



CARIBBEAN METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Caribbean Leaders Convene to Strengthen Early Warning Communication Across the Region

Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago | 23 January 2026 – The **Caribbean Meteorological Organization** (CMO), in partnership with the **Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency** (CDEMA) and the **Caribbean Broadcasting Union** (CBU), convened a ‘*Regional Workshop on Strengthening Knowledge Exchange and Mutual Understanding between National Meteorological and Hydrometeorological Services (NMHSs), National Disaster Risk Management Offices (NDRMOs), and the Media*’.

The workshop was executed under the **Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems** (CREWS) [Caribbean Project Phase 2](#), co-led and implemented by the World Meteorological Organization and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. The two-day workshop, held on **20-21 January 2026** at the **Hyatt Regency Trinidad**, brought together more than **sixty (60) participants from across the Caribbean**, including senior representatives of meteorological services, disaster management agencies, government information services, and public and private media organizations. The workshop aimed to strengthen coordination and communication of early warning information, ensuring that early warnings lead to early action, particularly for vulnerable and last-mile communities.

The opening ceremony featured remarks by the **Honourable Barry Padarath**, Minister of Public Utilities and Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister, who noted that meteorological services

“...must afford families, businesses and public services the most possible time to ensure safety before adverse weather...so that everyone everywhere is protected through multi-hazard warning systems.”

Dr. Arlene Laing, Coordinating Director of the Caribbean Meteorological Organization, encouraged all participants to share experiences and collaborate across institutional and professional boundaries to

“...strengthen the systems that ensure early warnings are not only issued, but clearly authorized, trusted, and acted upon across the Caribbean.”

High-level national, regional and international representatives were also present at the opening ceremony, including the **Honourable Clyde Elder**, Minister in the Ministry of Public Utilities; **Ms. Shivanna Sam**, Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Public Utilities; **Mr. Rodney Martinez Guingla**, Representative for North America, Central America and the Caribbean of the World



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Meteorological Organization; **Ms. Sonia Gill**, Secretary General of the CBU; and **Mr. Anwar Baksh**, Programme Officer with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. **Lt. Col. Kester Craig**, Deputy Executive Director of CDEMA, delivered remarks through a pre-recorded message.

The workshop engaged participants in expert-led panels, case studies, and interactive group exercises focused on strengthening communication across the early warning value chain. Discussions examined institutional roles and responsibilities, human factors in decision-making, broadcast and publishing practices, and strategies for countering mis- and disinformation, while supporting the development of practical communication tools and message templates for use before, during, and after hazardous events.

Participants identified a number of priority actions to strengthen early warning communication across the Caribbean, including improving the speed and consistency of information dissemination through coordinated, multi-channel communication; strengthening trust-based partnerships between meteorological services, disaster management agencies, and the media well before emergencies occur; and developing clear, ready-to-use messages and recommended actions that people can easily understand and act upon. Emphasis was also placed on advancing impact-based forecasting, using simple and culturally appropriate language, and ensuring early warnings are designed to support early action, not only emergency response.

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About the CMO

The *Caribbean Meteorological Organization* (CMO) is a specialized agency of the Caribbean Community that coordinates the joint scientific and technical activities in weather, climate and water – related sciences in sixteen English-speaking Caribbean countries (Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Virgin Islands (British), Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands). The Organs of the CMO are: (i) The *Caribbean Meteorological Council* (CMC)-Governing Body of the CMO, (ii) The *Headquarters Unit* (Secretariat), headed by a Coordinating Director, located in Trinidad and Tobago; (iii) The *Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology* (CIMH) located in Barbados; and (iv) The Caribbean Meteorological Foundation (CMF). The CMO originated from the British Caribbean Meteorological Service, founded in 1951.

Photos

