

OPENING REMARKS BY THE HONORABLE ALLYSON MAYNARD GIBSON AT CFATF PLENARY MEETING XXXIX, MIAMI, USA

DEPUTY CHAIR AND ATTORNEY GENERAL OF EL SALVADOR, HONOURABLE LUIS MARTINEZ GONZALEZ

HONOURABLE ATTORNEYS GENERAL FROM DOMINICA, GRENADA, GUYANA TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS

SENIOR OFFICIALS FROM ACROSS THE CFATF MEMBERSHIP

COLLEAGUES FROM THE FATF SECRETARIAT, GROUP OF COOPERATING AND SUPPORTING NATIONS AND OBSERVER ORGANISATIONS.

I WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND A VERY WARM WELCOME TO ALL OF YOU WHO, BY YOUR PRESENCE, AND IN SUCH SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS DEMONSTRATE THE ONGOING COMMITMENT OF YOUR GOVERNMENTS TO THE VERY IMPORTANT WORK THAT THE CARIBBEAN FINANCIAL ACTION TASK FORCE (CFATF) IS MANDATED TO DO IN PROTECTING THE REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL SYSTEMS FROM TRANS NATIONAL ORGANISED CRIME AND THOSE WHO ENGAGE IN TERRORISM AND PROLIFERATION FINANCING.

I WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND A SPECIAL WELCOME TO MS. ENID BISSEMBER FROM THE CARICOM SECRETARIAT, ONE OF THE FOUNDER OBSERVER ORGANISATIONS TO THE CFATF.

THE HEADS OF GOVERNMENTS OF CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY STATES WHO ARE ALSO MEMBERS OF THE CFATF HAVE A VERY IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN

- RAISING THE PROFILE OF THE CFATF REGIONALLY,**
- ENCOURAGING ACCEPTANCE OF THE ROLE THAT THE CFATF MUST PLAY WITH REGARD TO COMPLIANCE WITH THE FATF RECOMMENDATIONS AND**
- ENSURING THAT ADEQUATE HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES ARE PROVIDED SO THAT THIS WORK CAN BE UNDERTAKEN EFFECTIVELY.**

IT IS IN THIS REGARD THAT I AM EXTREMELY PLEASED THAT CARICOM SECRETARY GENERAL AMBASSADOR IRWIN LA ROCQUE WITH WHOM I MET ON MY RECENT VISIT TO GUYANA AGREED TO RE-ENGAGE WITH THE CFATF AS DEMONSTRATED BY YOUR PRESENCE.

IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THE CFATF AND CARICOM HAVE A PERMANENT PRESENCE AT THE MEETINGS OF BOTH ORGANISATIONS, THAT WE UNDERSTAND AND PARTICIPATE IN THE IMPORTANT WORK THAT WE BOTH CONDUCT, AND THAT WE COLLABORATE VERY CLOSELY AND SUCCESSFULLY IN PURUING THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE CARIBBEAN BASIN REGION.

AS YOU CAN SEE FROM THE AGENDA FOR THE VARIOUS WORKING GROUPS AND PLENARY MEETINGS, THIS WEEK HAS A SIGNIFICANT FOCUS ON WORKING TOWARDS RECTIFYING ALL OUTSTANDING AML/CFT DEFICIENCIES FROM THE THIRD ROUND THROUGH OUR FOLLOW UP AND ICRG PROCESSES.

THIS WORK IS A KEY FACTOR IN BUILDING CAPACITY AND IN THE ONGOING NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PREPARATIONS FOR THE FOURTH ROUND OF MUTUAL EVALUATIONS.

ANOTHER CRITICAL INGREDIENT IS YOUR UNDIVIDED ATENTION TO AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN ALL THE DISCUSSIONS BECAUSE BY DOING SO YOU WILL STRENGTHEN YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FATF STANDARDS AND BE AN ASSET TO YOUR COUNTRY AND THE REGION.

INDEED BY DEVELOPING AND DEEPENING YOUR AML/CFT EXPERTISE, OPPORTUNITIES COULD SOON ARISE FOR AML/CFT EXPERTS FROM THIS REGION TO PARTICIPATE IN MUTUAL EVALUATION MISSIONS IN OTHER PARTS OF THE GLOBE.

THESE ARE OPPORTUNITIES THAT SHOULD BE READILY GRASPED NOT ONLY FOR STRENGTHENING YOUR RESUME BUT ALSO FOR STRENGTHENING THE REPUTATION OF THE CFATF AS AN EFFECTIVE AND VALUABLE PARTNER IN THE GLOBAL AML/CFT NETWORK.

I CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN THAT THE CFATF MUST DEVELOP A POOL OF REGIONAL EXPERTS BEYOND THOSE IN THE SECRETARIAT, BOTH FROM THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS WHO, ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS, WILL BE ABLE TO PERFORM AS MUTUAL EVALUATION EXAMINERS, LEAD MUTUAL EVALUATION MISSIONS, DELIVER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING TO OUR MEMBERS AND PROVIDE EXPERTISE TO THE SECRETARIAT OVER VARYING PERIODS OF SECONDMENT.

THIS CAPACITY BUILDING EXERCISE MUST BE GIVEN PRIORITY AND DEVELOPED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY.

THE CFATF IS AT A CRITICAL JUNCTURE. THE WORK THAT WE WILL UNDERTAKE AND THE DECISIONS THAT WE MAKE THIS WEEK WILL BE VERY DECISIVE IN CEMENTING THE INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION OF OUR ORGANISATION.

THE PROCESS OF INTROSPECTION, REFLECTION AND REFORM HAS BEEN OF TREMENDOUS BENEFIT TO THE CFATF AT ALL LEVELS AND HAS REINVIGORATED THE ENTIRE CFATF MEMBERSHIP SUCH THAT ASPIRING TO EVEN GREATER ACHIEVEMENTS IS NOW SECOND NATURE.

THE OVERSIGHT AND MONITORING FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STEERING GROUP AND ITS SUB GROUPS THE BUDGET AND AUDIT COMMITTEE (BAC) AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE (HRC) OVER ALL ASPECTS OF CFATF AFFAIRS, HAVE BEEN FIRMLY ESTABLISHED AND WILL CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN THE ORGANISATION.

I WOULD LIKE TO UNDERScore OUR DEEPEST APPRECIATION TO THE SECRETARIAT STAFF FOR THEIR DEDICATION AND HARD WORK OFTEN TIMES IN DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH CONTINUE TO SERVE THE MEMBERSHIP WELL. PLEASE REST ASSURED OF OUR ONGOING SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING.

THE GROUP OF COOPERATING AND SUPPORTING NATIONS, THE FATF SECRETARIAT AND ALL OBSERVER ORGANISATIONS HAVE BEEN LONGSTANDING FRIENDS AND ALLIES, WHO THROUGH CONSIDERABLE INVESTMENT OF HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES OVER THE YEARS CONTINUE TO HELP CFATF MEMBERS IN BUILDING AML/CFT CAPACITY ON A NATIONAL AND REGIONAL BASIS.

WE CERTAINLY VALUE YOUR GENEROUSITY AND PLEDGE TO ONGOING COLLABORATION THROUGHOUT THE FOURTH ROUND OF ASSESSMENTS AND BEYOND.

ON A PERSONAL NOTE WE WELCOME AND CONGRATULATE MRS. EMILY ADELEKE FORMERLY REINHART FROM THE WORLD BANK ON HER RECENT WEDDING. EMILY WE ALL WISH YOU A LONG AND FRUITFUL MARRIAGE.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO EXTEND A WARM WELCOME TO FORMER MEMBER HONDURAS BUT NOW AN OBSERVER.

CESAR CASTELLANOS AND YOUR COLLEAGUES, PLEASE ACCEPT OUR THANKS FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT FOR THE RECENT CFATF NATIONAL RISK ASSESSMENT SEMINAR WICH WAS HELD IN YOUR COUNTRY.

WE DO LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU AND YOUR AUTHORITIES IN THE NEAR FUTURE ON A COMPLIANCE CONFERENCE FOR THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS WHICH WILL BE OPEN TO ALL COUNTRIES IN CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA.

I WOULD LIKE TO CALL UPON OUR MEMBERSHIP TO FOLLOW THE LEAD OF BARBADOS, VIRGIN ISLANDS, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND NOW HONDURAS TO WORK WITH THE SECRETARIAT TO DEVELOP A FIRM SCHEDULE OF COMPLIANCE CONFERENCES TO BE ORGANISED IN THE COMING YEARS.

COLLEAGUES WE HAVE A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF WORK TO DO BOTH AT HOME AND AROUND THE REGION.

THE WORKLOAD IS GETTING MORE ONEROUS AT A TIME WHEN RESOURCES ARE LIMITED.

YET WE CANNOT BE DAUNTED BY THE TASK AT HAND. WE HAVE TO SUMMON UP ALL OUR COURAGE AND BE CREATIVE IN ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF OUR COUNTRIES AND THE REGION.

I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT GIVEN THE COLLECTIVE CAPACITY OF ALL OF US GATHERED HERE IN THIS ROOM THAT WE WILL BE SUCCESFUL IN OUR QUEST.

FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION.

THANK YOU