

## The Secretary General of the ACS attends the IV United Nation's Conference on the Least Developed Countries



Port of Spain (June 27, 2011) - The Secretary General of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), Ambassador Luis Fernando Andrade Falla, accompanied by Ms. Amanda Charles, Adviser to the Directorate of Sustainable Tourism, made an official visit to Turkey, on the invitation of the Turkish Government with all due attentions, during the period 9 -11 May 2011 to attend the IV United Nation's Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC IV) and simultaneously meet with representatives of the Turkish Government, an observer country of the ACS.

The United Nation's Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) is held every 10 yrs and was conceived as an effort by the United Nations for engagement of the LDCs in order to generate international attention and action to reverse the continuing deterioration of the socio-economic condition of these countries. The United Nations reports that "LDCs are characterized by constraints such as low per capita income, low level of human development, and economic and structural handicaps to growth that limit resilience to vulnerabilities".

Formal Bi-lateral Meetings were held with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of the Republic of Turkey and Senior officials from the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA). The Meeting with the MFA was held with Ambassador Feridun Sinirlioglu, Undersecretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey. At the said meeting Ambassador Sinirlioglu reiterated the commitment of his Government to collaborate with the ACS, and in their capacity as an observer country of the ACS, lend support for ACS projects and initiatives, particularly the Caribbean Sea Commission Agenda, through continuing their financial contributions. He also

expressed commitment on behalf of his Government to strengthen ties with the ACS to increase trade, bi-lateral relations and expand developmental assistance to the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) Region, which was a priority for the Government of Turkey.

The Secretary General outlined the structure and functions of the ACS Secretariat, sharing briefly on the work programmes of the Directorates. He made mention of the possibility for TIKA's expansion to the LAC Region, to begin by developing a specific project for Haiti, to support recovery efforts, in light of the recent Disaster. He also thanked the delegation for the opportunity to meet, reiterating the interest of the ACS, to partner with TIKA as they expand their work to the LAC Region.

Meetings were held with the head of the delegation of Finland, an observer country of the ACS and principal contributor to the Strengthening Hydro-meteorological Operations and Services in the Caribbean SIDS (SHOCS) project being developed by the Directorate for Natural disasters. Additionally outreach was made to the representatives of several ACS Members, Associate Member States and Observers.

The ACS will follow-up with counterparts in Turkey regarding their interest in supporting ACS activities and projects. Efforts will also be made to solidify relationships with the Organizations benchmarked for future engagement, to include the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA).