refurbishment was also an opportunity to ensure that the home is now designed and build in accordance with the SMART health facility standards.

In 2017, **UNFPA** continued technical support for the development of the sexual and reproductive health policy for Anguilla, which will be completed in 2018 in partnership with PAHO/WHO. The capacities of the national statistical offices in Anguilla, Cayman Islands, Montserrat and Turks and Caicos Islands were strengthened on demographic analysis, population projections and processing census data in line with the CARICOM Census Strategy. Ongoing technical support is being provided to the countries in preparation for the 2020 Round of Population and Housing Census in partnership with ECLAC.

2017 Response to Hurricane Irma

Following Hurricane Irma in 2017, UNFPA provided life-saving emergency sexual and reproductive health kits to the Ministry of Health in Turks and Caicos for normal and complicated birth deliveries, clinical management of rape and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Technical support was provided to the Bureau of Gender Affairs for the development of the Referral Pathway for victims of gender-based violence to access essential multi-sectoral services. Dignity kits containing hygiene supplies for women and girls were also procured and distributed to affected populations.

UNFPA has supported the policy direction of ensuring that the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) which consists of a series of crucial actions required and products to respond to reproductive health needs at the onset of every humanitarian crisis, is mainstreamed into national and sub-regional disaster risk management plans. In partnership with the Training Unit of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), the capacities of national first line responders were strengthened to integrate the MISP and gender-based violence prevention and mitigation in national emergency response plans, ensuring that the dignity and human rights of affected populations are maintained.

UNWomen has worked with BVI and Anguilla in capacity building and technical assistance to national gender machineries and gender mainstreaming.

In 2017, UNDP's work in the non-self-governing territories of the Caribbean has focused on the recovery from hurricanes in the British Virgin Islands—where the hurricanes caused severe damage to 36 percent of nearly 7,000 houses, with many remaining buildings requiring roofing repairs. UNDP supported the creation of the Government's Recovery and Development Plan as well as a new specialized Recovery and Development Agency to guide the building back better and development efforts in an effective, timely and transparent manner. A UNDP-backed initiative with national partners also trained and provided temporary employment to 40 people, 67 percent of them women, to clear debris to enable long term recovery. UNDP also supported the Ministry of Health and Social Development, responsible for housing, in developing the Housing Recovery Policy and the Post-Irma Housing

Recovery Plan to guide the recovery of housing in the BVI, helping residents return to safer homes. In April, 2018, UNDP signed an agreement with the government of the British Virgin Islands to provide technical assistance to implement the loan provided by the Caribbean Development Bank to the government.

Turning to the Pacific, the UN's work is focused on Tokelau.

In Tokelau, **UNDP** currently supports the Tokelau Energy Sector Support (TESS) project, which focuses on updating the national energy plan and implementing a demand side energy efficiency project to reduce energy consumption on all three atolls. UNDP also supports Tokelau with a project on governance aimed at improving service delivery at the village levels. The Tokelau Good Governance Initiation Plan (TGG-IP) phase was implemented in 2015-2016 to provide Good Governance training for the Taupulega (Village Authorities) and communities in Tokelau, to formulate a basic social services delivery project. This will be in line with the development and implementation of Tokelau's Quality of Life Plan.

FAO has supported coastal replanting on Tokelau's atolls, strengthened capacity on food security through food gardening and small livestock production, and looked at ways to strengthen the contribution of Tokelau's inshore fisheries to community resilience. This work finished in 2017.

UNISDR has supported Tokelau's engagement in the global consultation processes for post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction and the integrated regional strategy for climate and disaster resilient development in the Pacific, including supporting travel for the Tokelau delegate to participate in global and regional platforms for disaster risk reduction.

WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA have been working together to reduce the effects of non-communicable diseases through a variety of interventions, increase health sector focus on climate change-related risks, develop human health resources for the future to ensure qualified staff, create sustainable policies for the retention and development of health workers to maintain adequate levels of staffing in the health programmes, and assist on linking all health needs based outcomes to the Tokelau National Strategic Plan.

Thank you.

