



**Opening Remarks for Minister McClean, Chair of the Side Event,
Childhood Obesity - a Development Time-bomb: Learning from SIDS to
accelerate multi-sectoral action in support of the 2025 NCD Targets and
the SDGs**

22 September, 2017

Trusteeship Council Chamber

1:15 -2:30p.m.

Good afternoon:

First Lady of Trinidad and Tobago, Her Excellency Reema Carmona,

Colleague Ministers,

Director-General of the World Health Organization, Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus

Deputy Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization, Ms Maria

Helena Semedo,

Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives,

Delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen.

Welcome to 'Childhood Obesity – a Development Time-bomb: Learning from SIDS to Accelerate Multi-sectoral Action in Support of the 2025 NCDs Targets and the SDGs.'

I am The Honourable Maxine McClean, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Barbados, and Chair of today's meeting. I wish to share with you, briefly, its main objectives:

1. **Taking stock:** to understand the initiatives in CARICOM countries and SIDS, to reduce childhood obesity.
2. **Multi-sectoral scalability:** To discuss the key roles and competencies of different sectors to achieve positive outcomes and share experiences, and to discuss the wider applicability of multi-stakeholder action to reduce childhood obesity in SIDS.
3. **Cooperation and collaboration:** to consider and share avenues for supporting SIDS in their actions to reduce childhood obesity, and the burden of NCDs, in their highly at-risk countries.

4. **Call for action:** to consider strategies to galvanise political will and accelerate political action in the lead-up to the 2018 High-level meeting on NCDs, and in support of reducing childhood obesity, through the achievement of the 2025 NCDs targets and the SDGs.

We have a very distinguished set of experts and policymakers, who will help us to address these issues, through opening statements, a panel discussion, and an interactive segment.

I will deliver opening remarks, on behalf of the distinguished Prime Minister of Barbados, the Right Honourable Freundel Stuart, who could not be here today. The **Honourable Minister of Health of Canada**, Ginette Petitpas Taylor, will then deliver a statement, after which the **Director-General of the World Health Organization, Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus**, and the **First Lady of Trinidad and Tobago, Her Excellency Reema Carmona**, will proceed to do the same.

Minister, Director-General, First Lady, thank you kindly for your participation.

Canada is not only a champion of the NCDs agenda, but it is also a friend of Barbados, and the wider Caribbean Community. Through the International Development Research Centre, IDRC, Canada has funded, over the past 2-3 years, an extensive evaluation of the Port-of-Spain Declaration: Uniting to Stop the

Epidemic of NCDs, and Minister, it is hoped that this type of collaboration will continue.

Barbados and CARICOM also look forward to continued collaboration with the WHO, on whose expertise we continue to rely, when seeking to craft and execute our NCDs agendas. In this regard, we welcome the launch of the WHO NCDs Progress Monitor to help us chart our responses to NCDs. Such tools will be especially critical in the lead-up to the Third UN Conference on NCDs, in 2018.

First Lady, we also look forward to your continued advocacy to prevent and control NCDs in your country, in your region and beyond. We are aware of your recent call this year for the regionalization of the UN Secretary-General's Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescent's Health, 2016-2030.'

I also wish to acknowledge those who will participate in the panel discussion:

- **The Honourable Elvin Nimrod, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Grenada**, a CARICOM colleague, who is representing the Prime Minister of Grenada, the Right Honourable Keith Mitchell, in his capacity as Chair of the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM.
- Another CARICOM colleague, **Senator, the Honourable Kamina Johnson Smith, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica**, is

also with us, to share the national experiences of Jamaica in its NCDs response.

- Offering a view of Pacific SIDS is **Dr Colin Tukuitonga, Director-General of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community**. CARICOM and Pacific SIDS share many similarities, they must also share lessons learnt in their responses to NCDs.
- We also have a civil society perspective to be shared by **Sir Trevor Hassell, President of the Healthy Caribbean Coalition**, and a distinguished son of Barbados. Today's event is symbolic of the good work that can be done through cooperation with civil society.
- Another distinguished son of Barbados, **Sir George Alleyne, Director Emeritus of the Pan-American Health Organization/World Health Organization, and Patron of the Healthy Caribbean Coalition** will moderate the panel discussion and interactive session. Sir George has received numerous awards in recognition of his work, and we are happy to benefit from his involvement here today.

Thank you to everyone for your presence and contribution here today.

I encourage all participants to please adhere to the time allocated for statements and questions. We have a hectic schedule before us and we would wish to benefit from the full contribution of all participants.

As such, I will now proceed to deliver a statement on behalf of the distinguished Prime Minister of Barbados, the Right Honourable Freundel Stuart.