

**STATEMENT BY
THE TEMPORARY ALTERNATE GOVERNOR FOR
UNITED KINGDOM
MR. CHRIS HINDLEY**

President Warren Smith, the Caribbean Development Bank's (CDB) Governors and CDB's Management and Staff, the United Kingdom (UK) wishes to thank the Government and people of Trinidad and Tobago, for graciously and effectively hosting CDB's Annual Meeting 2019 in close collaboration with CDB's Management and Staff.

We would like to recognise the achievements of the Bank over the past year. We were pleased to see CDB improve its disbursements, with a 20% increase over the previous year. The high rate of disbursements is an important demonstration that CDB is delivering projects for its clients and we look forward to further improvements as the Bank's investments in technology come online.

CDB has also delivered strong results over the last year, especially in economic infrastructure, where over 100,000 people have benefited from work on transport in Guyana, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. This will enable people and goods to travel more efficiently, boosting growth.

It was also an important year for CDB, expanding its country presence with the opening of the Bank's first country office in Haiti. This will help CDB develop, deliver and monitor projects in one of the priority countries for concessional assistance.

The past year has seen significant progress on the UK Caribbean Infrastructure Fund (UKCIF), with the full £300 million (mn) of the original grant now committed and projects identified for the additional £30 mn in reconstruction funding approved in November 2017, following Hurricanes Irma and Maria. In total, twelve Technical Assistance Grants and five Capital Grants have now been approved and are at various stages of implementation. We look forward to continuing working with CDB to ensure that UKCIF countries maximise the benefits from this UK grant funding.

Turning our attention to the future, the development of a new institutional Strategy presents an excellent opportunity to think about the challenges facing both CDB and the Region, and how CDB can position itself to support the growth and resilience of its members. CDB's Board has an important role to play in this and other questions of strategic importance to CDB and we welcome the opportunity to discuss the Bank's Strategy at these meetings.

Last year's Annual Meeting highlighted the importance of climate change for the Region and the world and the leading role that CDB can play in addressing it. Since then, new evidence has only strengthened this case, so we believe the Bank's new Strategy should have a greater focus on climate change mitigation and resilience. The Bank has a vital role in assisting its members to promote sustainable and resilient development. All CDB projects must be developed with a resilience lens.

The Bank must also consider how it can grow its portfolio whilst ensuring debt levels remain sustainable. Increased engagement with the private sector will be a part of the answer. Businesses drive growth, provide jobs and pay taxes which governments can use to further their countries' development. The Bank can help to improve the business environment within the Region. It can also engage more directly by investing in funds targeting job creating sectors in the Region. In doing so, CDB will be able to mobilise further capital, promote job creation and achieve a return on its investment. As the Bank increases its private sector operations, it should build its own skills and capabilities to ensure effective delivery.

CDB plays a significant role in the economic, social and resilient development of its members. It has demonstrated good progress in key areas such as disbursement rates, delivery of economic infrastructure, and an expanded country presence. The Bank's new Strategy will provide a strong basis to reinforce and expand on this. We look forward to working with the Bank's management and the Board to develop the new Strategy during the remainder of this year and to an even greater contribution by the Bank to the Region's development in coming years.