

Guatemala Named as New Chair of The ACS Ministerial Council



MEDIA RELEASE

GUATEMALA NAMED AS NEW CHAIR OF THE ACS MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

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Mexico

Guatemala has been named the new chair of the Ministerial Council of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) assuming responsibility for implementing the new Plan of Action for 2022-2028 adopted and launched by the 27th Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council of the ACS. The virtual meeting, hosted by 2021/2022 Chair of the Ministerial Council, Mexico, brought together 21 of the 25 Country groupings representing the Greater Caribbean. The Meeting agreed on a wide ranging plan of action including plans for post-COVID recovery of sectors such as sustainable tourism and trade and pledged to redouble efforts to have the Caribbean Sea recognized as a special area by the United Nations General Assembly.

In his opening speech, ACS Secretary-General Rodolfo Sabonge referred to the need to adapt to the

new world order: "This new world order obliges us to reflect on our status and identity, because in this multipolar world, on the one hand, opportunities are opening up that, if well exploited, could allow us to shine and achieve coveted development, but it also brings with it threats that, if badly managed, could plunge us into greater difficulties than those we have faced to date. This multipolar world obliges us to act more intelligently, but also more bravely". He pointed out the imperative of good governance in effectively positioning the Greater Caribbean to pursue its development aspirations. The Secretary General also thanked Koica, the Republic of Turkey, the Resilience, Sustainable Energy and Maritime Biodiversity Programs (RESEMBID) and the Mexican Agency of International Cooperation for Development (AMEXCID) for their invaluable support.

On behalf of Mexico, Efraín Guadarrama extended his support to Guatemala for its new mandate, but not before thanking the ACS membership for the support received during his term of office: "Our association is strengthened by the active participation of its member countries, and the firm commitment of the Secretariat headed by Mr. Rodolfo Sabonge and his team of collaborators is also evident.

New Chair of the Ministerial Council, the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Guatemala, Mario Búcaro, received with honour the presidency and expressed his interest in "promoting socio-economic development and contributing to the post-pandemic economic recovery, promoting strategies to attract investments and encourage tourism and the fight against climate change, outlining four specific pillars of action: multidimensional cooperation, green and blue agenda, economic recovery and migration.

At this meeting, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) was admitted as an Observer to the ACS. CDB President, Dr. Gene Leon said that "this partnership we have forged with the ACS promises to be highly strategic and mutually reinforcing, combining the strengths of each institution to enhance our ability to cooperate regionally and internationally". Dr Gene Leon also noted that this alliance has the potential to create enterprises that can generate competitive and sustainable economies.

The rest of the Executive Board of the Ministerial Council comprises Jamaica and Mexico as Vice-Chairs and Panama as Rapporteur and a proposal for the creation of a working group within the Committee on Budget and Administration to improve ACS governance was also presented at the event. Established in 1994, the Association of Caribbean States is an organisation for consultation, cooperation and concerted action in the Greater Caribbean. The ACS coordinates the mandates of its 25 Member States and 10 Associate Members. Its work is focused on, but not limited to disaster risk reduction; sustainable tourism, trade, transport and the protection and preservation of the Caribbean Sea.

Media contact:

Lorine Bozin | communications@acs-aec.org