

6 October 2021

PRESS RELEASE

Japan supports Caribbean countries fight against COVID-19, providing PCR testing kits through Japan-CARICOM Friendship and Cooperation Fund

On October 5<sup>th</sup>, Tatsuo Hirayama, Ambassador of Japan, attended the handover ceremony of the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing kits assisted by Japan-CARICOM Friendship and Cooperation at the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) Headquarters. The participants included Dr. Joy St. John, Executive Director of CARPHA, Dr. Douglas Slater, Assistant-Secretary General of the CARICOM Secretariat, Ms. Aneesa Doodanath-Siboo, Principal Pharmacist, Ministry of Health, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, and directors of CARPHA.

These PCR testing kits were procured by CARPHA under the Japan-CARICOM Friendship and Cooperation Fund, funded by Government of Japan and the Association for Promotion of International Cooperation (APIC). This assistance will provide 77,840 sets, equivalent to US\$311,135, of Extraction Testing Kits for PCR to benefit the Member States of CARICOM. The testing kits are to be distributed by CARPHA to Health Ministries of Member states.

Dr. St John expressed her gratitude to the Government of Japan in her remarks, stating CARPHA is pleased to receive these items which will add to their ability to provide support to the Governments and People of the Region in their continued fight against COVID-19.

Ambassador Hirayama congratulated CARPHA for its important role in fighting against the Pandemic in the region and reaffirmed that Japan and CARICOM have enjoyed long and fruitful relations. He referred to the support of Japan to the region in relation to the Pandemic, such as technical cooperation to CARPHA through its IDB Japan Special Fund; the technical cooperation project now being prepared with CARPHA through JICA; provision of medical equipment at bilateral level or through UNOPS; and commitment of altogether 1 billion US Dollars to the COVAX Facility. He further expressed his hope that the test kits will strengthen the CARICOM member countries' ability to detect infections.

Ms. Doodanath-Siboo expressed her gratitude to the Government of Japan on behalf of Honourable Minister of Health, Terrence Deyalsingh.

The Japan-CARICOM Friendship and Cooperation Fund has been the symbol of the Japan-CARICOM cooperation and has supported various activities to promote further engagement between Japan and CARICOM.

For further information

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Photos of the Handover Ceremony of PCR testing kits at CARPHA  
5<sup>th</sup> of October, 2021



Remarks by Ambassador Tatsuo Hirayama



Handover of the PCR testing kits to Dr. St. John



With the participants

