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Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean



REPORT ON
FIFTH CDCC (PRE-CGCED) CONSULTATIVE MEETING
(New York, 10 February 1984)

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REPORT ON FIFTH CDCC
(PRE-CGCED) CONSULTATIVE MEETING

The Fifth CDCC (Pre-CGCED) Consultative Meeting was convened on 10 February 1984 at United Nations Headquarters, New York. The Meeting was chaired by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, acting in its capacity as current chairman of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC). Mrs. Lenore Dorsett of the Permanent Mission of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations presided. Representatives from Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Christopher-Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and the Netherlands Antilles attended. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Regional Commissions Liaison Office were also represented.

The Agenda for the Meeting consisted of the following two items:

- (1) Consideration of Caribbean Group for Co-operation in Economic Development (CGCED) document "Caribbean Group: Current Situation and Prospects"
- (2) Other Business.

The CGCED document referred to in Item (1) of the Agenda above had been circulated in advance to the Permanent Missions of CDCC member countries to the United Nations. In addition, two informal papers "Summary of Progress on Work Programme Implementation 1982-1983" and "Major Outputs in the Draft Work Programme 1986-1987" were circulated at the meeting for information of representatives. These papers are summaries taken from a draft CDCC document and CDCC document (E/CEPAL/CDCC/109) respectively, two main documents for the coming Eighth Session of CDCC.

In her opening statement the Chairman indicated that the meeting was convened primarily to review the issues scheduled for discussion at the forthcoming meeting of the Caribbean Group for Co-operation in Economic Development (CGCED) to be held in Washington D.C., from 13-17 February. The CDCC Consultative Meeting was intended to give CDCC member countries the opportunity to discuss the issues prior to the CGCED meeting, as well as to examine the regional projects component of the programme in conjunction with ongoing and proposed CDCC activities, in order to ensure close co-ordination of both programmes. With respect to the second item on the agenda, the Chairman pointed out that the intention was to seek preliminary reactions from participants to the contents of the letter dated 16 January 1984 to all CDCC countries from the current chairman of CDCC, the Minister of External Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago. (A copy of the letter and its enclosure, a draft resolution for presentation to the Twentieth Session of ECLA, formed part of the documentation of the meeting and is attached in the Annex to this report).

Consideration of CGCED Document (Agenda Item 1.)

In opening the substantive discussions Mr. Wilfred Whittingham, Acting Director of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, mentioned the background and the mandates since the Third Session of CDCC for convening the consultative meetings. He observed that, while the CGCED was a meeting of donors and recipients with primary focus on national projects, the activities of CDCC were essentially a regional programme of horizontal co-operation focusing on self-help and basic indigenous action. At the same time the CGCED had a component relating to regional projects and it was therefore necessary to co-ordinate actions in both institutions in order to reduce duplication and overlap in their programmes. At the forthcoming meeting areas of particular interest to the CDCC were identified, namely, Transport, Energy, Agriculture, Export Promotion and Regional Payments.

Transport

The representative of the CDCC Secretariat pointed out that the ECLA Work Programme in Transport was completely integrated with the CGCED transport programme. He explained that there would be roundtable discussions on the

Caribbean Airports Maintenance and Operations Study recommendations and that programme would be the major area of concentration this year. He then described developments which had taken place during the last year.

The major developments were:

- (i) Canada had produced a plan of operations for implementing that aspect of the programme which they had agreed to finance.
- (ii) UNDP had funded a mission to Europe to seek additional financing.
- (iii) Continuation of discussions with CIDA and Transport Canada on implementation of the Canadian Programme.
- (iv) In view of the closing of the Caribbean Aviation Training Institute (CATI) discussions were held with Caribbean governments to establish the need for civil aviation training requirements, the nature and role of training institutions required and possible locations of such institution(s).

It was hoped that at the CGCED meeting donors would indicate their intention to provide additional assistance and that agreement could be reached between donors and recipients on the methodology for providing the training and technical assistance components of CAMOS.

Participants expressed concern about implementation and stated their desire for immediate implementation on a phased basis.

