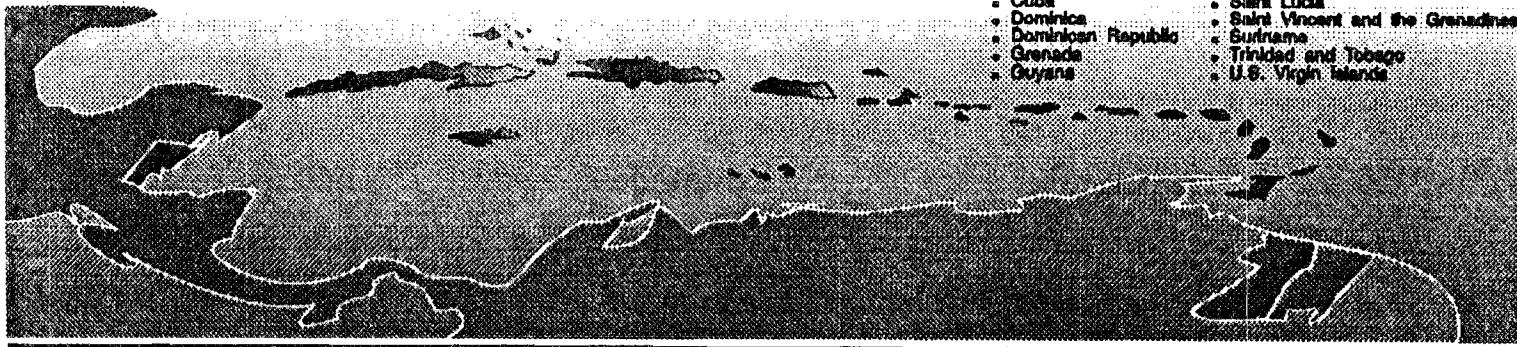




UN ECLAC/CDCC

- 8.1
- Antigua and Barbuda
 - Aruba
 - Bahamas
 - Barbados
 - Belize
 - Br. Virgin Islands
 - Cuba
 - Dominica
 - Dominican Republic
 - Grenada
 - Guyana
 - Haiti
 - Jamaica
 - Montserrat
 - Netherlands Antilles
 - Puerto Rico
 - Saint Kitts and Nevis
 - Saint Lucia
 - Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
 - Suriname
 - Trinidad and Tobago
 - U.S. Virgin Islands



Sixteenth session of the CDCC
at the technical level
Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
31 October 1996

GENERAL
LC/CAR/G.491
9 December 1996
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**REPORT OF THE SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE
CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION COMMITTEE (CDCC)
AT THE TECHNICAL LEVEL**



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UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean
CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION COMMITTEE

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Place and date of the meeting

The sixteenth session of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) was held at the technical level, at the Trinidad Hilton Hotel, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, on 31 October 1996.

Attendance¹

The meeting was attended by the following CDCC member countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Cuba, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. The Netherlands Antilles also attended as an associate member.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting

In calling the meeting to order, Mr Daniel Blanchard, Director of the Caribbean Subregional Headquarters of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), welcomed the participants and introduced the Chairman, Mr. Learie Rousseau, Acting Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago.

In his opening remarks, the Chairman welcomed participants, noting that the meeting was being convened to discuss progress made in the implementation of the work programme and other issues of interest to member governments. He noted that the sixteenth session was originally scheduled for February 1996, in Antigua and Barbuda, but that since governments were unable to send representatives the session had been cancelled. While there was unquestionably a heavy schedule of meetings for representatives, the lack of a quorum also raised the question as to the extent to which interest in and commitment to the CDCC and ECLAC and their activities might be waning. He suggested that the Committee needed to reflect on what was needed to be done to ensure its revitalization. Given the restructuring and downsizing of the United Nations and the undertaking of similar exercises by some governments, it behooved member governments to ensure that intergovernmental organizations and bodies were meeting the needs of its membership in as efficient a manner as possible. Notwithstanding the useful work of the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat, and the recent flurry of activities, there was an apparent waning of interest in the intergovernmental activities of the CDCC which member governments would have to address. In presenting the provisional agenda, the Chairman noted that time was regrettably short due to the concurrent running of the poverty eradication meeting. He noted the provision of other documents, notably the application of Anguilla for membership and the report of the ad hoc working group established pursuant to ECLAC resolution 553(XXVI). With respect to the latter issue, the Chairman noted the late circulation of the report and the limited information provided to delegations on the ad hoc meeting, both of which

