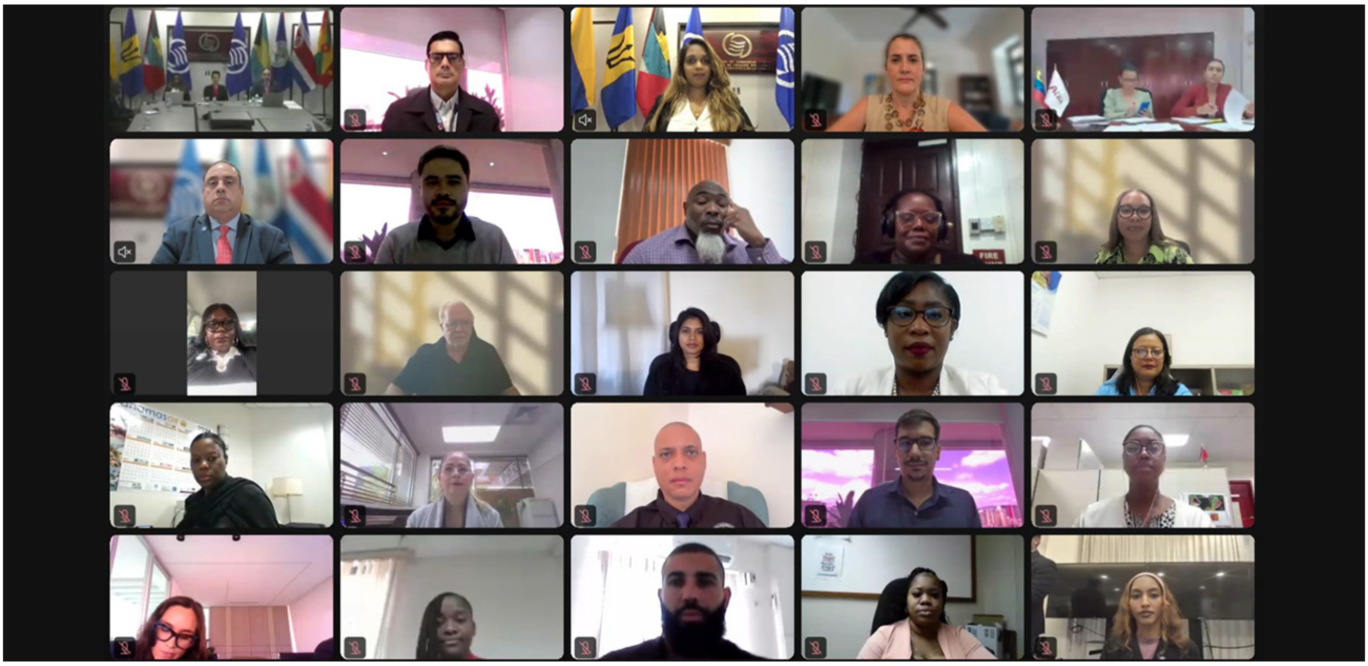
ACS Strategic Webinar Connects Greater Caribbean Institutions with Trade, Investment and Financing Opportunities



Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago — June, 2026 | The Association of Caribbean States (ACS), in collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), and the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank), successfully hosted the Strategic Webinar on Trade and Investment Promotion Organizations, bringing together more than 80 participants from across the Greater Caribbean.

The webinar enabled representatives of trade and investment promotion institutions to exchange experiences and identify opportunities for technical assistance, cooperation, and financing. It addressed persistent barriers to the region's economic development, including limited access to finance, low productivity, high transportation costs, and insufficient intra-regional connectivity. Although the Greater Caribbean benefits from a strategic geographic location, diverse economies, and significant entrepreneurial potential, stronger institutions and more efficient trade and investment systems are needed to translate these assets into tangible opportunities.

Opening the webinar, ACS Secretary-General H.E. Noemí Espinoza noted that geopolitical uncertainty, shifting supply chains, technological change, and growing competition for investment are reshaping the global economy.

"The question for the Greater Caribbean is not whether opportunities exist, but how effectively we position ourselves to seize them," she stated.

She also emphasized the importance of connectivity to the region's competitiveness and resilience. "Every investment in transport infrastructure, logistics networks, trade facilitation and regional integration contributes directly to expanding opportunities, reducing costs, attracting investment and strengthening resilience," she said. "Connectivity is, ultimately, the bridge between geography and opportunity."

Krista Lucenti, Lead Specialist and Coordinator of Trade and Investment at the Inter-American Development Bank, presented the Agreement on Investment Facilitation for Development, its relevance to the Greater Caribbean, and the technical support available for implementation.

Natasha Edwin-Walcott, Coordinator for MSME Development at the Caribbean Development Bank, outlined financing instruments and initiatives designed to strengthen micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, entrepreneurs, creative industries, and other sectors with the potential to support sustainable economic development.

Okechukwu Ihejirika, Acting Chief Operating Officer at the African Export-Import Bank, highlighted opportunities arising from Afro-Caribbean cooperation, including mechanisms to expand market access, mobilize investment, and deepen South-South partnerships between Africa and the Caribbean.

The webinar supports the implementation of the ACS Strategic Plan 2025–2035, which identifies Trade and External Economic Relations and Transport and Connectivity as strategic priorities. It also advances the ACS Futures Initiative 2035 (ACSFI2035) by strengthening the partnerships and institutional capacities needed to connect regional priorities with investment and implementable projects.

Our success will be measured not by the volume of trade or investment generated, but by the tangible improvements these efforts bring to the lives and well-being of people across the Greater Caribbean.