The Association of Caribbean States participates in the OECD Environmental Sustainability Week in Costa Rica



Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago - The Association of Caribbean States participated in several events surrounding the 1st Ministerial Summit on Environmental Sustainability under the theme: Economic Resilience, Green and Just Transition. The event was hosted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in San José, Costa Rica, on 5 October 2023.

In the framework of this summit, ACS Secretary General, H.E. Rodolfo Sabonge, participated in several other meetings coordinated by OECD during that week. On October 4, 2023, His Excellency participated in the 21st Plenary Meeting of the OECD Initiative on Global Value Chains, Production, Transformation and Development, and delivered remarks in Panel 4 titled 'Drivers of Economic Transformation - Planning, Building and Financing Infrastructure Resilient to Natural Disasters', which opened discussions on resilient infrastructure and good practices concerning natural phenomena.

During his intervention, the Secretary General explained the efforts of the ACS in disaster risk reduction and the results from Phase 1 of the recently concluded Sandy Shorelines Coastal Erosion project and the Greater Caribbean Climate Mobility Initiative. He emphasized the need for a paradigm shift in understanding the natural phenomena which can lead to disasters such as poor planning and constant human intervention in natural habitats.

In addition, the Secretary highlighted the importance of the Antigua Declaration, signed in the IX ACS Summit of Heads of States and Governments, which underscores the urgency of finding useful and up-to-date mechanisms that capture the vulnerabilities of small nations, such as the United Nations Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (IVM) and the Recovery Time Indicator (RDA).

On October 5, 2023, Secretary General Sabonge participated as a keynote speaker in the summit's Ministerial Session 3: Towards a sustainable ocean economy. In his speech, the Secretary explained the vision and role of the ACS as an international organization that comprise countries with the same common element, the Caribbean Sea. The Secretary General stressed the importance of establishing economic integration mechanisms that allow the region to use the Caribbean Sea sustainably and incorporate all relevant partners for its development, including the OECD and multilateral banks.

The 17th Meeting of the Working Group of the OECD Regional Programme in Latin America and the Caribbean was also held in the context of the summit on October 6, 2023. At the Meeting, ACS Advisor for Cooperation and Resource Mobilization, Lisa Douglas-Paul, followed up on the Secretary-General's interventions, emphasizing the mission of the ACS in promoting consultation, cooperation and concerted action. She provided detailed information to the Meeting on the projects and activities that are currently being executed by the ACS, showcasing, in particular, the contributions of the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF) in the areas of transport and trade; as well as efforts with South Korea on climate change, coastal erosion, and sargassum.

Finally, the Advisor concluded her intervention by emphasizing the Mandate provided by the United Nations to the ACS to Declare the Caribbean Sea as a Special Area, and its importance on the path towards a sustainable ocean economy. She closed her remarks by inviting the OECD to the ACS 8th International Cooperation Conference, to be held on 7 May 2024 in Paramaribo, Suriname.

For more information on this matter, please contact the ACS Directorate for Cooperation and Resource Mobilisation.