Energy

In its statement on Energy the CDCC Secretariat made reference to the projects outlined in the CGCED working paper as follows:

- i) UNDP/IBRD Caribbean Regional Petroleum Exploration Project which became operational in 1983, and the parallel financing being provided for seismic surveys by Petro-Canada International Assistance Corporation;
- ii) UNDP/UNESCO energy saving project in Jamaica;
- iii) Continuation of the national energy assessments under the UNDP/IBRD project; and
- iv) The proposed CARICOM Regional Energy Action Plan (REAP) with which the CDCC Secretariat had co-operated from the outset.

The Secretariat outlined the activities of ECLA in this sector, particularly the "Platzer/Best study". This study, which included project proposals was prepared after consultation with individual countries and CARICOM, CDB and the OECS, and is for the most part complementary to the CARICOM Regional Energy Action Plan. Consultations would continue in order to ensure that there was no duplication of effort.

Agriculture

It was noted that since the Fifth meeting of CGCED in June 1982 focus in the agriculture sector had been placed on review and consolidation of the activities of borrowers and donors.

The Agricultural Task Force, which had been convened by the CGCED for this purpose, had since identified 350 existing agricultural projects and 150 technical co-operation activities financed by 13 donor agencies. These represented an investment flow of \$400-\$500 million per year or 3 to 4 percent of the total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of participating Caribbean countries. The survey also showed that there was a significant degree of duplication and overlap in these activities resulting in a severe burden on the recipients.

For the future it was intended to build on the past work by the establishment of a Caribbean Agricultural Project Information Clearing House which would:

- (i) Collect, edit and disseminate project data;
- (ii) Facilitate donor/recipient consultations on new projects; and
- (iii) Carry out a survey on critical skills so as to guide future training policies.

The CDCC for its part had focused its attention on complementary areas such as Agricultural Research and Planning. The Secretariat apprised the meeting of the Workshop on Agricultural Research Policy convened jointly by CDCC and the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology between 26 to 30 September 1983.

The purpose of the workshop was three-fold:

- (i) To examine and strengthen the relationship between policy, decision-making and research;
- (ii) To identify mechanisms for consultation between the policymaker and the research community; and
- (iii) To create a network of regional and national research agencies in agriculture.

The workshop had noted that the existing framework for research in the Caribbean was quite comprehensive, CARICOM countries having at least 25 entities engaged in agricultural research although the capability was unevenly spread between the countries. It was concluded that with effective management and co-ordination the subregion had the capacity to resolve its worsening food and nutrition problems. Other areas such as the cost-effectiveness of research and the need for clearly defined government policies were considered.

The consensus emerged from the workshop that there should be subregional co-operation in research and those related activities which impact upon research; and various mechanisms adopted elsewhere were examined as possible models. A small working group of six persons had therefore been formed to prepare an outline of a proposed Caribbean Co-operative Agricultural Research Network by mid-1984.

The Secretariat informed the consultative meeting that the proposed network would be a major user of data gathered by the Caribbean Agricultural Project Informative Clearing House and was to be seen as a counterpart to the CGCED activities in the related area of work.

The meeting was also informed of the Ad Hoc Working Group Meeting of Agricultural Planners held from 29-30 November. The theme of that meeting had been "Production of Food for Consumption and Export: the Need to Achieve Optimal Balance". It was concluded that while a certain basic level of food security needed to be treated as an objective for each country, beyond that level the food sector as a whole needed to be evaluated and rationalized to ensure the most efficient production of appropriate commodities.

For its future work programme the CDCC had identified two further areas for investigation:

- (i) Land use and land tenure systems; and
- (ii) The development and conservation of critical production areas with the emphasis on water resources.

Export Promotion and Regional Payments Support

The representative of the CDCC Secretariat indicated the relationship between the CGCED programmes and the CDCC Work Programme in International Trade and Finance which included such items as Trade Facilitation, a Tariff study, Development of a wider Caribbean Multilateral Clearing Facility, and a Caribbean Trade Information System. It was also pointed out that work in these areas was being co-ordinated with the CARICOM Secretariat.

