

DRAFT REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON COOPERATION AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION

ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES (ACS)

**25th INTERSESSIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE 28TH ORDINARY
MEETING OF THE ACS MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

ACS Secretariat, Port of Spain, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

(Virtual Meeting)

18th January, 2023

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON COOPERATION AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION

The ACS recognises the importance of building development cooperation partnerships as a cornerstone of the ACS mandate to advance sustainable development. The present report reflects the advancements implemented in relation to cooperation and resource mobilisation for the period April 2022 through November 2022, outlining the actions and activities carried out by the DCRM during this period, with the aim of revitalising the sustainable development and recovery of the Greater Caribbean, as the region continues dealing with the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. This has been carried out in order to fulfil the objectives defined in the 2022-2028 Plan of Action approved at the 27th Ordinary Meeting of the ACS Ministerial Council on April 29 of the current year.

I. Statutory ACS-DCRM Meetings

- **5th International Cooperation Conference (25/05/2022)**, with a total of one hundred and seventeen (117) participants and nine (9) featured speakers. The Conference, entitled *"Recalibrating Cooperation: A Key Driver for the Recovery of the Greater Caribbean"*, focused on presenting the analysis of the COVID-19 impact in the region, the cooperation and resource mobilisation scenarios and strategies for the region in a post COVID-19 world, and providing a space for discussion and intervention for all participants regarding opportunities for collaboration with the ACS. In conjunction with the ACS Communications Unit, the Directorate developed valuable information resources such as the annual magazine "Cooperation in Action" and the Conference website, both of which highlighted the cooperation actions and initiatives implemented by the DCRM during the course of the year.
- **36th Meeting of the Special Committee on Cooperation and Resource Mobilisation (13/09/2022)**, with the participation of a total of thirteen (13) Members States, three (3) Associate Members, two (2) Founding Observer Organisations and three (3) Observer Countries. This meeting was an opportunity to highlight the new cooperation strategy of the European Union through the Neighbourhood Development International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) and windows of opportunity for greater cooperation between Europe and the Caribbean region. The meeting also featured a presentation by the Caribbean

Development Bank on the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index – Resilience Duration Adjuster (MVI-RDA), inclusive of the Internal Resilience Capacity Framework (IRC) with the aim of implementing their usage in the internal operations of the ACS Membership and thus, providing a more equitable opportunity to underpin access to concessional finance. The Directorate's overall activities, its Work Programme for the period 2022-2023, and Implementation Plan 2022-2028 were presented and discussed, the Work Programme having been approved. As agreed at the meeting, the Implementation Plan was submitted for approval by silent procedure until 27 September, date at which comments were received from Colombia, and which have already been consolidated, in addition to the request for an extension from the Republic of Guatemala, for which no additional comments were received, and the Implementation Plan was approved under the aforementioned principle.

- **6th International Cooperation Conference (10-11/11/22):** The Conference, entitled "*The Greater Caribbean Building Bridges of Transformation 67and Innovation towards a Future of Sustainable Progress*", was held in person, in Havana Cuba from 10 - 11th November, 2022. The conference aimed to address issues relevant to Member States, Associate Members, and international cooperation in the search for innovative solutions to transform the sustainable future of the Greater Caribbean.

24 Member States, 5 Associate Members, 20 Observer States, 3 Founding Observers and 33 Cooperation Agencies attended the event, with the notorious participation of i) President of Cuba, Miguel Díaz Canel, ii) Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cuba, Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, iii) Minister of Foreign Trade and Foreign Investment, Rodrigo Malmierca Díaz, iv) Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, Mario Búcaro Flores, v) Minister Counsellor for Public and Cultural Diplomacy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Arab Emirates, Omar Saif Ghobash, vi) Director of International Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign and Religious Affairs of the Republic of Costa Rica, Ambassador, Adriana Bolaños Argueta, vii) Director General for Latin American and Caribbean Affairs of South Korea, Jong-uk Choi, viii) Ambassador of Italy to Panama, Fabrizio Nicoletti, ix) Chairman of the Executive Board of the Bank of ALBA, Raúl Li Causi, x) Executive Director of AMEXCID, Laura Elena Carrillo Cubillas, xi) The recorded participation of the Secretary General of the International Italo-Latin American Organization, Antonella Cavallari, among others.

There was also the participation of 29 speakers from the governmental, multilateral, donor, academic, business and civil society sectors. Two educational videos were projected: one addresses the Early Advisory System (EAS) that monitors the movement of sargassum offshore, the conditions leading to beaching and how to improve resiliency and promote ways to utilise the seaweed for transformational adaptation; the other deals with mitigating the environmental and economic impact of sargassum, the latter being converted into products for climate resilience in the Caribbean.

Publication of the annual cooperation magazine of the Directorate of Cooperation and Resource Mobilization, incorporating: i) 8 research articles on international cooperation, urban planning, geospatial cooperation, climate change, disaster risk reduction, trade, tourism and transportation, ii) information on the 13 project concept papers in the ACS portfolio. The publication of the First Edition of the ACS Regional Cooperation Catalogue, which in turn incorporates i) 16 best practices from 6 different countries, ii) the application route for access by the Membership to the best practices offered and iii) access to different catalogues of member countries.

