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ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES

XXI MEETING OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, October 02, 2013

Plan of Action of Pétion Ville

**FIFTH SUMMIT
OF HEADS OF STATE AND/OR GOVERNMENT
OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES (ACS)
PLAN OF ACTION OF PÉTION VILLE**

The tasks contained in the following Plan of Action of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) shall be completed within a two-year period for the years 2013 and 2014. The Secretariat shall present regular reports and recommendations on the implementation of this Plan of Action to the Ministerial Council and its subsidiary organs, which will decide on action to be taken and possible modifications to be made, bearing in mind changes in circumstances.

All Member States and Associate Members are urged to support the projects and activities identified herein.

1. SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

- 1.1 **Establishment of the Sustainable Tourism Zone of the Greater Caribbean (STZC).** This is the flagship project of the ACS Special Committee on Sustainable Tourism which seeks the establishment and recognition of the Greater Caribbean as a Region that supports and promotes the Sustainable development of Tourism. Implementation of this project currently in the third phase of execution will include the establishment of support mechanisms, conducting studies and research and establishing regional and international linkages to enhance the profile, visibility and value of the STZC. These activities are expected to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices among STZC Stakeholders, and also support consultation and integrated planning for the further development of the STZC.

- 1.2 **Annual Regional Tourism Safety and Security Capacity-building Seminar.** To facilitate dialogue and cooperation among Tourism, National Security and Disaster Management Agencies on issues related to crime and harassment against tourists, and also to contribute to the development of coordinated and integrated response mechanisms and strategies in relation to disaster and risk mitigation and management, an Annual Regional Tourism Safety and Security Capacity-building workshop and/or seminar will be hosted. The First Annual Seminar will be hosted in collaboration with the Tourism Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago.

- 1.3 **Implementation of a Tourism Policing Project.** This project seeks to deliver training, technical assistance and subsequently documentation to increase the competencies of law enforcement and tourism stakeholders in the Greater Caribbean Region, in the area of visitor safety and security, while also creating employment opportunities for the youth. This project will include a Survey and Study on Tourism Policing in the Greater Caribbean Region, which will inform the development of a Regional Best-Practice Framework and Curriculum on Tourism Policing. It is expected to subsequently implement a pilot training project comprising of a mix of ACS Member States with due consideration to the geographical and linguistic representation. Implementation of this project will facilitate the transfer of knowledge, best practices and experiences of countries with Tourism Police units utilising knowledge exchange mechanisms and co-operation.
- 1.4 **Establishment of the Centre for the Promotion of Languages and Cultures of the Greater Caribbean (CPLC).** The objective of this project is to prioritize the implementation of student exchange programs among the countries of the ACS for language training and cultural immersion. As such, this project is aimed at promoting the cultural diversity of the region and strengthening the language skills of nationals in the main languages spoken in the Greater Caribbean: English, French, and Spanish; and also to foster the learning of the Creole language and culture as well as the other indigenous languages and cultures of the Greater Caribbean.
- 1.5 **Forum of Airline and Tourism Executives for the Promotion Multi-Destination Tourism in the Greater Caribbean.** To promote multi-destination tourism, intra-regional travel and facilitate synergies between the tourism and transport sectors, the project, *Forum of Airline and Tourism Executives for the Promotion Multi-Destination Tourism in the Greater Caribbean: Exploring Closer Ties & Opportunities for Connectivity* will be implemented. Activities for the upcoming period include, hosting of a Meeting of Airline Executives and Regional Tourism and Transport Authorities and commissioning of a Study which collates the diverse regional approaches to MDT, with recommendations for a Greater Caribbean MDT Strategy. The First Regional Dialogue will be held in collaboration with the Latin American and Caribbean Air Transport Association (ALTA) and the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO). These activities are expected to, inter-alia, increase partnerships and linkages between the tourism and air transport sectors and further advances the dialogue on issues pertaining to connectivity within and access to the region.
- 1.6 **Cruise Tourism and Entrepreneurial Strengthening in the Greater Caribbean: Opportunities for Women.** This project will seek to deliver training and capacity

building tools to women with Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the tourism industry, and tools for training and capacity building. Activities for the period will include a Study on the role and contribution of women in the Tourism Sector in Greater Caribbean and development of a Training Program Curriculum. Subsequently, a Regional Training Workshop and Symposium will be conducted. This project is expected to highlight the importance of cruise tourism as an engine for the socio-economic development of women; transfer knowledge and resources for capacity-building geared towards entrepreneurial strengthening of women with MSMEs in the tourism industry; and more importantly, showcase women-owned MSMEs to generate interest, exposure and opportunities for increased business.

