



COP 30 High-Level Segment: 2025 annual high-level ministerial round table on pre-2030 ambition

Delivered by Mr. Daniel M. Best, President, Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)

Distinguished delegates, colleagues, and leaders,

The Caribbean stands at the frontline of the climate crisis; the increasing intensity of storms tests our resilience and redefines our future. We have experienced five category five hurricanes in the past eight years. This is our reality.

In the Caribbean, the scale of these disasters is catastrophic: single events have caused losses exceeding entire national GDPs, with widespread damage to infrastructure, livelihoods and ecosystems. Year after year, our islands endure climate-related shocks that erase decades of development.

In the wake of these disasters, we cannot forget the people. We cannot leave behind the mothers comforting hungry children under leaking roofs, wondering when their children will return to school as they struggle to rebuild shattered homes and lives. Most devastating of all, we are losing our loved ones, our families and friends, to these extreme climatic events. The long-term psychological impacts remain untold.

We need ambition matched by action! We support the Roadmap to Belem's call for \$1.3 trillion annually, and we echo the voices of Small Island Developing States demanding justice; not just survival, but the opportunity to thrive. Caribbean nations need outcomes that prioritize equity and justice, including mechanisms to address loss and damage, predictable and accessible financing, and meaningful partnerships and support to build resilience at the community level.

We call on donor countries to significantly increase their contributions to the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage to ensure it adequately addresses the severe losses and damage incurred by vulnerable countries annually.

Our small states may be the most vulnerable, but we are also the boldest. We will continue to turn promises into progress, pledges into impact, and vulnerability into leadership. Together, let us secure a legacy where resilience is not an aspiration, but a defining reality for all.

Thank you.