

CDEMA

The Caribbean Disaster
Emergency Management Agency



OFFICE OF DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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CDM 7: Caribbean Disaster Management Conference returns to Jamaica

The 7th annual Caribbean conference on comprehensive disaster management commenced its week-long activities on Monday, December 3 in Jamaica at the Hilton Rose Hall Resort & Spa, Montego Bay. As the region's largest gathering of professionals relating to disaster risk management, it seeks to improve awareness and foster information exchange on good practices and forge stronger alliances amongst professional networks. As such the conference, aptly named CDM7, will convene under the theme '*CDM: Building Disaster Resilience-A Shared Responsibility*'.

Professional development sessions started on day one, making way for the official opening ceremony that took place on day two. Various high level officials were in attendance and speakers which included the Honourable Dr. Morais Guy, Minister of Transport, Works and Housing, Keynote Speaker Representing the Prime Minister; the Honorable Noel Arscott, Minister of Local Government and Community Development and Chairman for the CDEMA Council of Ministers; Ambassador Lolita Applewaihe, Deputy Secretary- General, CARICOM and Mr. Jeremy Collymore, Executive Director, CDEMA. The ceremony was chaired by Mr. Ronald Jackson, Director General of the ODPEM and Ms. Andria Grosvenor, Alliance and Corporate Services Manager, CDEMA.

Minister Guy commended the CDEMA and its partners for the work being undertaken "in putting Small Island Developing States in a state of preparedness for the disasters that threaten our very existence". He further implored the delegates to explore how they can bridge the gaps that have repeatedly emerged between emergency, early recovery and sustainable development efforts. The Minister observed that the conference provided opportunities for advancing the foundational tenet of shared responsibility in a manner which embraces the individual, community, national and regional vested interest and collective power.

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Minister Arcsott highlighted the importance of the conference's theme, stating that "the focus has to be on partnership building, collective ownership, joined-up efforts and resource pooling towards resilience building".

Mr. Collymore in his remarks highlighted the critical role of the conference and noted that "this CDM conference is an embryonic step in framing attention towards the need and urgency of a revisit of our development discourse in the light of the impending challenges associated with global warming, rapid urbanization and increasing exposure linked into our growth on development". He further continued to state that the issue of disaster risk reduction can no longer be a matter of awareness for our political and other decision makers and must become part of the development discourse in the region.

Subsequent to the opening ceremony, the conference's exhibition was officially debuted by way of a ribbon cutting with the Honourable Morais Guy and Mr. Jeremy Collymore.

The conference marks the tenth year of the implementation of the CDM strategy and framework. Mr. Ronald Jackson noted that the event will "facilitate the examination and review of experiences that would inform the development of a new framework and strategy". 400 delegates from 50 countries in all regions of the world are in attendance.

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