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## STATEMENT

Monica La Bennett  
Vice-President (Operations)  
Caribbean Development Bank

International Women's Day 2020

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International Women's Day is set aside each year to celebrate the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. This day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity.

For International Women's Day 2020, the United Nations' theme, "I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights" is mirrored in the hashtag #EachforEqual, This should serve as a constant reminder that every single one of us must play our part in creating a gender equal world.

On this International Women's Day, the global community takes stock of progress made for women's rights. This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China. The Beijing Platform for Action is recognised as the most progressive roadmap for the empowerment of women and girls everywhere.

Despite some encouraging progress, there is global consensus that real transformation has been slow for the majority of women and girls. Right here in the Caribbean, structural obstacles remain entrenched in laws and in our culture. Women and girls continue to be undervalued. They work longer hours and earn less than their male counterparts. They have fewer choices and experience multiple forms of violence at home and in public spaces. While access to jobs in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics were widely inaccessible in the past, we are now seeing encouraging signs of women making inroads into the non-traditional careers to women.

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) has finalised its new Gender Equality and Operational Strategy. The highly participatory strategic planning process involved staff, development partners, gender bureaux, and other public sector officials. The overarching objectives have been defined as achieving gender equality in the Bank's Borrowing Member Countries and inside the Bank. The strategic pillars revolve around equitable access to infrastructure services, economic empowerment, education and training; building resilience; and eliminating gender-based violence for all. Internally, we are reaffirming our commitment to work/life balance, equality of treatment, and safety and security for all.

Therefore, even as we celebrate and honour our women, today, we at the CDB remain mindful that we must continue our advocacy for equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for women, men, boys, and girls, including equal power to shape our own lives and contribute to society.