

## ACS Ministers Reinforce Need for Caribbean Multilateralism + Thank Outgoing Secretary General



### MEDIA RELEASE

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The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic and Trinidad and Tobago have recommitted to multilateralism, especially as the region seeks to set up its recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ministers were speaking at the 23rd Intersessional Meeting of the ACS Ministerial Council, held virtually today.

Dominican Minister Roberto Alvarez, Chair of the Ministerial Council of the ACS 2020-2021, highlighted the need to continue strengthening relations that will guarantee resilience and well-being of Caribbean people through commitment to multilateralism.

“We cannot spare efforts in the search for sustainable development for our peoples. We must promote projects that encourage, within and outside the Greater Caribbean, trade, investment, transportation, regional security, large-scale sustainable tourism, protection of the environment and the Caribbean Sea.”

Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago, host country of the ACS Secretariat, Dr. Amery Browne said that technical cooperation, and multilateralism are vital,

especially for Small Island Developing States.

“The work of the ACS is of utmost relevance. For example the convening of the first extraordinary meeting of ACS Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Health on COVID-19... and the establishment of a regional multi-sectoral technical task force to tackle the pandemic. We have demonstrated that we are not powerless in the face of this pandemic. We also need to grapple with achieving a post-COVID-19 recovery whilst remaining dedicated towards the attainment of the SDGs as both are symbiotically linked.”

Outgoing Secretary General, Dr. June Soomer, participating in her last official meeting as the sixth Secretary General of the 26-year-old Association said that the ACS continues to prove its relevance, bringing together the largest democracy in the region – Mexico, with the smallest democracy – Saint Kitts & Nevis. “We have a future within this Greater Caribbean, not just a voice and that our future will be working together as a region. This has been reinforced for me over the last few months with regard to COVID-19 and the need for us to work together... we are young but we have achieved a lot.”

The Ministers from the Dominican Republic and Trinidad & Tobago, along with country representatives from Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Mexico, Panama, Nicaragua, Saint Lucia, Barbados, Cuba, Costa Rica, Colombia and Guatemala all thanked Dr. Soomer for her dedication and skill in leading the organisation for the last four years and guiding it through its restructuring and revitalisation.

The Association of Caribbean States is an organisation that works towards sustainable development of the Greater Caribbean. The Organisation’s work is focused on: cooperation; disaster risk reduction; climate change; the protection of the Caribbean Sea; sustainable tourism; trade, transport & external economic relations; education and culture.