

## TOCO DECLARATION

We, the participants attending the UNESCO-sponsored 2<sup>nd</sup> Consultation Conference of the Caribbean Community Multimedia Centres for the sustainable development of remote, rural and marginalized communities of the Caribbean, held in Port-of Spain and Toco, Trinidad and Tobago, from 10 to 12 March 2010, hereby agree to the following amendments to the Paramaribo Declaration of October 2005:

**Conscious** of the impact, role and power of ICTs to contribute to sustainable development, recognizing the importance of ICTs particularly for remote, rural and marginalized communities,

**Cognizant** of the initiatives being undertaken to promote multimedia resources as tools for social development,

**Recognizing** the principles reflected in the *Geneva Declaration* of the World Summit on the Information Society, to build a people-centred, inclusive, and development-oriented Information Society where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting their sustainable development and improving their quality of life, premised on the purposes and principles of the *Charter of the United Nations* and respecting fully and upholding the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*,

**Mindful** of the diverse cultural heritage, social and geographical boundaries which identify us,

**Recognizing** the isolated and rural nature of many communities in the region,

**Recognizing** the indigenous peoples of the region,

**Recognizing** the need to actively protect and promote cultural heritage,

**Recognizing** the need to safeguard gender equity, and protect the rights of youth and children,

**Appreciative** of the on-going contribution of UNESCO and its Cluster Office for the Caribbean, in promoting ICT education and training in this region, and responsive to concerns expressed by Community Multimedia Centres (CMCs), and regional and community-based practitioners of ICT to function as a cohesive unit,

***Hereby do declare:***

In re-affirming and fulfilling the commitment expressed in the Paramaribo Declaration (2005), to work in partnership with each other and with UNESCO, to develop a Caribbean-based network of CMCs for the purpose of supporting and strengthening ICTs, community radio and television stations services and technology-based community access points, we agree to establish the Association of Caribbean Community Multimedia Centres so as to:

- Promote networking, advocacy, communication and the exchange of information between Caribbean CMCs, government and private-sector organizations,
- Develop local content that is of significance to the Caribbean and particularly responsive and appropriate to bridging the gaps of marginalization of indigenous peoples, particularly as it relates to organized training opportunities in all radio and ICT delivery areas and the creation of a comprehensive community of practice,
- Work with CMCs to encourage other interest groups to join in these endeavours;
- Advocate for national policies that will enable our governments to support the growth and development of CMCs and to address relevant issues concerning access to connectivity and energy supplies, including the use of alternative energy sources that will make possible the creation of more community radio stations and media centres at locations without access to commercial electrical power.

Furthermore, we acknowledge UNESCO's continued interest in creating alternative means of access to information and knowledge-sharing activities as a key element in the promotion of sustainable development, particularly as it relates to the institutional strengthening of Caribbean CMCs.

We call attention to our identified priorities and support these within a reasonable timeframe in order for the ongoing initiatives not to be lost, but to be strengthened over time.

We encourage entrepreneurship in order to promote long-term sustainability.

We strongly encourage other UN agencies, government, the private sector and interested parties, to identify with this declaration for achieving sustainable development and plural societies.

Hereby adopted and signed by participants attending the 2<sup>nd</sup> Consultation Conference of the Caribbean Community Multimedia Centres in Toco, Trinidad and Tobago, March 12, 2010.