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FIFTH SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE AND/OR GOVERNMENT OF THE STATES,
COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES

DRAFT STRATEGIC DOCUMENT – Annex VII

INPUT
OFFICE OF THE POLITICAL ADVISER

ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES (ACS)

FIFTH SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE AND/OR GOVERNMENT

Haiti, April 23-26, 2012

OFFICE OF THE POLITICAL ADVISOR

ACS Summits: Analysis of the Advances

I Summit 1995 – Port of Spain

Purpose: Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action on Tourism, Trade and Transportation

This Inaugural Summit expressed political consensus on cooperation in the three areas aforementioned, with a view to creating an extended Greater Caribbean economic space.

II Summit 1999 – Santo Domingo

Purpose: Analyze the progress of the ACS from 1995 to 1999 so as to determine the projection of the Caribbean Region towards the 21st Century.

This Summit analyzed the progress made and outlined a medium to long term strategy to promote functional cooperation and concerted action. It laid the institutional foundations and consultation was forged among the stakeholders. Cooperation in culture, education, science and technology was highlighted.

III Summit 2001 – Margarita Island

Purpose: Strengthen the ACS as forum for consultation, concerted action and cooperation towards the promotion of a Caribbean identity.

It was agreed that the main mission of the Association hence, would be the establishment of the Greater Caribbean as a Zone of Cooperation, an extended economic space, strengthening cooperation in the four priority areas, viz. trade, sustainable tourism, transport and natural disasters. The Convention on the Sustainable Tourism Zone was signed.

IV Summit 2005 – Panamá

Purpose: To reflect on the evolution of the organization; its achievements and challenges; to focus on its future, with a view to giving a new political impetus to the Association.

EVALUATION – POLITICAL ASPECTS - MANDATES OF THE IV SUMMIT

<u>MANDATE</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
<p><u>Numeral 1.</u> We, the Heads of State and/or Government of the Member States and Associate Members of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), have gathered in Panama City, Republic of Panama on July 29, 2005, to reaffirm our full commitment and support for the ACS and the validity of its principles and objectives outlined in the Convention Establishing the ACS, through which we will continue to promote the sustainable development of our peoples in economic, environmental, social and cultural aspects.</p>	<p><u>Commitment and Support</u> With a view to reinforcing commitment and support in a tangible manner, it is necessary 1) to continue with timely payment of quotas; 2) to consider the status and dimension of growth of the Association in terms of its projects, mandates and institutional commitments, as well as the international standards which should be adhered to 3) active participation at the highest possible level at meetings; 4) follow-up on decisions taken as well as timelines communicated by the Secretariat to complete its mandates and tasks; 5) to move forward the ACS' Agenda, drawing on dialogue as well as specific and necessary actions on the part of Ministries and States; 6) intensify every effort to sign and ratify legal instruments so as to endow the Association with the faculties and powers it needs; 7) to improve communications and hand-over of information so as to ensure continuity and cost effectiveness.</p>
<p><u>Numeral 2.</u> We recognise that the Tenth Anniversary is an appropriate occasion to reflect upon the evolution of the ACS, its achievements and challenges, and to focus on the future of our organisation. In this respect, we are committed to giving new political impetus to the Association.</p>	<p><u>Reflection</u> Conscious of our fundamental objectives, of its integrating characteristic, and if the desire is for the Association to face current realities with success, so that it reaches the heights and dimensions of its call as an international organization, representative of so many countries, then it should be endowed with all that it needs to ensure this, viz., financial, technical, human resources and cooperation.</p> <p>The Secretariat, being one of the permanent organs of the Association, should be wholesome and strong. It is necessary to strengthen it in every sense of the word: fill all vacancies with capable functionaries; implement and maintain established procedures, forge the passion, greater understanding and loyalty towards the institution, as well as respect for the authorities.</p> <p>The challenge for the Secretariat and the Member States is to define strategic priorities, plans of action and objectives of the work programmes, with the greatest measure of precision possible, so as to optimize the use of the scarce resources available for the same. Members can contribute significantly by means of their leadership both political and technical, to the Secretariat's effort.</p>