The need for programmes in these two areas arose from the persistent balance-of-payments problems of the last few years. The export promotion programme of CGCED sought to address the decline in CARICOM exports especially to third countries. It was stated that within CARICOM the problem was being addressed and an action programme for export expansion was being formulated.

Note was taken of the CGCED proposals for changes in the incentive system and used by CARICOM countries. In elaborating these proposals, the CGCED considered this incentive system as serving as a disincentive to export to third countries.

Delegates indicated that the export promotion proposals had first been advanced in the "Ranis Report" which had not been accepted by the OECS countries. They considered that the Caribbean Group was now being used to resuscitate the same proposals. It was stated that the Ranis proposals did not fully take into account the Caribbean reality and had not been elaborated with sufficient inputs from Caribbean experts as had been intended. Furthermore, these proposals would strike at the heart of policies evolved within CARICOM and create a serious dislocation of existing industries in the region. However, the CARICOM countries were looking at the entire subject in the context of overall economic restructuring. It was pointed out that the Regional Payments Support Fund concerned the English-speaking Caribbean which had experienced severe problems with its Caribbean Multilateral Clearing Facility (CMFC) during the last few years. The programme being contemplated was to complement the existing Fund. A comprehensive debate of the issues was not possible however as many delegates had not seen the original Ranis Report and therefore had found it necessary to reserve their positions.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS
Agenda Item 2.

The Chairman outlined the background to the letter and draft resolution sent to CDCC countries by the Minister of External Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago in his capacity as current Chairman of CDCC, noting that the request for a special meeting of the Committee of the Whole of ECLA was necessary since CDCC VIII was likely to be held after the Twentieth Session of ECLA; in which event a means would need to be found for ECLA to approve the CDCC work programme for 1986-1987.

While some delegates indicated that they had not received specific instructions regarding the resolution, there was general agreement that a meeting of the Committee of the Whole of ECLA should be convened in New York after CDCC VIII and prior to the summer session of ECOSOC in Geneva. Delegates undertook to urge their government's support for the draft resolution at the Twentieth Session of ECLA from 29 March to 6 April 1984 in Lima.

The meeting then adjourned.

MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
KNOWSLEY
QUEEN'S PARK WEST

16 January 1984

Excellency,

I write to you in my capacity as current Chairman of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC) on the subject of the forthcoming Eighth CDCC Session and the Work Programme for the 1986-1987 biennium. At CDCC VII, held in January 1983 in Trinidad and Tobago, the Government of Haiti, through its delegation, offered to host the Eighth Session. The Committee accepted the offer and the Secretariat was requested to undertake the necessary consultations.

It had been proposed to convene CDCC VIII in early February, 1984, but extraordinary circumstances necessitated rescheduling of the meeting. In addition, ECLA Santiago, indicated that time constraints would impede preparation and circulation of the Final Report of CDCC VIII in advance of the 20th Session of ECLA, scheduled for 29 March to 6 April, 1984.

As it is necessary for the CDCC Work Programme to be presented to the Commission and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), I propose that an Extraordinary Session of the ECLA Committee of the Whole be convened prior to the Regular Session of the ECOSOC to be held in Geneva during summer of 1984.

It is necessary that a decision to convene this Extraordinary Session be taken by resolution at the 20th Session of ECLA in order to ensure inclusion of the 1986-1987 CDCC Work Programme in the ECLA and United Nations Programme of Work and Budget for the 1986-1987 biennium.

