

## Association of Caribbean States (ACS) Celebrates the 15th Business Forum of the Greater Caribbean in Antigua, Guatemala



The 15th Business Forum of the Greater Caribbean, ACS' flagship event and regional platform for public-private dialogue in the region, was held at the Porta Hotel in Antigua, Guatemala. Business leaders and policy makers in attendance presented and discussed information, strategies and updated knowledge on attracting foreign direct investment and increasing economic competitiveness and productivity in the region.

The forum began with welcoming remarks by ACS Secretary General, H.E. Rodolfo Sabonge, reminding us that this is the first face-to-face forum we have held in three years. The Secretary General referred to the need to focus our efforts on developing trade and attracting investment to the region, as regional leaders look to rebuild stronger economies in the aftermath of the pandemic.

Guatemala's Foreign Minister, H.E. Mario Búcaro Flores, invited those present to work together to promote and build a circular economy to achieve our regional goals.

The forum discussed the economic strategies needed to attract investment and promote trade in the Caribbean. A key point is the improvement of the relationship between the public and private sectors. Also addressed were topics such as the role of logistics and connectivity in trade and business opportunities, women's leadership in a digitized business world, MSME-focused programs, opportunities arising from the circular economy, and e-commerce as a tool for economic diversification.

The first day of the conference was closed with the presence of the Officer in charge of the ACS Directorate of Trade and Sustainable Development, Safiya Reid, who extended a cordial invitation to participants to attend the next Conference on Connectivity of the Greater Caribbean, which will take

place on September 12, 13 and 14 of this year in Martinique. This conference will bring transport and logistics stakeholders together to discuss solutions to reduce regional transport challenges so that the abundant business opportunities discussed at this forum can be realized.

The second day of the conference allowed public and private sector parties to exchange ideas on access to clean water and sanitation, waste treatment, sargassum management and sustainable tourism. MSMEs are the main sources of economic growth and we at the ACS stand firm in developing policies that strengthen their capacity for internationalization.

Learn more at: <https://cooperation.acs-aec.org/>