The list of participants is annexed to this report.

factors limited the extent to which delegates were able to consult with key players in their respective capitals and obtain a full understanding of the issues to be discussed. He then tabled the provisional agenda which was approved.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of agenda and organization of work

The agenda was adopted as follows:

1. Opening of meeting
2. Adoption of agenda and organization of work
3. Review of the work of ECLAC/CDCC:
 - (a) Report of the Director
 - (b) Review of the meeting of the Ad hoc Working Group established pursuant to resolution 553(XXVI) of ECLAC
4. Application of Anguilla for membership of the CDCC
5. Any other business
6. Date and venue for the seventeenth ministerial session of the CDCC.

Agenda item 3: Review of the work of ECLAC/CDCC

(a) Report of the Director

Mr Daniel Blanchard, Director of the Caribbean Subregional Headquarters of ECLAC, indicated that he would highlight the activities of the secretariat since the last meeting of the Monitoring Committee held in Port-of-Spain from 21-22 March 1996 and also provide information on proposed activities for 1997.

He noted that several important staffing changes had occurred, including the departure of the Deputy Director of the Office, Mr. Swinburne Lestrade, who left at mid-year to assume new responsibilities as Director-General of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). Ms. Barbara Boland was designated to serve as Acting Deputy Director. The Office had also been reorganized into informal "clusters": an economic cluster, comprising five professionals, dedicated to integration and trade, analysis of economic trends and statistics; a social cluster with four professionals dedicated to issues of poverty reduction, women in development, population and related

issues; a cluster with four professionals looking at sustainable development of production and technology; and two separate programmes on the Non-Independent Caribbean Countries (NICCs) and the Caribbean Documentation Centre. The Subregional Headquarters was also implementing eight new extrabudgetary projects relating to Caribbean/Latin American trade, integration of non-independent Caribbean countries, population, a database of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) related projects in the Caribbean, maritime training, statistics and coastal zone management.

Turning to the issue of Caribbean participation in ECLAC meetings, the Director noted that Caribbean delegates had participated very actively in the twenty-sixth session of ECLAC, held in Costa Rica in April 1996, and in the first session of the High-Level Working Group to determine priorities in the work programme of ECLAC which had convened in Santiago at the end of July 1996. The main thrust of the Caribbean interventions was to urge ECLAC Headquarters to take Caribbean concerns and issues more seriously into consideration in the preparation of documents and other activities. Secondly, the Caribbean representatives stressed the importance they placed on strengthening the work of the Port-of-Spain Subregional Headquarters, both with additional resources and substantive support from Santiago. Thirdly, the Caribbean delegates instructed the Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean to increase their emphasis on operational activities so as to better serve the needs of the CDCC member governments.

With respect to the follow-up to global conferences, the office was organizing three major Caribbean conferences on the topics of poverty eradication (follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development), sustainable development of Small Island Developing States and migration as a follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). The Caribbean Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Eradication was being held concurrently with this meeting of the CDCC, in order to make maximum use of scarce resources, while the other two meetings would be convened in the first quarter of 1997. The Caribbean Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Eradication was both a follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and a Caribbean preparatory activity for the ECLAC Regional Conference of Ministers of Social Development and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Regional Social and Economic Summit. The meeting had been jointly organized with CARICOM, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and with most of the United Nations agencies active in the field of poverty eradication in the region.

The proposed Caribbean meeting on migration was part of the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. It would seek to address some of the migration-related problems facing the Caribbean subregion and identify new directions for policy-making. Preparatory work comprised the collection and analysis of data for the conduct of three research studies on migration and development in the Caribbean: (i) the impact of immigration on small island countries and coastal States; (ii) the role of remittances and its contribution to development; and (iii) new trends in return migration and the implications for development. The outcome of this work and the Caribbean conference was also expected to provide inputs into the preparatory exercises for the proposed United Nations international conference on migration scheduled for 1997.

Other population and development activities included, strengthening government capacities for improved development planning through the conduct of a number of training and research activities to enable planners and data producers to better utilize and analyze census and survey data. The secretariat would continue to provide technical support for the processing and analysis of teenage fertility survey data and the formulation of a national policy on adolescents for the governments of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Grenada. In keeping with the recommendation contained in the Caribbean ICPD Plan of Action and in response to requests from Caribbean governments, production of the quarterly newsletter, "Caribbean Action on Population and Development: Follow-up to ICPD" would be continued throughout 1997.

