

Opening Remarks by the Secretary General of the ACS, H.E. Noemí Espinoza Madrid, at the 10th Meeting of the Drafting Committee for the 10th Summit of Heads of State and/or Government of the ACS



Distinguished Presidency, honorable delegates,

It is a privilege to welcome you to this tenth Meeting of the Drafting Committee, a fundamental space for the consolidation of the Declaration that will guide the course of our Association in the coming years.

I want to start by expressing my deepest gratitude to this Committee for the commitment and dedication with which it has undertaken this task. Your effort is key to achieving a document that not only reflects our shared aspirations but also strengthens the work of the Association of Caribbean States to position our great region as a leading actor.

The Declaration we are refining will undoubtedly be one of the most important results of our historic tenth Summit of Heads of State and/or Government, paving the way to advance our new Strategic Vision.

Within this framework, the Secretariat has identified the opportunity to suggest some proposals that will make this Declaration a more inclusive instrument, focused on the protection of human rights, especially for those in vulnerable situations. This will reinforce our commitment to social justice and dignity for all people, in addition to promoting actions for the well-being of the population and contributing to face the challenging reality experienced not only by our region but the entire world.

The proposals are as follows:

- Migration, promoting a commitment to address this phenomenon from a human rights perspective, ensuring safe, orderly, and dignified mobility, betting on the development of a Common Migration Agenda for the Greater Caribbean that reflects our shared and supportive vision on this issue.
- A proposal on youth [and another on women] that reaffirms our commitment to inclusive and

sustainable development, which recognizes their essential role in driving the development of the Greater Caribbean and the need to create better conditions for the well-being of the region.

- Finally, a proposal on the protection and preservation of the Caribbean Sea, prioritizing its recognition as a Special Zone for Regional Sustainability, as well as promoting a common position to advance in highly relevant intergovernmental forums such as UNOC 2025, the UN General Assembly, and COP30.

Distinguished delegates,

We have a great responsibility before us. This Declaration must be an inspiring document, one that reaffirms the commitment of our Member States to strengthening the ACS and, above all, that promotes concrete actions in favor of the well-being and development of the peoples of the Greater Caribbean.

In these challenging times for the world, we need more than ever a strengthened Association with leadership. Consequently, what we agree on in this space must reflect our determination to build a more resilient and integrated region.

I encourage you to continue working with the same commitment and vision that has brought us this far, with the conviction that this Declaration will not only reflect our principles and aspirations, but also be the engine that propels bold initiatives to turn challenges into opportunities for the well-being of our peoples.

Thank you very much!