

**OPENING REMARKS BY, MADAME KARINE ROY-CAMILLE,
PRESIDENT OF THE MARTINIQUE TOURISM AUTHORITY, AND
CHAIR OF THE ACS SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE
TOURISM**

GUATEMALA, 23 JULY 2014

HONORABLE AMBASSADOR ALFONSO NUMERA, SECRETARY GENERAL OF
THE ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES,

DIRECTOR PEDRO PABLO DUCHEZ, DIRECTOR, GUATEMALA TOURISM
INSTITUTE

DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ACS MEMBER STATES AND
ASSOCIATE MEMBERS,

INVITED GUESTS AND FRIENDS OF ACS,

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

IT IS AN HONOR FOR ME TO PARTICIPATE AS CHAIR OF THE XXV SPECIAL
COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MEETING OF THE ACS, BEING
HELD TODAY IN THE BEAUTIFUL CITY OF LA ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA A
UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE.

FIRSTLY, I WOULD LIKE TO CONGRATULATE THE GOVERNMENT OF
GUATEMALA FOR THEIR GENEROSITY IN HOSTING, THE QUALITY OF THEIR
HOSPITALITY AND THE SUPPORT PROVIDED FOR THE ORGANISATION OF
THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO MAKE MENTION OF THE SUPPORT PROVIDED BY
THE STAFF OF THE ACS SECRETARIAT.

IT HAS BEEN UNDERSCORED THAT THE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM ZONE OF
THE GREATER CARIBBEAN (STZC) SHOULD BECOME THE REFERENCE
FRAMEWORK FOR ACS MEMBER COUNTRIES EFFORTS IN RELATION TO
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM, AS THIS WOULD ALLOW FOR THE
HARMONISATION OF REGIONAL STRATEGIES, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
PARTNERSHIPS AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS.

I AM VERY PLEASED TO REPORT THAT DURING MY CHAIRMANSHIP THE
STZC CONVENTION HAVING RECEIVED THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF
RATIFICATIONS ENTERED INTO FORCE ON NOVEMBER 6, 2013. TO DATE 17
COUNTRIES HAVE RATIFIED THE CONVENTION AND I WOULD LIKE TO
COMMEND AND THANK THE COUNTRIES THAT HAVE BEEN PROACTIVE IN
DOING SO.

I ALSO URGE THOSE ACS MEMBER COUNTRIES WHO HAVE NOT YET DONE SO TO EXPEDITE THE RATIFICATION PROCESS.

FURTHERMORE, THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGIONAL COOPERATION MECHANISM OF THE STZC HAS BEEN LAUNCHED THANKS TO THE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF MARTINIQUE THROUGH THE EUROPEAN UNION INTERREG CARIBBEAN PROGRAM.

MARTINIQUE HAS RECENTLY BECOME AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER OF THE ACS IN ITS OWN RIGHT, AND MY PRESENCE HERE SHOWS THE CONTINUED COMMITMENT OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF MARTINIQUE, LED BY PRESIDENT SERGE LETCHIMY, TO THE CONSOLIDATION OF COOPERATION IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN THROUGH THE ACS.

THE SIGNING CEREMONY OF MARTINIQUE AS AN ACS ASSOCIATE MEMBER TOOK PLACE ON 11 APRIL 2014 IN THE TOWN OF CARBET WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF SECRETARY GENERAL ALFONSO MUNERA AND PRESIDENT SERGE LETCHIMY. IT WAS A GREAT HISTORICAL MOMENT WHICH SYMBOLIZED A NEW ERA IN MARTINIQUE'S REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN.

FURTHERMORE, THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED ACS SUMMIT IN MERIDA UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GREATER CARIBBEAN AND THE ROLE OF THE ACS AS A SPACE FOR DIALOGUE AND CONCERTED ACTION.

I BELIEVE THE ACS IS AN IMPORTANT FORUM FOR THE SHARING AND EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES IN COMMON AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT FOR THE SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF OUR COUNTRIES AND NOW WE NEED TO BUILD THIS PROCESS IN CONCRETE AND MEASURABLE WAYS.

WE NEED TO AVOID DUPLICATION OF EFFORTS AND SEEK VALUED ADDED BENEFITS FOR ALL ACS MEMBER COUNTRIES.

IN THIS REGARD, THE WORKSHOP OF BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM HELD YESTERDAY WAS AN IMPORTANT STEP IN THIS DIRECTION. IT PROVIDED AN IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITY TO BE INFORMED OF GOING INNOVATIVE DESTINATION MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES AT THE INTERNATIONAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS.

IT WAS ALSO A PLATFORM FOR ACS MEMBER COUNTRIES TO SHARE EXPERIENCES AND PROVIDED A FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE INTER-REGIONAL DIALOGUE AND COOPERATION EXCHANGES.

IN TODAY'S MEETING WE WILL DISCUSS THE ADVANCEMENTS OF THE ACS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM WORK PROGRAMME IN SEEKING TO STRENGTHEN COLLABORATION AMONG OUR COUNTRIES.

ONE IMPORTANT SUBJECT TO BE DISCUSSED IS THE HOSTING OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF TOURISM OF THE ACS, WHICH WE ARE PROPOSING TO BE HELD IN THE BEAUTIFUL ISLAND OF ST MAARTEEN, WHICH ALSO FORMALISED ITS STATUS AS AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER OF THE ACS ON FEBRUARY 2014.

IN CONCLUSION, I LOOK FORWARD TO FRUITFUL DELIBERATIONS THAT WOULD ALLOW US TO CONTINUE OUR EFFORTS TO SOLIDIFY THE CONCEPT OF THE STZC AND REALISE THE VISION OF MAKING THE GREATER CARIBBEAN ONE OF THE WORLD'S PREMIERE TOURISM DESTINATIONS.

I THANK YOU.