The Director noted that SIDS follow-up activities received a boost at mid-year when the secretariat was authorized to recruit Ms. Yvonne St. Hill, a national of Barbados, to work full-time on this issue with existing staff. The joint ECLAC/CARICOM proposal to create a SIDS Joint Coordinating Unit was endorsed by both the CARICOM Council of Ministers and CDCC, and a formal project proposal for funding was now in the CARIFORUM pipeline for approval by the European Union. Focus was being placed on the Caribbean Ministerial Meeting to be held in March 1997, which would highlight the progress made and constraints to the implementation of the Barbados Plan of Action and identify priorities for future action. The secretariat intended to present documents on coastal zone management and on the environmental aspects of tourism.

Activities related to the Fourth World Conference on Women currently focused on the provision of technical assistance for the preparation of National Action Plans, setting up national mechanisms for the implementation of the Platform of Action for the Fourth World Conference on Women and the integration and implementation of such plans into the national planning framework. Given the mandate for regional coordination, the secretariat would also endeavour to promote cooperation among government specialists, international organizations and NGOs working in the gender field, providing a forum designed to exchange ideas, monitor progress and assess the impact of policies on the status of women with their counterparts within the Latin American and Caribbean region.

Activities relating to the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) continued, with special attention being given to the ad hoc working group on small economies. Three documents were prepared for the Working Group. The first identified the special characteristics of the smaller economies of the Caribbean while the second document addressed the same issues from the point of view of Central America. The third document looked at the internal policy measures which the smaller economies would need to implement in order to maximize their participation in the FTAA. At the Fourth Meeting of the Working Group, the Latin American Economic System (SELA) was asked to prepare a draft set of proposals listing areas where they required technical assistance to better fit their countries to participate in the FTAA, based on the background documents prepared by ECLAC and the Organization of American States (OAS). In coordination with His Excellency Ambassador Richard Bernal, a small working group meeting was convened at the Office of ECLAC in Port-of-Spain on 10 October 1996, to review the draft proposals and prepare a revised document for the Fifth Meeting of the working Group, to be held in Caracas from 13-15 November 1996.

Following the introduction of structural adjustments in the economies of most of the Caribbean countries, and given the rapid pace of global economic change, the Director indicated that it was necessary to sustain policies that tied in the reforms undertaken in past years, to craft new solutions and introduce major new economic policies to stimulate and sustain development. Mr. Winston Dookeran, former Minister of Planning of Trinidad and Tobago, would be working on this subject, which was being characterized as the second generation of structural adjustment issues, along with experts from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the IDB, the World Bank, the University of the West Indies (UWI) and the Harvard Institute for International Development. The products of this research were to include a Conference on the Challenges of Future Macroeconomic Policy in the Caribbean, the publication of a book containing the research papers and the provision of technical assistance on policy issues to governments upon request.

The Caribbean Documentation Centre continued to concentrate on its main area of expertise, which was to provide up-to-date documentation on social and economic issues. The Centre intended to extend its reach by establishing a presence on the World Wide Web by the end of October 1996 which was the test date for the Port-of-Spain web site, the full address of which was still to be determined. The site would help to disseminate the work of ECLAC to a wider audience, including the Caribbean Ambassadors in New York and provide accurate, timely information about the Caribbean from a Caribbean perspective. The web site, when complete, would feature the general publications of the office, statistical data and country profiles of each of the countries of the CDCC and provide a link to the Caribbean Information System for Social and Economic Planning (CARISPLAN).

The Director noted that for the past three years the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST) had concentrated its efforts on the promotion of renewable energy technologies in the region and that efforts would continue to promote the use of these technologies in such sectors as agriculture, for irrigation, in tourism for improving efficiency, etc. The Council was developing a programme with an integrated approach to water management to assist policy makers in factoring the needs of all users of water in the planning process and to develop policies to protect and preserve vital sources of water. The Council would also, in conjunction with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), embark on a programme to establish a technology development and transfer centre to assist in the diversification programmes of governments. It would also continue its work related to the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises in the region. Activities in science and technology policy, and science education and popularization would continue. CCST would also sponsor a number of meetings and workshops on renewable energy and the secretariat would complete the study on science and technology dimensions of industrial development in the Caribbean.