The signing of two memoranda of understanding (MoU), namely: 1) MoU with the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB) and 2) MoU with the Central American Transport Commission (COCATRAM).

Outcomes of this event included positioning selected project proposals to international cooperation for the mobilisation of new financial resources, as well as achieving a strategic and comprehensive vision of relations with development partners to follow up on the discussions and scopes identified between the cooperation partners and the ACS.

II. ACS Cooperation Catalogue

The ACS Catalogue on South-South and Triangular Cooperation is an initiative presented by the Republic of Guatemala in its capacity as Chair of the ACS Ministerial Council for the period 2022-2023. This catalogue seeks to compile the best practices of the Membership in different sectors of common interest that could be shared at a regional level, thus creating a zone of cooperation exchange. The request has already been forwarded to Members for their input as well as the format for their systematisation. This

consolidated ACS cooperation catalogue was made accessible online and shared with the entire Membership for consideration. The ACS, through the Directorate for Cooperation and Resource Mobilisation, will function as the articulating agent of the process, linking the supply and demand of the Member States and Associate Members in an organised manner through an agile and efficient mechanism.

III. White Paper

The Directorate of Cooperation and Resource Mobilization drafted, in conjunction with the Office of Political Affairs and the Office of the Secretary General, the First Edition of the ACS White Paper; including a historical review of the institution, its Action Plan 2022-2028, its priorities and general strategies, as well as its projects to be implemented.

IV. Cooperation Partnerships and Opportunities

i. Participation in "Calls for proposals"

The Directorate for Cooperation and Resource Mobilisation constantly monitors potential calls for proposals and notifies the respective Directorates of these opportunities so that a decision can be made to participate or not dependent on interest expressed. ACS participation has been fruitful to date with the following proposals:

- **RESEMBID – Best practices in Sustainable Tourism:** This proposal was presented in conjunction with the Directorate for Trade and Sustainable Development (DTSD), the latter responsible for sustainable tourism. The proposal was accepted and amounted to €269,401.00. The DCRM continues to support the DTSD by providing the necessary oversight of the "RESEMBID COVID-19 Resilience" Project.

In addition, the DCRM participated as a counterpart in the evaluation of the bids for the Consultancy: "Consultancy for the Development and Operationalization Training of a Best Practice Guide for Tourism Stakeholders in Contagion Scenarios in Greater Caribbean OCTs".

- **Regional Public Goods – Inter-American Development Bank** – the project on "Competitiveness and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Development in the Greater Caribbean" was presented jointly with the Directorate for Trade and

Sustainable Development for USD\$820,000.00 and which, has reportedly been validated and subsequently awarded in August 2022.

ii. Portfolio of Cooperation Partnerships

The DCRM continues to invest considerable time and effort in developing proactively, a portfolio of relationships and alliances identifying donors and strategic partnerships to request and secure financing, technical assistance and cooperation from different development partners. Each opportunity has been reviewed carefully and exploratory and technical meetings have been held, led by the DCRM, in order to produce a list of twenty-six (26) “open opportunities” that the DCRM is currently finalising with the other ACS Directorates. It should be pointed out that based on the way in which the work process with the other Directorates was established, the DCRM creates the initial contact with the potential partner and together with the respective Directorates, technical presentations of the projects are delivered and the Directorates themselves undertake the technical follow-up and any decision-making directly with the donor, subsequent to which the DCRM then provides assistance to finalise such support.

This portfolio of cooperation opportunities under consideration are namely with:

- Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI) and Korean Trust Fund (KTF)
- Inter-America Development Bank (IDB)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- Latin American Bank for Development (CAF)
- International Trade Centre (ITC)
- Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD – Train for Trade)
- Caribbean Export Development Agency
- CEPALSTAT
- Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)
- International Maritime Organization (IMO)
- International Labour Organisation (ILO)
- Ibero-American Programme for the Strengthening of South-South Cooperation (PIFCCS)
- GEOACT
- DG Echo
- INTERREG
- United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)
- Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
- European Union
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- Federative Republic of Brazil
- The Kingdom of the Netherlands
- The Republic of Türkiye
- The Republic of Korea
- The Republic of Chile

- The United Arab Emirates
- University of the West Indies

iii. Participation in Cooperation events

The Directorate actively researches and virtually attends cooperation related events and webinars, the results of which include, among others, greater promotion, visibility and joint participation with partners for development to address fiscal and financial matters, as well as the mobilisation of resources, evaluating the role of the private sector and other social groups for participation, the compilation and exchange of best practices, capacity building and innovation and recovery planning.