2. TRADE DEVELOPMENT AND EXTERNAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS

- 2.1 Elimination and Reduction of Obstacles and Challenges to Trade Facilitation within the Greater Caribbean Region.** This project will focus on holding Technical Meetings of the Working Groups on Customs Facilitation and the Issuance of Business Visas; and the promotion of the implementation of the UNCTAD E-Regulations Programme. The expected results would be the Signing of an Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding to govern the exchange, sharing, and interface of customs information and procedures, with particular reference to the advance electronic remission of merchandise declarations for export, and other areas of interest among Member States, as well as the creation of an information portal to facilitate access to information on the movement of Business Persons.
- 2.2 Convening of an Annual Business Forum of the Greater Caribbean, as well as the Forum of Trade Promotion Organizations.** With these two Fora, it is anticipated that trade, investment, and the exchange of knowledge will be promoted among businessmen, business-women and entrepreneurs of the Greater Caribbean. They will also encourage discussions on relevant topics on the Region's Trade Agenda aimed at expanding and strengthening trade relations.
- 2.3 The Promotion of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the Greater Caribbean.** This project is designed mainly to create and expand job opportunities, and alleviate unemployment in the countries of the ACS. To this end, an annual seminar will be convened involving expert entities and MSMEs of the region, to discuss the importance of the sector and identify opportunities for development in ACS Member States. Based on the outcomes of this seminar, a document will be developed for the exchange of good practices.

- 2.4 **The Empowering of Women Through Trade** through the holding of an Annual Seminar in order to promote from a gender perspective, the strengthening of capabilities of women entrepreneurs, their economic autonomy and provide the gender sensitive tools necessary to address matters related to the challenges and obstacles of managing MSMEs, resulting in the increased capacity and skills of women entrepreneurs and small business owners. By means of this Seminar, it is anticipated that knowledge will be acquired in respect of avenues for accessing finance, and new technologies.
- 2.5 **Promotion of the convergence and deepening of Trade within the ACS through new schemes.** Update the study on the actual and potential flow of trade in the ACS Region, and the identification, compilation and execution of existing and new related cooperation activities within the Region.
- 2.6 **The strengthening of the Caribbean Development Bank (CARIBANK)** to expand its participation and activities in all countries of the ACS. In this regard, Mexico is willing to collaborate with the Caribbean Bank to seek the necessary tools and/or mechanisms through the Yucatan Agreement for the financing of infrastructural plans or work in the Greater Caribbean.

3 TRANSPORT

The programme “**Uniting the Caribbean by Air and Sea**” will be implemented through actions in air and maritime transport, which might contribute, in an effective manner, to the expansion of intra-Caribbean trade and investment, multi-destination tourism, as well as functional cooperation in general among the Member States and Associate Members of the ACS. To this end, the following actions will be undertaken:

- 3.1 **Maps of Maritime Routes of the Greater Caribbean.** To implement Phase III of the Maps of Maritime Routes of the Greater Caribbean in order to display the maritime transport services which exist, their frequency, and where the different agents of the shipping lines can be found in the framework of the existing interactive map that is systematically updated, and which is made available on the ACS website.
- 3.2 Taking into consideration the importance of maritime maps for navigational security, the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the ACS and the International

Hydrographic Organization is recommended in order to strengthen the hydrographic capacities of the Members States.

- 3.3 **The Port and Maritime Strategy of the Greater Caribbean.** To create a strategic plan for the maritime port development of the Greater Caribbean, which would allow the establishment of the order of priority of the actions to be developed, in order to have a competitive maritime sector and one that is capable of satisfying the foreign trade needs of the Greater Caribbean. This project will include strategic proposals to promote and develop port infrastructure that could effectively sustain the increase in traffic that is expected to result from the expansion of the Panama Canal in 2014. The Port and Maritime Strategy of the Greater Caribbean will be executed jointly by the Centro-American Commission of Maritime Transport (COCATRAM), Cuban Ministry of Transport (MITRANS), Panama Maritime Authority (AMP), the Jamaica Ministry of Transport and Works (Port Authority of Jamaica) and the National Maritime Authority of Colombia.
- 3.4 **Air Transport Agreement among Member States and Associate Members of the Association of Caribbean States.** To continue to promote the implementation and update of the Agreement in order to meet the need of a general aviation policy for the Greater Caribbean, establishing a legal and co-operation framework that would offer more air service options with the reduction of costs and prices, more routes, more carriers and improved services; as well as ensuring the highest levels of operating security and safety for international civil aviation.
- 3.5 **Commercial Co-operation Partnerships and Alliances among the Airlines of ACS Countries.** This project seeks to encourage the creation, development and promotion of policies to facilitate through code sharing agreements and operating agreements in order to increase the networks of routes and connections in the Greater Caribbean. To this end, each Member State or Associate Member, so desiring, may take part in the *Study on the possibilities of the demand for air transport among ACS member countries to analyse the commercial air policies of Member States*, which would include reviewing the statistics available on air traffic, as well as potential and future demand. The study must formulate policy recommendations that would translate into incentives for air transport in the region.
- 3.6 **Marine Pollution.** ACS should take the necessary measure for the prevention of marine pollution as recommended by The Regional Marine Pollution Emergency,

Information and Training Center Wider Caribbean (RAC/REMPEITC-Caribe) based in Curaçao.

4 DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Considering the vulnerability of our countries and territories to disasters associated with natural phenomena, ACS fosters international co-operation and capacity-building in the area of disaster risk reduction, in enhancing the provision of humanitarian assistance at all stages of a disaster and in promoting a culture of prevention and early warning systems. To this end, the following actions will be undertaken:

- 4.1 **Strengthening Hydro-meteorological Operations and Services in the Caribbean SIDS - Small Island Developing States.** Implement the Second Phase of this project, entitled *SHOCS II*, designed to enhance the role and strengthen the capacity of National Meteorological and Hydrological Institutions and Disaster Management Agencies in ACS Member States in the provision of early warning services and preparedness to mitigate impacts of natural hazards.
- 4.2 **Green Response to Disasters.** Develop standards and regulations that Caribbean governments and people can incorporate, to promote and facilitate the production and utilization of eco-efficient products, tools and processes to be utilized for responding to, and recovering from, disasters impacting on their country.
- 4.3 **Online Diploma on the Management of Disaster Risk Reduction.** This Diploma, developed by the Advanced School of Public Administration (ESAP) in Colombia and shared with the Member States of the ACS, will seek to give representatives of ACS Member States, greater knowledge on the issue in the region and on the implementation of mechanisms for exchanging experiences, strategies, tools and training.
- 4.4 **Broadcast of the Radio Soap Opera "The Rough Season".** The objective of this Soap Opera is to sensitize the Caribbean Population and improve their reactions to meteorological phenomena, while increasing their knowledge. To this end, it is expected to translate the radio soap opera into French and Spanish so that it could be broadcasted throughout the Greater Caribbean region.

- 4.5 **Plan to reduce vulnerability to disasters.** Contribute to the development of a plan to reduce vulnerability to disasters associated with natural phenomena, from the provisions of the Plan of Action of St. Marc, the Framework for Action of Hyogo and other instruments related to this subject that are recognized and implemented by the Member States of the ACS.
- 4.6 Take into consideration the management of risks in all development programs of the countries of the Greater Caribbean and favour the exchange of documentation of best practices in the field. In addition, enhance ACS member countries' capacity to recover from disasters from natural origin, and to strengthen their civil protection and prevention systems by taking advantage of the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) and by developing other similar insurance coverage facilities and mechanisms.