Improving the availability of statistics to policy makers continued to be one of the priority areas for the CDCC. In order to address the causes of the apparent decline in the quantum and quality of statistics being produced by the statistical offices of the subregion, the secretariat organized a seminar on, "Improving the Data Supply Modality", held in Saint Kitts and Nevis in May 1996. The

follow-up to this meeting, which was co-sponsored by ECLAC, the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, was the preparation of two projects presented to the donor community for funding. Follow-up was being carried out by the ECCB. Also arising out of the seminar were requests for assistance in modernizing the statistical offices of several countries. The ECLAC Statistics Unit continued to render assistance to the Algemeen Bureau voor de Statistiek in Suriname and to the Government of Aruba in improving data management in that country.

In concluding, the Director noted that cooperation with other organizations continued to receive a high priority. As a result of the cooperation agreement signed with CARICOM, the CDCC had undertaken a number of joint activities mentioned above. A mutually beneficial working relationship had also been established between ECLAC and the Association of Caribbean States (ACS). Two documents on trade and investment had been prepared for the ACS and a formal Cooperation Agreement had been readied for signature. A draft cooperation agreement had also been prepared for signature with SELA.

In a supplementary presentation, the Acting Deputy Director sought to amplify on several programme activities, notably the intra-ACS trade database which was being developed, various activities being undertaken in the Demography Unit and in Statistics.

In the ensuing discussions, support was given to the programme relating to the NICCs which was conducted in 1996 as well as the work programme scheduled for the period 1998-1999. Enquiries were made regarding the scope of activities being carried out with the French Overseas Departments. The Director noted that contacts were relatively limited, although representatives from Guadeloupe had attended the fifteenth session of the CDCC as observers and there was an exchange of economic and social data with L'Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques (INSEE) in Guadeloupe. In essence, the initiative to build closer relationships with the non-independent British and Dutch territories had come from the United Kingdom and the Kingdom of the Netherlands, respectively. No similar initiative had so far been taken by the Republic of France, so that the status of their participation on a regular basis had not been determined.

Delegates expressed their concern that the meeting scheduled under the project for the removal of language barriers had not been held. They noted that while the meeting, which had been scheduled for the third quarter of 1995 in Sint Maarten in conjunction with a meeting of language experts, had to be cancelled because of hurricane damage to that island, it had not been rescheduled since. They proposed that since the programme had been on the agenda for a long time it should be definitively reviewed at the next CDCC ministerial session.

With respect to staffing of the secretariat, delegates enquired whether those members of staff on short-term contracts could now be regularized, since the freeze on recruiting new staff had been lifted. In his response, the Director noted that the conditions of the freeze had changed to allow vacant posts to be filled on a temporary basis. Any attempt to fill posts by external candidates would need the approval of United Nations Headquarters on a case-by-case basis. Posts could, however,

be filled by internal redeployment, although no requests had been received for redeployment to Port-of-Spain. Currently, only the post of Deputy Director and that relating to the industry programme remained vacant.

Delegates sought information from the secretariat regarding the funding of projects, specifically the SIDS programme and that relating to the CCST. It was noted that at a recent meeting to set priorities in Santiago, governments were led to believe that funding for operational activities was adequate for the existing programmes within ECLAC, yet there remained important activities in the Caribbean which were unfunded. This underscored the need for a greater focus on the Caribbean and for increased allocation of resources for operational activities to the countries of the subregion. Accordingly, member governments needed to be pro-active to ensure that the subregion's needs and concerns were addressed.

With respect to the SIDS project, the Director indicated that ECLAC/UNDP funding for the Joint Coordinating Unit had been provided and the post relating to it had been temporarily filled. A delay was, however, being experienced with respect to CARICOM counterpart funding, which was being sought through CARIFORUM, and was not likely to materialize before 1998 because of the long lead times entailed in such funding. A possible solution might be found if the European Union could provide pre-budget support to CARICOM pending the release of the CARIFORUM funds. With respect to the CCST, a work plan had been provided to the most recent session of the Monitoring Committee and funding was being sought from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for it. Essentially, the Director indicated the need for extrabudgetary funding. The Caribbean office had emerged from the budget cuts quite well, he said, having received an additional US\$60,000.

