

**ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES
SECOND ORDINARY MEETING OF THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Havana, 13th December, 1996

Agreement No. 3 /96

**AGREEMENT ADOPTING THE WORK PROGRAMMES OF THE SPECIAL
COMMITTEES AND ESTABLISHING SEVERAL PROVISIONS**

The Ministerial Council,

PURSUANT TO:

Article IX, Item (a) of the Convention establishing the ACS;

Article 8 of the Terms of Reference of the Special Committees; and

The reports of the Special Committees presented during the Second Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council;

CONSIDERING:

That the actions of the Special Committees must be in line with the objectives of the Work Program of the Association;

AGREES:

1. To adopt the work programs of the Special Committees, which provide the framework for their activities pursuant to the basic priorities provided for in the Convention establishing the ACS, the Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action of Port-of-Spain and the Work Programme of the ACS set down by the First Meeting of the Ministerial Council. The Committees will follow up and enrich the programs that are adopted.

2. To take note of the reports presented by the Chairmen of the Special Committees, which comprise the main actions that are to be undertaken to execute their work programmes.
3. To instruct the Chairman of the Ministerial Council, with the support of the Secretary General, to ensure systematic communications between the Special Committees so that they can complement each other's functions and avoid any duplication of their activities and the activities of other international agencies in which the Members of the Association participate. The Intersessional Preparatory meeting will follow up the work of coordinating the Special Committees.
4. To adopt the proposal that the Committees on Natural Resources and the Environment meet at the same time and place simultaneously and to hold the next meeting of both Committees in Jamaica in April 1997.
5. To instruct the Special Committees to ensure that their Work Programmes have a medium and long-term perspective.
6. To request the Special Committees to foster the mutual knowledge of the institutions relevant to their spheres of competence in the countries of the Association.
7. To adopt the following proposals presented to the Second Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council, which are not contained in the respective work programmes and priorities of the Special Committees, so that they may be incorporated into said programmes and priorities.

Special Committee for the Protection and Conservation of the Environment and of the Caribbean Sea

- a. To set up a working group within the Special Committee to provide specific follow up for the issues of natural and environmental disasters and propose actions and policies to deal with them.
- b. To instruct said working group to design a project for a cooperation system for the prevention and mitigation of natural and environmental disasters, as well as a mechanism for mobilizing the necessary intraregional and international resources to provide disaster relief.

- c. To instruct the Chairman of the Ministerial Council to present to the United Nations a proposal to the effect that the Caribbean Basin be considered a zone especially affected by natural and environmental disasters and consequently, that it be assigned a priority in UN assistance and relief programs.
- d. To convene a meeting of the national environmental and natural resources authorities of the member countries of the ACS to coordinate positions with a view to the forthcoming debate in the United Nations in connection with Agenda 21.
- e. To instruct the Special Committee to devote the necessary attention to the threats implicit in the dumping of toxic waste and the traffic of radioactive waste in the Caribbean Region.

Special Committee for the Development of Trade and External Economic Relations

- a. To instruct the Special Committee to give priority to the promotion of broad economic opportunities for trade and investment. The Special Committee will, then, in the first instance, identify the existing obstacles to intraregional trade and investment. It will also design a methodology to encourage in a gradual and progressive way the liberalization of trade, investments, transport and other related areas, culminating in the establishment of free trade in the area as soon as possible.
- b. To promote the organization of a business forum, which will hold its first meeting in 1997, at the same time as the Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council.