5 EDUCATION, CULTURE, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The historic and cultural patrimony shared by the States and territories of our Association provide a solid basis on which to develop cooperation efforts, and to take concerted action in the areas of education, culture, science and technology.

- 5.1 **To foster Cooperation among the Universities and other tertiary institutions of the Greater Caribbean** in order to obtain the following results: A) to hold a bi-annual academic seminar on the priority areas of the ACS, with the objective of evaluating the progress made in these fields and to propose advancements which are precise and tangible; B) to promote joint research by the various university research groups which impact on the socio-economic and cultural development of the Greater Caribbean ; C) to promote student and teacher exchanges, by means of scholarships, internships and visiting professor programs; D) to promote international seminars dedicated to the study of our common historical and cultural patrimony; E) to promote joint publications, particularly those that contribute to strengthening co-operation in the Caribbean.
- 5.2 **Cultural Co-operation.** To foster technical meetings between the cultural cooperation units of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and those of the Ministries of Culture, with the objective of: a) strengthening cultural policies in the region; b) establishing precise and tangible programs in cultural exchange in the Greater Caribbean, such as book fairs, art festivals, art exhibitions and other cultural expressions, among which we highlight sport,

given its ability to promote friendship between the people of the Caribbean and to build collective identities.

- 5.3 **Creation of a Calendar of Events.** To coordinate efforts to produce a Calendar of ACS Cultural Events annually, as a guide for public and private cultural institutions belonging to ACS Members, with a view to enhancing and increasing cultural integration and mutual knowledge, as well as the promotion of intra-regional tourism.

6 CARIBBEAN SEA COMMISSION

Cognizant of its commitment to preserve the Caribbean Sea as its common patrimony, the Caribbean Sea Commission (CSC) was established under the auspices of the Association of Caribbean States, to function as the mechanism through which work to gain recognition for the Caribbean Sea as a Special Area within the context of sustainable development, could be carried out. In order to achieve these objectives, it is necessary to carry out the following actions:

- 6.1 **The examination of the legal, economic and financial implications, as well as benefits of the designation of the Caribbean Sea as a Special Area** on a national regional and international scale; and to this end:
- 6.1.1. Recruit/Hire experts tasked with the examination of the legal, economic and financial implications of the Special Area concept;
 - 6.1.2. Facilitate the work of the CSC by means of a greater access to the financial, human and technical resources of the region, and in particular, through collaboration with the University of the West Indies, and other research and development institutions in the Greater Caribbean;
 - 6.1.3 Develop a mechanism for the reporting process of the CSC to the General Assembly of the United Nations; and to
 - 6.1.4 Pursue enhanced participation by pertinent regional institutions in the work of the CSC with the previous approval of the Members States.

7 SPECIAL FUND

Considering the decision of the Ministerial Council of the ACS at its XVIII Meeting held in Panama City, Republic of Panama on 22 February 2013, instruct the Council of National Representatives of the Special Fund, to proceed as follows:

- 7.1 **Consolidate and strengthen the Unit** for the management and monitoring of cooperation projects with the aim of continuing the efforts made by the ACS in the strengthening of the Special Fund and the creation of an Executive Administration of Resources. In this regard, an international call for offer will be launched to hire a Project Manager who will be in charge of the Special Fund.
 - 7.2 **To create a Forum for the Exchange of Ideas and Planning**, integrated by those responsible for cooperation of the Member States and Associate Members, as part of the new framework of the ACS towards international co-operation and development.
 - 7.3 **To obtain Technical Assistance** aimed at the institutional strengthening of the Special Fund for managing co-operation projects.
 - 7.4 **To prepare a Matrix that would systematize all potential Sources of Co-operation** for the ACS and the creation of a strategy so that, following a structured work plan and established priorities, the financing needed for the region might be sought.
- 8** The Executive Board of the Ministerial Council is charged with approving a matrix that establishes a Work Plan from the Plan of Action hereby presented, and will exercise control with regard to its execution.