1. OFFICIAL STATISTICS IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA

- *Official Statistics* in Dominica is the responsibility of the Central Statistics Office (CSO), Ministry of Finance. The CSO comprises four (4) units, namely Economic; Social and Demographic; Computing and Surveys and Administrative.

  *Its Mission* is to educate the public on the importance of statistics and to maintain a professional, competent, well-equipped staff, emphasizing modernization through training and the utilization of science and technology.

- *In undertaking its functions* the Dominica CSO operates within the Census and Statistics Act with the mandate to “collect, compile, analyse, abstract and publish statistics portraying various aspects of the social, demographic and economic conditions of the people of the State”. The Statistics Authority for the State is also “responsible for taking, from time to time, appropriate measures to organise and develop a national statistical system capable of meeting effectively the statistical needs of social and economic planning”.

- *The 2020 Round of Population and Housing Census* has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with Dominica having to postpone its census enumeration from 2021 to 2022. Dominica was scheduled to have its Census launch on 4 April.

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2. KEY STATISTICS AND INDICATORS ON DOMINICA

✦ Population

Mid-year population estimate for 2020 stood at - 73,370 (a growth rate 1.6 percent over 2019 mid-year estimate).

✦ Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

- GDP at constant market prices for Dominica was ECSMn 1,046.5 in 2020 (provisional), which reflected a decline of -16.1 percent over the previous period, 2019, when GDP stood at ECSMn 1,246.8. Clearly, this decline reflected the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy in 2020. Estimates available from the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank shows a growth in GDP for Dominica of 6.64 percent in 2021, signalling a recovery over the first year of the pandemic. (Source Central Statistical Office and Eastern Caribbean Central Bank websites).

✦ Prices/Inflation

Consumer Price Index: Overall, prices increased by 0.52 percent by the end of 2021 compared to -0.7 percent at the end of 2020.

✦ Investment

Direct Investment: Net Direct Investment amounted to ECSMn 1297.9 in 2020 (preliminary) an increase of 4.9 percent over 2019. This was a far smaller increase as compared to that of 14.8 percent in 2019 over 2018 with the value of net direct investment for 2019 being ECSMn 1237.6.

✦ Fiscal Deficit, Government Revenues and Expenditure

Central Government Fiscal Operation: Fiscal Balance improved from a deficit of -54.24 (EC$M) as at the end of 2020 to a surplus of 257.46 (EC$M) as at end 2021. Current Revenue increased from EC$M 547.59 as at end 2020 to EC$M 802.12 at the end of 2021. At the same time, Current Expenditure decreased from EC$M 601.82 as at end of 2020 to EC$M 544.66 as at the end of 2021.

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2. KEY STATISTICS AND INDICATORS ON DOMINICA (Continued)

- **Merchandise Trade**
  - *Dominica’s total trade:* Dominica’s total imports decreased from US$292.3 million in 2019 to US$180.0 million in 2020 representing a decline of 38.4%. Dominica’s total exports also declined slightly from US$13.2 million in 2019 to US$13.1 million in 2020 representing a decline of 0.3%.

- **External Debt Outstanding to GDP (Public Sector)**
  - *Total external debt outstanding* for the public sector to GDP stood at 111.12 at December 2021, compared to 109.1 at December 2020 and 78.04 at December 2019, showing a worsening of the debt situation during the pandemic years.

- **Tourism**
  - *Tourist arrivals* in Dominica were 21,737 in 2020 representing a 75.7 percent decline over pre-COVID-19 arrivals in 2019, while visitor expenditure amounted to US$M105.9 in 2019. (UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the Caribbean Tourism Organisation).

- **Unemployment Rate**
  - The latest available *Unemployment Rate* for Dominica goes back to the 2010 Census Round (conducted in 2011). The Unemployment rate, both sexes, for that year stood at **11.1 percent** with males showing a figure of **12 percent** and females, **9.9 percent**. Youth unemployment stood at **21.1 percent** in that year.

- **ICT Statistics**
  - *Fixed line penetration* moved up by 2.0 percentage points from 7 percent in 2019 to 9 percent in 2020.
  - The *Mobile penetration rate* was 103 percent in 2020, representing a one-percentage point decrease from the previous year.
  - *Fixed broadband penetration* increased by 5 percentage points from 20.3 percent in 2019 to 25.3 percent in 2020.
  - *Mobile broadband penetration* was 65.5 percent in 2020, its highest penetration rate over the period 2000 to 2020 and an increase of 26 percentage points over 2019.

- **Environment Statistics**
  - *Forest Area:* According to the UN FAO, 63.8 percent or about 47,870 hectares of the total land area of Dominica is covered by forests. (FAO, Global Forest Resources Assessments 2020).
  - *Disasters/Climate Change:* Between 2010 and 2019, three (3) Meteorological disasters occurred in Dominica, including Hurricanes Tomas (2011) and Maria (2016), which resulted in 94 deaths and over 100,000 persons affected during these occurrences.
3. REGIONAL COOPERATION IN STATISTICS

Regional cooperation in Statistics commenced formally in 1974 with the establishment of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS). The SCCS meets at least annually and seeks to harmonise statistics across CARICOM countries, widen the scope, range and quality of the statistics produced and disseminated and engages in South-South cooperation with the support of International Development Partners such as the EU, ECLAC, the IDB and Governments of Italy and Canada. Several regional statistical public goods have been delivered including a common regional statistical work programme, a common census framework, a model statistics bill, a code of good statistical practices and a quality assurance framework.

4. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS TO 2030

The CARICOM Regional Strategy of the Development of Statistics (RSDS) - 2019-2030 was endorsed by CARICOM Heads of Governments in 2018 at its Thirty-Ninth Regular Meeting, following the endorsement of the Caribbean Action Plan for Statistics in 2016 and the approval to prepare the RSDS in 2017. The RSDS, as a masterplan for statistics, seeks to strengthen and improve the availability of statistical data for evidence-based decision-making, which is fundamental to the delivery of developmental outcomes. It comprises five strategic priorities - Standards and Harmonisation, Governance, Integrated Statistical System, Innovation and Advocacy and Communication and four drivers – Sustainable Capacity Building, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ICT Infrastructure and Gender Mainstreaming. The RSDS seeks to provide an enabling architecture to realise an efficient CARICOM statistical system, that is responsive to the national, regional and global development agenda, such as to monitor the achievement of the seventeen (17) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), for which 230+ indicators are required, and the maximising of the benefits of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).

5. 2020 ROUND OF POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS

The Population and Housing Census is a massive and complex statistical exercise that involves the canvassing of the households of a country, normally every ten (10) years, to obtain information on the total population, the age, sex, education, occupation and other crucial socio-economic, environmental and ICT characteristics. In fact, the census information underscores evidence-based decision-making at all levels. The global COVID-19 pandemic that hit the region in 2020 and continuing affected the undertaking of the Census in CARICOM countries. Governments throughout the region should provide the support that the national statistical offices require to enable the successful conduct of this important activity.
KEY RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FOR COUNTRY AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

- Data is at the core of modern society, therefore Investment in Statistics and the development and alignment of a national statistics strategy with the RSDS can help shape the future of Dominica.

- The Population and Housing Census, which is being undertaken in a pandemic, requires the necessary support by governments to deliver high quality data for decision-making.

- Monitoring and overcoming the COVID-19 impact as well as the impact of natural disasters and climate change, poverty and gender related violence require timely, relevant and in general high-quality statistics and Dominica is encouraged to support the development and integration of new statistical methods to make available data for policy and research.

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