ACS Revitalization Advances as Member States Align Priorities Ahead of the 31st Ministerial Council



Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago | 12 January 2026 — The Association of Caribbean States (ACS) held its 28th Intersessional Preparatory Meeting for the 31st Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council in a hybrid format, from the Headquarters of the ACS Secretariat in Port of Spain. The meeting brought together 18 Member States and 2 Associate Members, enabling substantive progress in the preparation of strategic decisions, political follow-up, and programmatic coherence, within the framework of the ACS revitalization process.

The meeting was presided over by the Republic of Panama, in its capacity as Chair of the ACS Ministerial Council, as part of the preparatory work toward the 31st Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council.

The opening ceremony included welcoming remarks by the host country, delivered by The Honourable Sean S. M. Sobers, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, who reaffirmed the host country's commitment to strengthening the ACS and to its continued relevance as a space for consultation, cooperation, and concerted action for the Greater Caribbean. In his intervention, the Minister underscored the importance of advancing toward more effective regional action, with an emphasis on implementation and tangible results.

Welcoming the delegations, Her Excellency Noemí Espinoza Madrid, Secretary-General of the ACS, underscored that the meeting takes place amid "profound transformations" and an evolving geopolitical environment—conditions that make regional multilateralism, sustained dialogue, and collective action more relevant than ever.

"The Association of Caribbean States (ACS) is at a pivotal moment in its revitalisation process. This intersessional meeting offers us an opportunity to review progress, consolidate agreements, and prepare decisions that will be essential to strengthen our Association's relevance, coherence and future outlook," stated Secretary-General Espinoza Madrid.

Within this context, the Secretary-General presented her management report, covering the period from the 30th Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council to the present, outlining the main

advances, challenges, and priorities of the Association at this stage of the revitalization process.

Subsequently, during the exchange of interventions, several delegations, including Jamaica, Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela, acknowledged and commended the sustained work of the ACS Secretariat, as well as the leadership exercised during this phase of the Association’s revitalization.

During the meeting, Member States examined the reports of the ACS Special Committees, including the Caribbean Sea Commission, the Committees on Cooperation and Resource Mobilization, Disaster Risk Reduction, Sustainable Tourism, Trade Development and External Economic Relations, Transport, as well as the Committee on Budget and Administration, reaffirming the importance of an integrated agenda that articulates sustainable development, resilience, and regional cooperation.

The meeting also considered the draft agendas of the meetings to be presided over by Panama in 2026, in preparation for the 31st Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council and the 16th Extraordinary Meeting of the ACS Ministerial Council, contributing to an orderly and coherent planning of forthcoming work.

The 28th Intersessional Preparatory Meeting reaffirmed the political commitment of Member States to strengthening the ACS, ensuring the effective implementation of agreed decisions, and consolidating a more relevant, coherent, and people-centered Association for the Greater Caribbean.