

**MESSAGE BY H.E. MR. EDWIN W. CARRINGTON,
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CARIBBEAN
COMMUNITY (CARICOM) ON THE OCCASION OF
CARIBBEAN STATISTICS DAY, 15 October 2010 and
WORLD STATISTICS DAY 20 October 2010**

As Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community, it is my pleasure to be involved in the activities marking **Caribbean** Statistics Day. This we will do on **15 October 2010**. That day has been chosen in keeping with the designation of **20 October 2010** as **World** Statistics Day this year, by the United Nations General Assembly in **Resolution 64/267**.

This year marks the second observance of **Caribbean** Statistics Day. It is aimed at not only raising the profile of statistics in our Community, but also at emphasising the importance and the need to encourage decision-makers, researchers and other stakeholders to make use of statistics. It is by so doing that they can contribute to the utility, improvement and strengthening of the statistical services. It is the intention to continue to mark this observance every year.

The observance of **Caribbean** Statistics Day and **World** Statistics Day, provide a very valuable opportunity to recognize the crucial role of statistics in laying the foundation for arriving at decisions based on facts rather than on conjecture. It is critical, therefore, that governments of the Region should continue to play a major role in the strengthening of the capacity of their Central Statistical Offices and the Statistics Departments of other ministries and agencies.

Statistics are at the very heart of everything we do. From issues pertaining to population –its size, the age structure; to the standard of living and the extent of poverty and other social issues; to the size and growth of national income and the status of trade in goods and services, statistics provide information to guide and monitor our development, and are particularly crucial to developing states such as ours in the Caribbean.

The observance of **Caribbean** and **World** Statistics Day seeks to enable a better understanding of this area and also attempts to counter the challenges being faced by national statistical offices in their efforts to collect, compile and disseminate statistics. This observance seeks to project an understanding of the importance of providing information to enable more effective management at every level; of facilitating good governance and ultimately targeting better development outcomes. Further, among other things, the activities surrounding these events seek to reassure respondents to statistical inquiries – be they individual, firms or households of the confidentiality of the information that they provide and of the official purposes for which they would be used.

This year, the theme for the observance of **Caribbean** Statistics Day takes its cue from that for the observance of **World** Statistics Day: *‘Celebrating the Many Achievements of Official Statistics’*, and emphasising the ideals of Service, *Professionalism and Integrity*.

Across the Region, Member States and Associate Members are observing both **Caribbean** and **World** Statistics day with a variety of activities: a testimony to the fact that there is commitment to invest in Statistics as a priority for our development. Some of these activities include: lectures and seminars on areas of importance such as on tourism and national accounts; fora in collaboration with other agencies; exhibitions (including demonstrations of adaptations of DevInfo) and “statistics fairs”; church services; presentations and visits to schools, including quiz, slogan and jingle competitions; radio addresses; public consultations live on major television and radio stations; display of banners in heavy traffic areas; distribution of posters, leaflets and brochures; and other publicity and advocacy events.

As part of our activities to mark **Caribbean** and **World** Statistics Day 2010 here at the Secretariat, the following are some of the events planned:

- Seminars on selected Social Sectors and on issues pertaining to Statistics;
- Demonstration of the Regional Statistics Online Facilities;
- Exhibition of Publication by the Regional Statistics Programme;
- Statistics Slogan and Jingle Competitions;
- Visits by schools’;

- A Quiz Competition for Primary and Secondary School students;
- Production and dissemination of promotional materials.

These activities are all geared at enabling a greater awareness of statistics, leading to increased confidence and use of statistical data by the public.

While Statisticians have a lot to celebrate there is still a long way to go in the Caribbean Region to inspire the public through the production of high quality and specifically targeted statistical products. I am confident that these continuing series of engagements will contribute to an improvement in the current trend of generally weak statistical infrastructure and an increasing recognition of the critical importance of the role of statistical offices in the Community.

Finally, we must thank our Statisticians for their Professionalism, Integrity and Dedication, all leading to statistics having its rightful place in our development as we strive to improve the lives of all of the citizens of the Community.