

Test for Ubuntu Dialogues Page

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Brussels, 19 June 2020/OACPS: The Co-Presidents of the OACPS-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, Mr Carlos Zorrinho and Mr Faumina Liuga, express their concern over the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has to the socio-economic situation of the Members of the Organisation of African Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS).

They note that despite the fact that Members of the OACPS have valuable experience in containing outbreaks, and that most countries have already taken decisive action to mitigate the spread of the virus, the emergency health response capacity of some Members of the OACPS must be enhanced by providing immediate support to their public health systems.

They acknowledge that the restrictive measures taken to limit and curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic have led to a cessation of economic activities and a domino effect that has had a direct or indirect impact on populations, businesses, and public services. In this regard, they call for the mobilization of financial resources to revive economic growth, job opportunities and sustainable development. They urge an immediate moratorium on all bilateral and multilateral debt payments, both public and private, until the pandemic has passed.

The Co-Presidents welcome the G20's decision to suspend debt payments and call for a deployment of a large-scale economic stimulus package to the Members of the OACPS in order to give them the fiscal space needed to devote more public health resources to fighting the virus, while mitigating its economic and social consequences.

In particular they urge the African Development Bank (ADB), the Asia-Pacific Development Bank (APD), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the New Development Bank (NDB), the World Bank (WB) and other regional institutions to use all available instruments and to revisit their loan access policies and quota limitations so that low income countries can fully benefit from their support. In order to provide additional liquidity for the procurement of basic commodities and essential medical supplies, they call on the IMF to decide immediately on the allocation of special drawing rights. They also ask that all of OACPS's development partners ring-fence their development aid budgets.

They also strongly support the UN Secretary-General's call of the 23 March for a global truce in the world's conflict zones in order to protect vulnerable civilians from the fallout of the coronavirus pandemic.

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