

**30th SESSION OF THE CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT
AND COOPERATION COMMITTEE OF THE ECONOMIC
COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE
CARIBBEAN**

Port of Spain, 11 September 2024

**Agenda Item 4 Accelerating implementation of the Antigua
and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States**

PRESENTATION

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OPENING

**Congratulate Her Excellency Minister Penelope Beckles on her ascension to the
Chairmanship of this august body, the Caribbean Development and Cooperation
Committee**

**Congratulate you Excellencies, the distinguished Members of the CDCC, as well as
the Executive Secretary, our very dear Chief of the Subregional Office and friend,
Madame Quarless, and her amazing staff on this 30 Year Milestone**

**Executive Secretary we welcome you to the subregion and we look forward to further
deepening cooperation between ECLAC and the members and stakeholders of the
Caribbean subregion towards having a greater and positive development impact
within the subregion over the next 30 years. The CDCC provides one of the key
political and intellectual engines in this regard.**

CONTEXT

The life of the CDCC mirrors the SIDS Policy Framework and hence this agenda item at
this moment is quite apropos, Accelerating implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda
Agenda for SIDS.

Let us pause for to relook on the experience of the SAMOA Pathway to gather insight for building the ABAS Roadmap.

- i. The last 10 years witnessed debilitating crises which we were reminded over the past two days.
- ii. There was an International Year of SIDS to drive advocacy
- iii. Several projects and initiatives were undertaken including the SIDS Partnership Framework and the SIDS National Focal point Mechanism
- iv. There was the insight of the JIU that among other things, assisted in catalysing the effort to establish the MVI and strengthening of key institutions and programmes of work in some UN institutions
- v. There was testing of the Vulnerability and Resilience Country Profile by UNDESA among 8 SIDS including 3 Caribbean countries
- vi. We stressed the importance of alignment with the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and SDGs
- vii. ECLAC subregional office work edhand in hand with CARISEC and Member states to identify Caribbean relevant indicators
- viii. An M&E framework – but challenged with having the requisite national evidence-base to make that mechanism fully effective; timing; and importantly a focussed implementation plan

RECOMMENDED APPROACHES

A. Anchoring an Integrated Regional Development Framework

Several speakers called for or alluded to (including my colleague Patrick Mc Caskie) the need to Regional Development Strategy. Our Caribbean ABAS Roadmap can play that part

The CARICOM COTED held in May 2024, Ministers

- **Agreed** to re-establish the CARICOM Task Force on Sustainable Development comprising regional experts and institutions, to assist in developing an implementation plan for the ABAS with an emphasis on intra and inter-regional SIDS cooperation;
- **Also agreed** to call on the international community and the United Nations System, *via* the Resident Coordinator and the regional commissions to support

the CARICOM Secretariat in facilitating, sustaining and enabling the work of the CARICOM Task Force on Sustainable Development.

Hence the need for close collaboration between the CDCC mechanism and CARICOM. We should aim to have that roadmap in place for the 2025 ECLAC MONCOM and the COTED (Sustainable Development in 2025).

B. Resilience Building that addresses Structural issues

We are Small Open Economies and we need System-wide Shock Absorbers- this is the underpinning philosophy of the ABAS, i.e “Renewed Resilience”. Our outgoing chair Minister Ramdin identified critical facets for a sustainable development model for a resilient sustainable future including

- MACROECONOMIC STABILITY
- EQUALITY
- ENVIRONMENTAL STABILITY-
- POLITICAL STABILITY
- GOVERNANCE- Inclusive and accountable- Social Partnerships referenced by Barbados
- INTERREGIONAL HEMISPHERIC TRADE PLATFORM

Also

- ***MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION-SUSTAINABLE AND INTEGRATED FINANCIAL AND INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK***

C. Sustained Advocacy

- Advocacy Platform is needed and should be a part of that Roadmap- CDCC is well positioned to play a major role
- Caribbean Major Groups and Civil Society Mechanism- first called for in 2013 in the SIDS regional held in Kingston and echoed again. **SIDS People need to own their ABAS. Perhaps this can be considered within the rubric of the CDCC.**
- We also need to ensure SIDS are at the table and within the international institutions.
- CARICOM COTED Decisions

D. Multi-level Cooperation Interventions

We should consider adopting of a 5-Tiered Cooperation Framework posited in ECLAC Report Caribbean Synthesis Report December 2023

- National- Subnational/Local
- Regional
- Interregional
- UN System Support- UN CARICOM, RC LAC, MC Teams
- International (North-South, South-South, Triangular)

E. Need for Joined Up Sustained SIDS Institutional Mechanisms

- UN System SDS GBN, SIDS Partnership, SIDS NFP
- A Revitalised RCM supported by ECLAC
- The SIDS Centre of Excellence and its Pillars (Investment, Data, Science and technology, and Debt Sustainability)
- SIDS Financial Institutions and Policies such as the Bridgetown Initiative
- SIDS-SIDS Green and Blue Economy Knowledge Transfer Hub -UWI, UN PAGE, UNEP, Governments of Barbados and Grenada
- Moving from a 5 -year to 2-year political review mechanism. Ambassador Webson of Antigua and Barbuda has discussed this matter
- SIDS Capacity Initiative for the MVI- VRCP will require dedicated support. Based on the VRCP Development Account -Funded Project of 2014 that followed the adoption of the SAMOA Pathway, the issues Planning, Governance and Human Resources will need to be addressed to ensure execution of the VRCPs.
- MINISTER BECKLES- COOPERATION, SHARED STRENGTHS and POOLING OF RESOURCES

F. A SPECIAL CARVE OUT regarding Strengthening and Modernizing National Data and Statistocal Infrastructure and Systems In SIDS as articulated by Programme Manager Sustainable Development of Ms Amrikha Singh of CARISEC

CURRENT CONSTRAINTS/CHALLENGES/STATE OF PLAY

- Outdated Statistics Legislation-Very few countries have updated Statistics Legislation (Bahamas, Turks and Caicos). Some are in the process of updating Legislation (Grenada, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago).
- Lack of a strategic approach to statistics development within Member States through the design and implementation of a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS). A Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics (RSDS) was already endorsed by the 39th Regular Meeting of the Conference of CARICOM Heads of Government in 2018. Some countries have completed the design of the NSDS.
- Lack of a Robust IT infrastructure in NSOs and within the NSS to ensure an integrated statistical system.
- Under-utilisation of statistics available by policy makers due to lack of capacity to analyse and interpret data. – Evidence-poor policy processes
- Insufficient statistical literacy

RESPONSE

In Keeping with the ABAS- PARA 32G, “Strengthening and modernizing national data infrastructure and systems in SIDS to better integrate data into development planning, and enhancing the capacity of Statistical Offices in SIDS”

- High-level Advocacy forum on Statistics -The 4th High level Advocacy Forum on Statistics in CARICOM is scheduled for 19th July 2024 in Grenada.
- Design and Implement NSDSs that are linked to the CARICOM RSDS and the National Sustainable Development Plans and Priorities. This is critical in ensuring that Statistics priorities are in alignment with national plans and priorities and that data is demand driven.
- Update Statistics Legislation through the CARICOM Model Statistics Bill and its adoption by CARICOM Member States.
- Continuous training of policy makers to enhance statistics literacy- ECLAC is engaged in this area and will need to support to scale it further.
- Institute a Global Partnership and Investment Framework for Modernising Statistical Systems in SIDS**