



AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY



Remarks

Dr. William Warren Smith, CD
President
Caribbean Development Bank

Appreciation Ceremony in Honour of
Dr. Kenrick Leslie, First Executive Director of
CCCCC

November 25, 2020
Virtual Event

Most of us remember when the Centre was simply an idea, a concept, and a vision of what our Region could do to ring the alarm of the threat of climate change for our Region and the urgent need to take action.

It was your tireless efforts, Dr. Leslie, that led to the establishment of this Centre. Today it is a credible regional institution in the forefront of the climate change dialogue, with significant visibility and respect in the international space. Through your indefatigable leadership and energy, the Centre has delivered tangible support to CARICOM countries for a wide range of national and regional projects and programmes.

At the very start of my presidency at the Caribbean Development Bank, you and I discussed how best our two institutions could collaborate. Over the years, our relationship has flourished. It was your remarkable skills and talent and innovative ideas that have inspired the strategic direction of the CCCCC. And it was your drive that cemented confidence in this institution, and galvanised the financial and technical support needed for its rapid growth and development.

CDB is very proud that we were able to walk alongside you and the CCCCC on this journey and to be there when the milestones were reached along the way. We are especially pleased about our role in financing The Climate Change Information Clearing House, perhaps the first of its kind in the world, and more recently in the launch of the LiDAR Programme.

This has been a mutually beneficial relationship, with the Centre helping to broaden CDB's affiliations with development partners, and networks in support of our own climate change work programme.

Dr. Leslie you always gave unselfishly. Often, and even at short notice, you willingly agreed to serve on our panel discussions and participate in countless meetings "for the cause." And with your small powerhouse team, you became a sounding board as we tested our own ideas for helping the Region grapple with climate change.

Thank you sincerely for your hard work, dedication, and commitment. It was your tenacity that caused a vision to become reality and that led to the emergence of the Centre as a formidable force in our Region's responses to the challenges of climate change.

You leave 5Cs on a strong footing. Thank you for building an extraordinary team, mentoring and moulding young and committed talents inside the organization. As you pass the baton, I feel confident that they can rise to the occasion and will continue to make you proud.

On behalf of the Caribbean Development Bank, thank you for your dedication and what you have accomplished in less than two decades. Let me also thank your wife Marlene for her extraordinary support that she provided throughout this journey.

We wish you Dr. Leslie, the very best!