

## **Press Release - The Association of Caribbean States celebrates the Passing of the Torch**



**Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago - December 17, 2024** - The Association of Caribbean States (ACS) is marking the midpoint of its yearlong celebration of the 30th Anniversary of its establishment with a critical point of inflection - the passing of the torch of leadership from outgoing Secretary General, H.E. Rodolfo Sabonge, to H.E. Noemí Espinoza Madrid, the incoming Secretary General of the Association.

This ceremonial transition will take place on 19th December 2024, at the Headquarters of the ACS Secretariat in the presence of high-level representatives of the 35 Member States and Associate Members of the ACS, as well as ACS Observers and Social Actors. The Secretary General designate will assume office as the 8th ACS Secretary General on first January 2025.

The signing of the Convention establishing the ACS took place on 24th July 1994 in Cartagena, Colombia and 30 years later, its highest decision making body - the Ministerial Council will convene again in that country to hold its 30th Ordinary Meeting and 10th Summit of ACS Heads of State and/or Government.

As Secretary General, Ambassador Espinoza will, in support of the Chair of the Ministerial Council, the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia, convene these and several other important ACS gatherings, namely the ACS International Cooperation Conference and the ACS Business Forum, for May 2025.

The Ambassador will build on the strategic work done by her predecessor, H.E. Rodolfo Sabonge, in promoting consultation, cooperation and concerted action in the focal areas which the ACS is charged by its membership to lead efforts - namely connectivity, trade and sustainable development, environmental stewardship, particularly of the Caribbean Sea, and disaster risk reduction.

Critically, in furtherance of the theme for the 10th ACS Summit, United for Life, Towards a more Sustainable Greater Caribbean, the new Secretary General will guide the Association's preparation of its First Strategic Plan, intended to refine the Vision, Mission and Values of the ACS in a contemporary geo-political, socio-economic, environmental and technological that is fast evolving

and that demands an ACS fit for purpose to deliver on the sustainable development aspirations of the Greater Caribbean.

Ambassador Madrid brings with her nearly 3 decades of experience in international diplomacy, global partnership building and negotiations - a suite of skills that will be critical to forging a forward looking trajectory for an ACS poised to play an ever more strategic role in regional and global development over the next decade, beginning with consultations on the first ACS Strategic Plan.

Amongst honoured guests to this important symbolic ceremony will be the Representative of the Chair- the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia; the Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to Trinidad and Tobago and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps to that country as well as the Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Senator the Honourable Dr. Amery Browne.