25th Intersessional Meeting Preparatory to the 28th Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council



17 Member States and 2 Associate Members of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) held virtually the 25th Intersessional Preparatory Meeting for the 28th Ordinary Meeting of the ACS Ministerial Council. H.E. Giovani Castillo Polanco, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Guatemala, delivered the opening address in his capacity as representative of the Chairman of the Ministerial Council. On behalf of the host country of the ACS Headquarters, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and CARICOM Affairs took the opportunity to congratulate the ACS for its work in addressing the challenges facing the Greater Caribbean region as a result of climate change. Secretary General Rodolfo Sabonge in his welcoming address noted that despite the continuing negative impact of such dire external global circumstances as climate change, COVID-19 and conflict, on the Region, ACS members were, by their presence at this meeting, demonstrating their ongoing commitment to overcome challenges by working together.

The meeting adopted the Reports of the Chairman of the Ministerial Council, the Secretary General and the Chairmen of the ACS Special Committees on the ACS focal areas of Disaster Risk Reduction, Trade Development and External Economic Relations, Transport, Sustainable Tourism, Co-operation and Resource Mobilisation, Caribbean Sea and Budget and Administration. These reports outlined the achievements of the various bodies of the ACS in support of the Chair’s four pronged vision at the half mark of his mandate, namely to increase multilateral cooperation, advance a regional green and blue agenda, reactivate the regional economy through greater investment and address the migratory cycle from a development perspective.

The meeting celebrated, amongst other achievements to date, the launch of the Greater Caribbean Climate Migration Initiative, the success of the 6th ACS International Cooperation Conference held in Cuba - the first in-person ACS gathering since 2020 and the constructive conclusions of the Internal Management Audit of the ACS aimed at refining the functionality, effectiveness and fitness for purpose of the ACS and its Secretariat in keeping with the revitalisation mandate of ACS Heads of State and Government.

The meeting looked forward to the 9th Summit of Heads of State and/or Government of the ACS and other key encounters to be hosted by the Chair for the Ministerial Council in May 2023 in Antigua, Guatemala, agreeing on the draft agendas and programme for the face-to-face Summit, the 28th Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council, the 7th ACS International Conference on Cooperation, and, the 15th Business Forum of the Greater Caribbean. Delegates welcomed the one-week dialogue space where Greater Caribbean policymakers will engage with each other world leaders but also with development cooperation actors and the private sector to identify opportunities to partner in innovating an integration that can fast track the region's sustainable and multidimensional development in the region.

With a view to operationalising the 2022-28 Plan of Action in support of the Association's vision for innovative and sustainable development, delegates recommended a draft Implementation Plan for consideration at the 28th Ordinary Meeting of the ACS Ministerial Council.