

# STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE OACPS ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

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*Brussels, 21 September 2020/OACPS:* September 21<sup>st</sup> is a very important date for humanity, because it has been designated the International Day of Peace. At the end of the Second World War, after having experienced humanity's worst atrocities, we collectively banished war by creating the League of Nations, which later became the United Nations (UN). All of our actions must be aligned with this approach.

On behalf of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), H.E. Mr. Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti, Secretary-General, reiterates that the celebration of this day is an opportunity to reassert that peace is critical for prosperity and sustainable development. There can be neither inclusive growth nor sustainable development without peace and security. As such, he reaffirms the OACPS' commitment to the principles and objectives of peace and security for all nations, in keeping with commitments made at both the international and regional levels.

Nonetheless, the Secretary-General stresses that the path to peace is fraught with pitfalls. We must therefore redouble our efforts to achieve it. There are many global challenges barring the way to peace. In fact, the different manifestations of poverty are a breeding ground for instability in our regions, compromising all our efforts towards sustainably establishing peace and security. Among the challenges faced are terrorism, transnational crime, the effects of climate change, and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Secretary-General welcomes the choice of this year's theme, "Shaping Peace Together." Indeed, given the complexities of the challenges related to peace, the search for solutions requires actions involving all nations. It is therefore critical that multilateralism be strengthened in this area, through new forms of solidarity and alliances in global fora.

In this regard, the Secretary-General pays tribute to the OACPS Members who contribute to the global peace process, by sending troops into the field. He specifically commends the efforts made by Ethiopia, Ghana, Rwanda and Tanzania, which are among the top ten countries contributing to UN peacekeeping missions. This attests to their dedication and unwavering commitment to peace and stability, not only in our regions, but also around the world.

He is also pleased with the positive political developments in OACPS Member Countries, which have brought about historic peace processes. He urges Members to continue developing a culture of peace, by promoting dialogue and reconciliation mechanisms.

The Secretary-General reiterates his support for OACPS Members, who have spared no effort to improve governance in their countries, so as to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for present and future generations, in keeping with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16.

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