

**Intervention of His Excellency Mr Alfred MARIE-JEANNE,
President of the Regional Council of Martinique
7th Summit of Heads of State and / or Governments of the ACS
Saturday, June 4, 2016, Havana, Cuba**

**"Uniting within the ACS to tackle problems in the region of
Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Peace"**

Some pondered the crucial question of when the ACS will awaken. Today, an evolving solution has been marked-out.

Mr. President Raul Castro Ruz, congratulations for hosting this key meeting which has a positive international resonance. It is the first achievement of many more to come.

Thanks to the outgoing Secretary General, Mr. Alfonso Múnera Cavadía, for the important work accomplished and the impetus he has injected into the Association.

Welcome to the new Secretary General, June Soomer, my neighbor of Saint Lucia,

Distinguished brothers and sisters of the Caribbean,

Dear Friends.

There are numerous problems to be resolved between. We must have the courage to recognize them with the view of solving them.

It goes to show that unity cannot be decreed, it is built step by step.

Failure to do so would be a step backwards.

That means that cooperation in areas of mutual interests must be the basis for our work.

This unity involves listening, accountability and tireless collective efforts.

Unity, this means sharing principles, values, and having specific goals.

Our unity mainly involves commitment, in order to achieve concrete achievements.

Within the Caribbean, we undoubtedly have examples of commitment which have resulted in real transformations.

To take just one example, I will mention Cuba, which despite a infamous blockade of more than half a century, has always worked to strengthen capacity building in many of our territories in the fields of health, sports, education, research and culture. This is heroism combined with generosity and selflessness.

Despite the well-known international constraints, our unity relies on a mutual understanding of the real issues related to Sustainable Development and Climate Change, which today are linked, especially for small island territories.

Deepening our cooperation and united vision with regard to actions aimed at reducing the Ecological Footprint on our territories must be more than ever at the forefront of our concerns.

In this regard, external assistance is welcome, but it must in any case be an opportunity for re-control our territories in order to have a new stranglehold.

In this regard, external assistance is welcome, but under no circumstance should it be used as an opportunity to assert dominance in a disguised form of enslavement in our territories.

We have to experiment with a new model and find new inspiration that would make us less dependent and less vulnerable to the volatility of external markets and international events.

A model that relies on our history to better consolidate our solidarity.

A model founded on the values that have shaped our way of being in the world.

A model meeting the demands of more complementary economies.

Innovation, research that is as necessary as it is relevant and new technologies should be at the control center to prevent brain drain and to encourage the return of those who left.

A model that favors a permanent dialogue for the return of a genuine peace, banning any outside interference.

In the presence of threats of all kinds and the most unexpected (natural or industrial risks, epidemics and terrorism), what is at stake is our collective ability of anticipation and reaction.

That is why it is essential to reaffirm and to strengthen the initiatives of early warning system, intervention and recovery, and strategic intelligence as well.

Because irrespective of our level of preparedness, risk cannot be excluded.

Peace, like unity, is built step by step, while resisting oppression in all its various forms.

Unity and peace go together. These are the conditions of our assured success.

United in the Association of Caribbean States, we welcome the opportunity proffered to us in order to discuss, imagine and draw the outlines of a common future for Sustainable Development and Peace.

Fomented destabilization, hot war, and cold war are no longer accepted.

The Right of People to self-determination should not be constantly violated.

Force must no longer overpower Rights.

This is the solemn moment to denounce ALL THOSE that conspire against Venezuela.

We have no revenge to take. We have the obligation to affirm our attendance in the World in order to make our presence fruitful.

Thanks Cuba for the quality of its hospitality and organization.

President Raul, thank you for conveying my fond memory to your brother Fidel.

Thanks also to all our collaborators and our translators.
Gracias a todos.

Alfred MARIE-JEANNE

President of the Regional Council of Martinique