

TALKING POINTS FOR USE

BY

**H.E UHURU KENYATTA, C.G.H.,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA
AND COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE
DEFENCE FORCES**

**ON
THE OCCASION OF THE COMMISSIONING
CEREMONY OF THE CARICOM DIPLOMATIC
OFFICE**

**TWO RIVERS OFFICE COMPLEX,
NAIROBI**

21st JUNE 2022

**Hon. Dr. Jerome X. Walcott, Minister for
Foreign Affairs, Republic of Barbados,**

**Dr. Carla Barnett, Secretary General,
Caribbean Community,**

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Evening,

1. First, I take this early opportunity to welcome you, Hon. Jerome Walcott, Foreign Affairs Minister of **Barbados**; to **Nairobi, Kenya**.

2. I am most delighted to join you in this auspicious occasion. Nothing gives me greater joy than to participate in occasions where we are fulfilling promises made to our people and our partners. The Commissioning of the **CARICOM Diplomatic Office in Nairobi** is, indeed, one such event.

3. It is a fulfilment of a promise I made during my visit to Barbados in 2019, to secure a home for the **Caribbean Community in Kenya.** This is a promise of historic significance in that it will forge closer people-to-people ties between **Africa and CARICOM.**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. Africa has been separated from the Caribbean region, not just by the Atlantic Ocean, but by centuries of few interactions despite our shared common descent and history.

5. But I am proud to state, **Kenya and Barbados have been at the forefront** in fostering linkages between Africa and the Caribbean countries. **At the initiative of Kenya, the 33rd Ordinary Session of the Assembly** of the AU Heads of State and Government held in Addis Ababa, in February 2020 adopted a Declaration on ***"Promoting Closer Collaboration and Cooperation between the African Union, the African Diaspora and People of African Descent in the Caribbean and Pacific Regions."***

6. As a follow-up to the AU Declaration, Kenya hosted the First Africa-CARICOM Summit virtually on 7th September 2021. We agreed to hold the annual Africa-CARICOM Summit on September 7th every year. Indeed, we are pleased to note that Barbados has offered to host the next Summit in September this year.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

7. The commissioning of the CARICOM Diplomatic Office here in Nairobi demonstrates what can be achieved when people come together with a shared vision and common purpose. **This** Diplomatic Office will be a **launch pad** into the rest of Africa as Caribbean governments set out to deepen relations with their African counterparts.

8. Further, CARICOM representation in Nairobi will provide a platform for African States and Multilateral Organisations hosted here in Nairobi, to interact with the Caribbean Community with ease.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. As you are aware, Nairobi hosts the global headquarters of the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** and the **United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)**. The establishment of the CARICOM Office in Nairobi gives **proximity** to these leading environment agencies, which should make it easier to pursue one of the **top priority issues** for CARICOM member states, notably **environment and climate change.**

10. Hon. Minister, I want to thank the CARICOM member states through you, for **choosing Kenya** as the **host for your diplomatic mission** and **the CARICOM Offices.** I am confident our continued engagement will strengthen **South-South cooperation,** promote the interests of the global South and advance Pan-Africanism.

11. As I conclude, I wish to reiterate Kenya's commitment to open a consulate in Barbados fairly soon.

12. With those few remarks, it is now my distinguished pleasure to **declare** the **CARICOM office** in Nairobi, officially commissioned.

Thank You!