



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

## ***MEDIA RELEASE***

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**For Immediate Release**

### **Promoting Global Africa for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Development**

**The UWI, Regional Headquarters, Jamaica. Friday, April 5, 2024—** The need for Caribbean and African nations to build irreversible solidarity to counter hegemonic powers and develop a relationship framework focused on climate change, information technology, and innovation was unanimous in the discourse at the March 20 symposium led by the PJ Patterson Institute for Africa-Caribbean Public Advocacy at The University of the West Indies (The UWI). The hybrid event, which attracted a broad range of stakeholders with an interest in the dialogue to deepen and accelerate functional cooperation between African and Caribbean countries was held at The UWI's Regional Headquarters in Jamaica.

The Honourable Mia Amor Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados, gave virtual remarks to open the Symposium. She emphasized the necessity for African-Caribbean cooperation, stating that pursuing reparative justice requires us to stand together as partners and allies, amplifying our voices for the common interest in the global system. Prime Minister Mottley added that African and Caribbean collaboration goes beyond the obvious benefits of trade and commercial relations. While those are undoubtedly vital, our cooperation is a moral obligation rooted in our shared commitment to justice, equality, and human dignity.

During his remarks at the event, Vice-Chancellor of The UWI, Professor Sir Hilary Beckles highlighted the historical separation of the African and Caribbean diaspora due to colonization, which was aimed at preventing any possibility of future restructuring. However, the Pan-Africanist movement and Haiti's declaration of independence have made efforts to fight against this separation. He pointed out that The UWI plays a crucial role in facilitating the decolonization of African history, advocating for global Africa and Caribbean diplomacy, promoting solidarity among Caribbean nations and African countries, and pursuing reparations.

The Most Honourable PJ Patterson, Statesman-In-Residence at PJ Patterson Institute for Africa-Caribbean Advocacy, emphasized the importance of Africa and the Caribbean forming their own coalition in response to the actions of hegemonic powers in the Western world. To effectively denounce these pernicious measures, the 54 nations of Africa and the 14 Caribbean countries must act as a united block at a global level. They should work in collaboration with the nations of Latin America and the developing countries of Asia, while simultaneously building an unbreakable chain of unity and solidarity that connects them with the African diaspora around the globe. Within that context, the Statesman-In-Residence noted the important role of the Institute in advocating and initiating collaboration with the Caribbean, Africa and the diaspora to achieve similar goals.

Specifically addressing the challenges the two regions face, featured speaker H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, Chairman of the Brenthurst Foundation and former President of the Federal Republic of

Nigeria, emphasized the vulnerability of both regions to climate change impacts. He highlighted the need for South-South cooperation to facilitate the transition to a more sustainable system. He proposed the creation of the African Caribbean Foundation, The UWI's PJ Patterson Institute, and acknowledged the potential for Africa and the Caribbean to learn from each other. Obasanjo suggested that Africa can learn from the Caribbean's use of technology for economic growth and sustainability and also emphasized the importance of cooperation between the two regions in addressing climate change. Similarly, he said that the Caribbean has much to learn from Africa's use of technology to advance micropayment schemes and support activities in the health sector as well as in the development of technology hubs and how it is embracing Climate-Smart agriculture.

The Symposium's programme was organised collaboratively with the UWI's Office of the Vice-Chancellor and Office of Global Affairs. It was chaired by Professor Anthony Bogues, Director of the Center of the Study of Slavery and Justice, Brown University, and included panel discussions on Climate Change Mitigation Strategies: Opportunities for Africa and the Caribbean and Information Technology and Innovation with presentations from Dr Carla Barnett, Secretary-General, CARICOM, Dr Didacus Jules, Director General, OECS among others.

**END.**

#### **Note to the Editor**

Related News: [The UWI's PJ Patterson Institute for Africa-Caribbean Public Advocacy hosts Africa Caribbean Symposium on March 20](#)

#### **About The University of the West Indies**

The UWI has been and continues to be a pivotal force in every aspect of Caribbean development, residing at the center of all efforts to improve the well-being of people across the region for over 75 years.

From a university college of London in Jamaica with 33 medical students in 1948, The UWI is today an internationally respected, global university with nearly 50,000 students and five campuses: [Mona in Jamaica](#), [St. Augustine in Trinidad and Tobago](#), [Cave Hill in Barbados](#), [Five Islands in Antigua and Barbuda](#) and its [Global Campus](#), and global centres in partnership with universities in North America, Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Europe.

The UWI offers over [1000 certificate, diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate degree options](#) in **Culture, Creative and Performing Arts, Food and Agriculture, Engineering, Humanities and Education, Law, Medical Sciences, Science and Technology, Social Sciences, and Sport**. As the Caribbean's leading university, it possesses the largest pool of Caribbean intellect and expertise committed to confronting the critical issues of our region and the wider world.

The UWI has been consistently ranked among the best in the world by the most reputable ranking agency, [Times Higher Education \(THE\)](#). Since The UWI's 2018 debut in THE's rankings, it has performed well in multiple schemes—among them including World University Rankings, Golden Age University Rankings (between 50 and 80 years old), Latin America Rankings, and the Impact Rankings for its response to the world's biggest concerns, outlined in the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Good Health and Well-being; Gender Equality and Climate Action.

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