

VII SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATES AND/OR GOVERNMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES

RECOMMENDATIONS SECRETARY GENERAL H.E. ALFONSO MÚNERA

Conclusions: The first conclusion, in which there has been repeated consensus among the Member Countries of the Association, is the fulfilment of the central objective set at the Summit of Pétion Ville aimed at achieving the revitalization of the ACS. Today, the Association has a healthy budget and its finances in order; a Secretariat working in harmony and with adequate technological equipment; strengthened spaces for consolidated dialogue and an important set of projects in priority areas.

A second conclusion is that, although great strides have been made, there are issues that must continue to be worked on in order to make the Secretariat's performance more effective. In this regard, it is relevant to formulate the few following **practical recommendations**:

--*Continue the process of strengthening the Special Fund.* There has been notable improvement, through the appointment of a Project Manager, which will be included in the budget of the Secretariat from next year, together with the development of a set of project initiatives and its presentation to international organisations and donor countries; however, it is necessary to engage in dialogue on the means to guarantee a more active, resolute and direct participation of the countries in general, and in particular, of those comprising the executive board of the Special Fund in fund management, and above all, in boosting project marketing. Moreover, the Secretariat has drafted a short summary of the evolution of the Fund, to which we have attached various studies conducted in the past under the Ministerial Council chairmanships of Colombia and Mexico. These studies, and in particular, the one which was conducted by ECLAC in 2009, contribute sufficient data towards the actions that must be undertaken.

--*Rethink procedures* in order to achieve a more productive ACS calendar of meetings. The decision must be taken that, once the Plan of Action at the Summit of Heads of State is adopted, the committees in the different areas must ensure that their actions abide to its fulfilment, and only in exceptional cases and with the proper funding validated, can add new projects.

--*Experience* has shown that it would be more convenient to join the Transport and Trade Directorates, under the same director. Indeed at this time, there are two important projects in the area of trade that combine specific aspects of trade and transport.

--In 2012, the wise decision was taken to once more *incorporate cooperation across the areas of culture and education into the activities of the ACS*. It was proposed to create coordination in this area, which, until now, has been the voluntary work of the Secretary General in coordinating its development. Taking into account that the budget of the Association should not be further



overwhelmed with a new Directorate, the void must at least be filled through the appointment of a coordinator with experience and proven knowledge in educational and cultural cooperation.