



**REPLIES TO THE ADDRESS OF WELCOME
ON BEHALF OF THE NON-BORROWING REGIONAL MEMBERS**

**TEMPORARY ALTERNATE GOVERNOR FOR THE
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA
AMBASSADOR RAUL LICAUSI**

Good morning,

Honorable Prime Ministers, Chair of the Board, Governors, President, representatives of the Member States and of the Caribbean Development Bank:

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the Non-Borrowing Regional Members of this institution—a group that includes Venezuela, Mexico, Colombia and Brazil—and, in particular, to bring greetings from the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and our President Nicolás Maduro Moros.

We thank the Government of Brazil and the Chair of the Board of Governors, Viviane Mendes Muller, for their warm hospitality, and we welcome Mr. Daniel Best to his first Annual Meeting as President of the Bank. Venezuela, and the group I represent today, express our full support for his leadership.

This meeting takes place amid deep global transformations that directly affect the Caribbean's development agenda—and therefore, the mission of this Bank.

Rapid technological change—including artificial intelligence—is redefining economic and social models, while deepening digital divides. Simultaneously, the worsening climate crisis continues to threaten the Caribbean, a region that contributes less than 1% of global emissions yet bears a disproportionate share of the damage.

The devastation caused by Hurricane Beryl—in Petite Martinique, Carriacou, and Cumanacoa in Venezuela—reminds us of the urgent need for climate finance and resilient

infrastructure. These challenges are worsened by growing vulnerabilities in food and energy security. For our peoples, access to electricity and food is not a privilege—it is a right. Development financing must help safeguard these essential needs.

That is why institutions like the Caribbean Development Bank must take on an even greater role, not only in lending, but in enabling resilience, regional integration and sustainable solutions. We welcome the planning process for the Strategic Plan 2026–2035 and its pillars: Innovate, Transform, Thrive, as well as its ten priority action areas, in particular: climate action, agriculture, education, health, and disaster preparedness.

However, progress requires more than plans—it demands political will and cooperation. From Venezuela, we reaffirm our condemnation of unilateral coercive measures, which restrict trade, hinder access to financing and technologies, and undermine the very objectives this Bank is designed to achieve.

As a Non-Borrowing Regional Member, and from our own national efforts, we reiterate Venezuela's commitment to support the Caribbean. We offer cooperation in agriculture, fisheries, and transportation.

Furthermore, in my capacity as President of the Executive Board of the ALBA Bank—a development institution comprised of ten member countries, seven of which also belong to this Bank—I wish to reaffirm our willingness to coordinate and complement efforts with the CDB.

We believe that synergies between our regional financial institutions can enhance impact, streamline resource mobilisation, and support integrated development strategies. From infrastructure and disaster preparedness to the financing of capital goods, food security, and energy resilience, we stand ready to collaborate on projects that strengthen regional integration and promote the unity of our peoples through sovereign and inclusive development.

We value this institution and reaffirm our commitment to the development and unity of the Caribbean. We look forward to fruitful exchanges during this Annual Meeting.

Thank you