



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

OFFICE OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR

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Vice-Chancellor

Message from the Vice-Chancellor The University of the West Indies

Virtual Conference: Writing about Caribbean Gender and Social Justice January 15-16, 2021

On behalf of The University of the West Indies, I extend a very warm welcome to colleagues across the region to this virtual conference. The collaboration between the Institute for Gender and Development Studies (IGDS) and the Association of Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars (ACWWS) in hosting this conference demonstrates the power of regional and global networks, and the reach afforded by technology. In 2020, the year the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in uncertainty and unpredictability in our various operations, and we had to find new ways to engage and continue robust discussion around many key issues, this conference is timely. Pandemic and geography notwithstanding, the Caribbean participated meaningfully in the global Black Lives Matter and the #MeToo Movements, two issues that are fundamental to democracy and upholding human rights. Recent events in the United States have further highlighted the tumultuous times that we are living in, and the importance of vibrant and relevant discourse about pathways to assure a future in which those fundamental rights are upheld.

Gender remains central to the examination of social issues, particularly in light of the ways in which women and men have been impacted differently in the cultures of the world. It is therefore critical for academics and practitioners to continue a close examination of the ways in which they can help to influence research, discourse, policy and ultimately change archaic perspectives.

I congratulate the Institute for Gender and Development Studies, Regional Coordinating Unit for hosting this important conference and my sincere thanks to each of you for making the time to engage in this important discussion.

Blessings!

Hilary Beckles
Vice-Chancellor