

ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES (ACS)

DIRECTORATE OF TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (DTSD)

ACS MEETING OF TRANSPORT STAKEHOLDERS

Thursday 28th May, 2020 - via videoconference

**OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIR OF THE ACS SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORT, MR. CLIFTON AMOIDA**

Secretary General of the Association of Caribbean States, Dr. June Soomer.
Representatives of the ACS Members and Associate Members,
Representatives from the Founding Observers of the ACS,
Representatives of air and maritime organizations within the Greater Caribbean,
Specially Invited Guests.

Good morning,

As we meet today, we are all cognisant of the difficult times that the world has been experiencing due to the pandemic caused by the novel coronavirus. The countries in the Greater Caribbean region are no exception. Whilst some of our nations have managed to “flatten the curve”, others continue to be affected.

In moving towards the new normal, we must start thinking about how we rebuild and restructure our systems in every sector to be better able to withstand these external shocks. It will take collective effort and specific targeted actions, but we are up to the task.

Today, we focus on the transportation sector, a critical sector which supports commercial activities like trade and tourism, which drive so many of our Greater Caribbean economies. The pandemic has shown us that transportation is an essential service. Moving goods will always remain essential. Therefore, we must ensure that we use the opportunity provided by the pandemic to advance a more equitable, accessible and robust regional transport mechanism.

This meeting will aim to begin discussions around this matter. It also seeks to have input from all the transportation stakeholders present today on how COVID-19 has impacted the sector. From this exchange of dialogue, we hope to share and learn of regional best practices.

To that end, I thank you and I wish you all fruitful discussions.