Concern was expressed by delegates that operational activities to be undertaken in the Caribbean during the 1998-1999 biennium, as approved by ECLAC in April 1996, were to be funded only by extrabudgetary resources, while regular budget funds were to be allocated to finance operational activities under some thematic subprogrammes of the approved work programme of ECLAC and under the subprogramme relating to Central America. It was noted that funding for operational activities in the Caribbean had been difficult to source. Therefore, it was emphasized that there was also a need for specific allocations from the regular budget to be earmarked for operational activities in the Caribbean, particularly since all member States of the United Nations contributed to the regular budget. It was also noted that during meetings held in 1996, several donors had expressed support for a greater focus on the needs of the Caribbean and for increased resources to be allocated to the region.

The Chairman, in his summary of the agenda item, indicated that the report should reflect the strong feelings of the delegations regarding the lack of funding for outstanding projects especially the fact that operational activities which were given high priority were denied access to regular budget funding.

(b) Review of the meeting of the Ad hoc Working Group established pursuant to Resolution 553 (XXVI) of ECLAC

The Director informed the meeting that the ad hoc working group had been convened in Santiago, Chile, in July 1996 to redefine future ECLAC programme activities. He noted that Caribbean countries had been well represented and that the meeting had been a success.

Delegates, however, expressed the view that the report of that meeting was unsatisfactory to the Caribbean delegations, since their initiatives had not been reflected adequately in it. Several important and relevant statements of member States and associate members had not been reflected in the report, while statements of the secretariat had been reflected at great length, a situation which did not appear to be appropriate and which needed correction. Concrete proposals regarding the prioritization of activities were also watered down, through phrases such as, "asked the secretariat to consider the possibility of". Accordingly, it was proposed that consideration of the report at the current CDCC meeting should not be regarded as conclusive and that the matter of priorities should not be considered closed. The report should be examined further at the next technical and ministerial sessions of the CDCC in 1997 where the issues of concern should be revisited by governments. Since the issues were multisectoral in nature, a document outlining the outstanding issues should be circulated to governments in good time to ensure that the various interested departments were consulted.

In his summary of the agenda item, the Chairman noted that the report of the ad hoc meeting should not be considered final, but that a document setting out Caribbean concerns should be prepared by interested governments, for submission to the seventeenth session of the CDCC. The secretariat was asked to notify governments which wished to make submissions, to do so in good time.

Agenda item 4: Application of Anguilla for membership of the CDCC

The meeting approved the application for membership of the CDCC by Anguilla.

Agenda item 5: Any other business

There was no discussion under this agenda item.

Agenda item 6: Date and venue for the seventeenth ministerial session of the CDCC

The Director noted the enquiry earlier in the meeting as to whether the seventeenth session of the CDCC would be held at ministerial or at the technical level and confirmed that the ministerial segment would be preceded by a technical segment. He noted that funds had been budgeted for a

ministerial session in Antigua and Barbuda and that was envisaged for the seventeenth session, yet governments needed to decide whether they wanted an intergovernmental meeting in the traditional manner, where it was difficult to get a comprehensive turn-out of ministers or whether, as in the current case, it should be an adjunct to a substantive meeting where there was strong ministerial representation.

Delegations expressed the preference for regular ministerial sessions. Formal ministerial sessions were considered to be necessary to safeguard the rights and functions of sovereign governments, especially where means were being applied to reduce the role of governments in designing national policies.

In his summary, the Chairman directed the secretariat to consult with member governments to determine the time and place of the seventeenth ministerial session of the CDCC which should examine ECLAC/CDCC in the context of the current budget cuts and their overall programme priorities.

Annex**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA	H.E. Ambassador Patrick Lewis Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations New York
CUBA	Mr Raul Taladrid, Vice-Ministro, Ministerio para la Inversion Extranjera y la Colaboracion (MINVEC)
GUYANA	Ms Denise De Souza, Head of Division, State Planning Secretariat, Ministry of Finance
HAITI	Mr Jean-Luc Desinor Emmanuel, Ministry of Planning Mr Jacques Nixon Myrthil, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
JAMAICA	Mrs Joy Wheeler, Deputy High Commissioner, Jamaica High Commission, Port-of-Spain
NETHERLANDS ANTILLES	Ms Aimee Kleinmoedig, Second Secretary for Netherlands Antillean Affairs, Embassy of the Royal Netherlands, Port of Spain
SAINT LUCIA	Mr Lionel Egbert, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Youth
SURINAME	Ms Nalinie Sewpersadsingh, Official, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	Mr. Learie Rousseau, Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mrs. Margaret King-Rousseau, Deputy Director, Political Affairs Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mrs. Phyllis Augustus, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs

ECLAC system

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 Barbara Boland
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