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# Pompeo: 'There is No Intent for the United States to Divide CARICOM'

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**U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo signs Jamaican guestbook during visit to island between Jan. 21-22, 2020 By. GOVERNMENT OF JAMAICA**

JAMAICA — U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said during a press conference in Jamaica Wednesday that the American government had no intention to divide CARICOM, a 15-member group of Caribbean nations formed in 1973.

"There is no intent from the United States to divide CARICOM," Mr. Pompeo said.

He added, "We want all the countries of this region to prosper and be successful. We know that countries in this region will agree with the U.S. on certain positions from time to time and disagree with us from time to time. That's true for Jamaica, as well as true for many of the folks

that I'll visit with this afternoon. We want to invite them all to be part of the economic prosperity security zone that is this region, and we welcome the leadership that Jamaica has demonstrated in the CARICOM region."

Jamaica Prime Minister Andrew Holness also reaffirmed the Jamaican government's commitment to a unified CARICOM, the government said Wednesday.

"Jamaica does not want to see, and does not engage in any policy that would divide CARICOM, which is an important fraternity of countries. We want to keep it that way. Jamaica's interest is to unite the region for prosperity, freedom and peace," said.

Mr. Holness's and Mr. Pompeo's comments follow [the boycotting of Mr. Pompeo's meeting in Jamaica](#) between Jan. 21-22 by Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago, where some CARICOM members were invited, while others, without explanation, were left out. Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley and Trinidad Prime Minister Keith Rowley said they would not participate in any action that could possibly dismantle the group.

Mr. Holness emphasised that the focus has to be that every member of CARICOM and every Jamaican ensure that there is engagement within the region.

"So, the conversation should be how do we get greater engagement, how are we talking more. My interest is to get Jamaica talking with everyone and to strengthen our relationship, particularly with our largest trading partner, particularly with our largest security partner, because we have over one million U.S. visitors coming to our shores yearly. We have significant economic, social and cultural interests, so we should never seek to create an artificial divide," the prime minister said.

Mr. Pompeo said the U.S. welcomes dialogue with every country in the region, noting that "we'd want to meet with them all, we'd welcome them all to participate in all of the conversations that we are having about important issues."

"Things that matter to the United States of America we think matter to each and every country in CARICOM and we want to work with them closely to develop a security prosperity dialogue with them, so that we can all be successful, not divided, but together," he added.