<p>Numeral 3. We recognise that in light of the experience gathered over the past ten years, our Association has achieved a level of maturity that requires a New Vision to inspire its activities in the years ahead, and in that sense, the time is ripe for our Association to move more rapidly to achieve our principal objectives through promoting greater consultation and co-operation among our Member States, taking into account the dynamic of the international agendas, and by playing a more profound and effective role in the international community, particularly at the regional and sub-regional levels.</p>	<p>Acquired Experience</p> <p>If in 2005, it was necessary to move rapidly toward the achievement of our main objectives, it is even so much so now that the geo-political realities have evolved and revolutionized in such a way that it seems to place in jeopardy the very existence and raison d'être of the ACS.</p> <p>Greater consultation and cooperation were recommended in 2005; it is of utmost importance that the structures and mechanisms we already had be revisited, revived and maintained; for example Meetings with the other secretariats of founding observers, as well as contact and liaison with Social Actors. Without adequate staffing and finances, it has been difficult to participate in regional and international forums.</p> <p>It is necessary to make maximum use of the support possible from Observer Countries who are interested in a greater exchange and cooperation.</p>
<p>Numeral 4. We recall the Guadalajara Declaration of the Latin America and Caribbean-European Union Summit, held in Mexico in May 2004, which recognised the ACS as an important regional partner for strengthening co-operation between the Greater Caribbean Area and the European Union. We will develop appropriate follow-up mechanisms to strengthen co-operation with the EU.</p>	<p>Regional Counterparts</p> <p>The ACS enjoys some recognition, however it is important that the Association become a force that is pro-active, and seeks to involve itself in concrete ways in the regional and international agenda.</p> <p>Other alliances are being sought and forged on a daily basis on several fronts, leaving the ACS in the proverbial cold.</p> <p>Even though a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by ACS and the European Union, mutual collaboration can be explored.</p>
<p>Numeral 19. The Caribbean Sea is a common patrimony of the region and we, as its custodians, reiterate our decision to continue taking the steps necessary to ensure its recognition as a special area in the context of sustainable development by the United Nations General Assembly.</p>	<p>Caribbean Sea Initiative</p> <p>Conscious of the original mandate as conveyed in the Convention Establishing the ACS regarding the preservation of our common patrimony, the pronouncements made at the last four Summits, the Reports given by Barbados as Chair of the commission to the 15th Intersessional and to the 17th Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council, it is of supreme importance to make the most of the work and recognition already achieved and attained.</p>

<p>Numeral 25. We recognise the growing success of the ACS in implementing a culture of co-operation among the integration and co-operation organisations in the Greater Caribbean, particularly among its Founding Observers, and we support joint efforts toward the four areas of interest of the ACS being backed by the commitment of the Members and Secretariats with continued functional collaboration. In this respect, we invite the Founding Observers and other regional and sub-regional organisations to promote the broadest participation possible on their part, in the building of bridges among the different groups of ACS Members and we support joint activities, current and future, toward the mobilisation of extra-budgetary resources.</p>	<p>Culture of Cooperation. This cooperation continues to be evident in the work programmes of the Association.</p> <p>It is necessary, however, to strengthen and increase this influence, collaborating in a concerted, reciprocal and practical manner on programmes and activities of mutual interest.</p>
<p>Numeral 29. We invite the territories eligible for ACS membership to take the necessary steps to become Associate Members, with a view to achieving universality of membership as provided for in the Convention Establishing the Association of Caribbean States.</p>	<p>Universality of the ACS Membership It is necessary to approach once again those territories which qualify to be Associate Members, as per the Convention establishing the ACS.</p>

DELIVERABLES

<p><u>ACS Meetings</u></p>	<p>Reconsider the mechanism of the Ministerial Council Meetings, especially in respect of the procedure to approve the Ministerial Agreements.</p> <p>Resume and strengthen Political Dialogue in the agenda of the Meetings of the Ministerial Council, dialogue which is absolutely necessary for the life and direction of the Association.</p> <p>Ensure that each unit of the Secretariat has adequate human resource in order to comply with its mandates in a comprehensive manner.</p>
<p><u>Members and Associate Members</u></p>	<p>Appreciate and acknowledge those who have remained constant in their commitment and cooperation. Strengthen ties with the other members for a greater commitment to the work of the Association. Maintain the focal point contact information constantly up-dated and accurate in a reciprocal manner. Ensure that the use of current means of communication is optimal in every sense of the word, towards the success of the Association's work.</p> <p>Revive the interest and involvement of the small islands, beginning with the rapprochement to the OECS.</p> <p>Links could also be established with relevant and current political actors, e.g Ministers of Trade, Transport and Environment. This strategy could strengthen political communication.</p>
<p><u>Founding Observers</u></p>	<p>It is necessary to resume the process of Inter-Secretariat Co-operation, which would position the ACS as a mechanism for the transversal cooperation on the basis of effective studies on the programs and objectives of each one. It is necessary to make the most of the ACS/SICA/CARICOM rapprochement. We must revisit the substantive dialogue and so strengthen ties with SELA/SIECA/CTO and ECLAC so as to empower these relations in such a way that the notion of a community with shared interests could become more operative in the Greater Caribbean.</p>
<p><u>Observer Countries</u></p>	<p>Invest efforts and resources to ensure a closer relationship with a greater number of observer countries.</p>
<p><u>Social Actors</u></p>	<p>Re-establish and strengthen communication with the Social Actors.</p>
<p><u>Observer Organizations</u> Countries who qualify to be Associate I Members International Organizations with whom ACS already has ties and cooperation</p>	<p>Revisit and strengthen these ties. Firmly establish the relevance of the ACS in the context of the international organisms so that these regional organizations do not perceive the ACS as a competition for resources, but rather as a partner in the achievement of development.</p>

<u>New Organizations</u> ALBA, UNASUR, CELAC	This multi-dimensional integration process generates many parallel but different agendas and creates a complex mosaic of interests that is difficult to articulate. It is necessary to consider the possible role of the ACS in this process, and the possible deviation of the political interest along with financial and technical resources of the members of the ACS, in this scenario.
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CONCLUSION

It is necessary to not fall into the realm of irrelevance, but rather to augment the climate of mutual confidence and unite ourselves on a vision of the future with regard to topics relevant to the Greater Caribbean.

Above all, it is necessary to value the grandeur of this initiative that is the Association of Caribbean States. It is crucial that at this Fifth Summit, leaders give their unequivocal stamp of political commitment to the ACS with regards to its purposes and objectives.