

DIALOGUE ON IDENTIFYING EXISTING TRADE OPPORTUNITIES AMONG MEMBER STATES OF THE GREATER CARIBBEAN REGION

RATIONALE

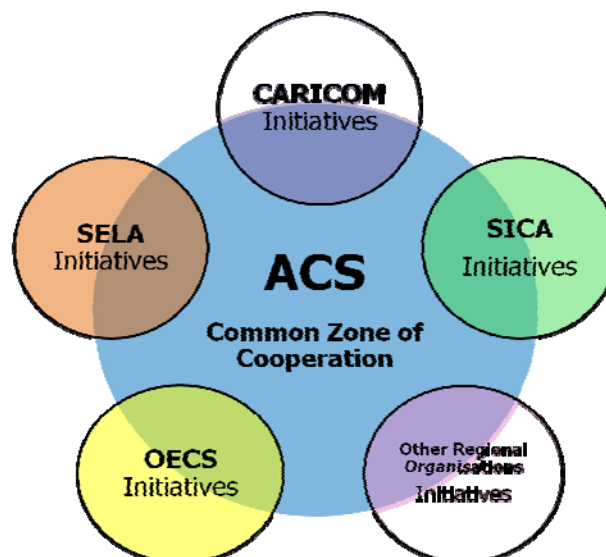
The Association of Caribbean States was established as an umbrella organization to bring together major Regional groupings of the Greater Caribbean in a common space in order to promote consultation, cooperation, coordination and concerted action among Member States and Associate Members.

In this regard, and at this critical juncture at which the Region is position currently, the ACS in its role as Regional coordinator recognizes the necessity to gather Regional organizations of the Greater Caribbean to dialogue and address issues relevant for the furtherance of trade and investment in the Region.

FOCUS OF DIALOGUE

The ACS framework provides a forum for political dialogue that allows Members the opportunity to identify areas of common interest and concern that may be addressed at the regional level, and the solutions for which can be found through cooperation.

Former Secretary General of the Association, Norman Girvan indicated that, “a close analysis of it nature and work programmes leads to the conclusion that it is a system of functional cooperation containing both intra-regional, and extra regional elements and addressing both economic and non-economic subject areas....Hence we can argue that the proper characterization of the ACS is a Zone of Cooperation” as shown in the diagram below:



THE DIALOGUE SEEKS TO ADDRESS:

From a Global Perspective:

- The position of the Caribbean Region within the current global economic trading system.
- How existing trade opportunities in the Caribbean region are impacted by today's globalizing economy.
- How can the Greater Caribbean Region maximize on existing capacities related to trade and investment towards increased global competitiveness.

From the Perspective of Regional Organizations: (CARICOM, SICA, OECS, SELA, Caribbean Export Development Agency)

- The identification of specific areas for cooperation and collaboration among Regional organization groupings for the benefit of Member States.
- The realization of viable initiatives to promote trade and investment as it relates to:
 - i. New emerging sectors and markets.
 - ii. Promoting Innovation and new technologies
 - iii. Cultural Cooperation (e.g. maximizing upon opportunities within the creative and cultural industries)
 - iv. Inter-Secretariat Cooperation
 - v. Promoting synergies and linkages.

PARTICIPATION

Each regional organization or body is asked to present a **brief 5-10 minutes presentation** on existing initiatives, and work currently being conducted in their organization in relation to points identified above, as well as offer proposals for closer coordination and concerted action among Regional organizations of the Greater Caribbean.