During the last half of the year, the DCRM was part of the Secretary General's delegation to New York, in the framework of United Nations General Assembly 77, and participated in the CELAC-ACS co-ordinated breakfast meeting, as well as in a number of other bilateral approaches, including:

- Central American Integration System (SICA)
- World Bank
- Government of Italy
- Government of the United Arab Emirates

Subsequent to the visit to New York, a mission to the European Union followed:

- Directorate General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG-ECHO)
- Directorate General for International Partnerships (DG-INTPA)
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- Ambassadors of the Eastern Caribbean States, The Bahamas, Barbados, Guatemala, Guyana, Panama, Trinidad and Tobago to the European Union.

The occasion marked the beginning of a series of links that represent a building of inter-institutional relations that will generate, contribute, technical and financial cooperation that will serve to strengthen the portfolio of ACS projects prioritized and endorsed at the

iv. Memoranda of Understanding

The Directorate fervently pursues its engagement with cooperation partners inter alia Memoranda of Understanding. Currently under consideration and being developed are agreements with the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the Commonwealth Secretariat, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD),

International Labour Organization (ILO), Brazil, Peru and the University of the French Antilles. Recently signed MoUs include the Latin American Bank for Development (CAF) and pending imminent signature are MoUs with the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB) and the Central American Maritime Transport Commission (COCATRAM).

v. Technical Cooperation Initiatives

As a further part of its mandate to promote cooperation and institutional strengthening of the ACS Secretariat, the Directorate for Cooperation and Resource Mobilisation remains instrumental in obtaining technical assistance for ACS staff members in the areas of Strategic Planning and language training through Spanish courses, courtesy the Embassies of the Republic of Colombia and the Republic of Chile in Trinidad and Tobago.

V. DAC Eligibility and Application Process

The DCRM remains committed in its efforts to seek and receive a favourable response in respect of eligibility status for official development assistance (ODA) through the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

VI. Project management

The Directorate for Cooperation and Resource Mobilisation is continuously involved in the design and formulation of Project Concept Documents and provides simultaneous ongoing support to the other ACS Directorates at the various stages of project management. These initiatives are presented to development partners for financing consideration and subsequent implementation.

The DCRM is currently promoting the projects prioritized by the Association, its Membership and the Secretariat in order to mobilise South-South and triangular Cooperation for their effective financing.

Transport:

- Maritime Transport and Logistics Strategy and Action Plan for the Greater Caribbean region (Consultancy)
- Development of a ferry network in the Greater Caribbean

Trade:

- Creation of a Regional ACS Observatory

Tourism:

- Revitalization of the Sustainable Tourism Zone of the Greater Caribbean (STZC)
- Sustainable Tourism Strategy for the Greater Caribbean (Consultancy)

Transport, Trade, Tourism:

- Digitalization of the Greater Caribbean

Disaster Risk Reduction:

- Geospatial Information System of the Greater Caribbean for disaster prevention (GIS-GC)
- Strengthening capacities for Multi-hazard Early Warning Systems in the Greater Caribbean region (MH-EWS)
- The Greater Caribbean Bridges to Inclusion (GC BTI)

Caribbean Sea Commission:

- Update of Report to Declare the Caribbean Sea a "Special Zone" in the Context of Sustainable Development (Consultancy)
- Impact of climate change on the sandy shorelines of the Caribbean: alternatives for its control and resilience II
- Resilient and low carbon tourism in the Greater Caribbean
- Mitigating the effects of climate change on Caribbean coral reefs: cultivation and propagation of stony corals and black hedgehogs for coral reef restoration

The prioritization of projects responds to the approved ACS Action Plan in the first semester of 2022, and to the evaluation and appropriation process of the Member States and Associate Members through the mechanisms established in the Internal Agreements of the Association; and the 2021 and 2022 Special Committees and Caribbean Sea Commissions.

VII. Administrative activities

Administrative activities undertaken by the Directorate include, but are not limited to the:

- Creation and production of the Annual ACS Cooperation Magazine and digital brochure of the 5th ACS International Cooperation Conference;
- Creation and production of the Annual ACS Cooperation Magazine and the digital brochure of the VI ACS International Cooperation Conference with i) 8 research articles on international cooperation, urban planning, geospatial cooperation, climate change, disaster risk reduction, trade, tourism and transport, ii) information on the 13 project concept papers in the ACS portfolio;

- Creation of the web page for the VI International Cooperation Conference, providing a space for registration, the agenda, panellists, special guests, photographs of the event, the projected presentations, the logistic manual, the cooperation magazine, the cooperation catalogue, the biographies and photographs of the panellists, as well as ACS contact information;
- Creation of the e-mail address conferencedesk@acs-aec.org for the receipt of correspondence pertinent to the Directorate's events;
- Preparation of the Executive Report of the VI International Cooperation Conference;
- Participation in different webinars related to cooperation;
- Elaboration of a follow-up matrix for all Memoranda of Understanding between the ACS and partners;
- Research on donors/development partners and a mapping systematization;
- Research and updating of the Inter-Secretariat Matrix.

The Directorate continues to promote efforts to advance the construction and consolidation of dialogue with international cooperation strategic partners in the search for transformative and innovative change towards sustainable development in the Greater Caribbean Region.