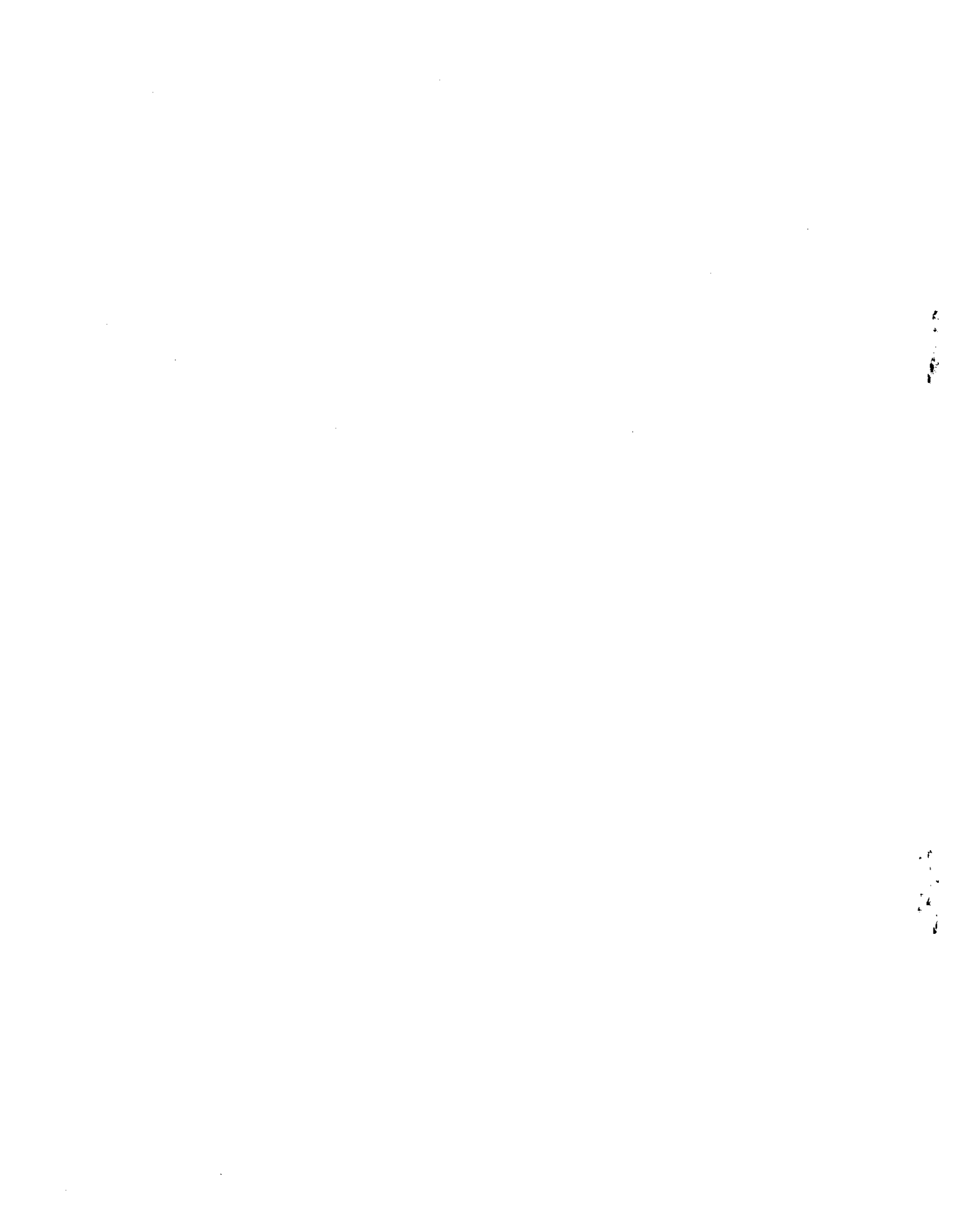
With these aspects in mind, I forward attached a draft resolution for the consideration of your government and to facilitate briefing of delegates to the 20th Session of ECLA.

It is my hope that this procedure meets with your approval and I should appreciate receiving your comments. If you agree, I propose to seek the support of other ECLA member states for convening such a meeting.

Accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Sgd.) Basil A. Ince

N.B. This letter and attachment
was sent to all CDCC Governments.



DRAFT RESOLUTION

Having noted that the Eighth Session of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC) is scheduled to be convened in May after this twentieth session of the Commission,

Further noting that the 1986-87 Programme of Work of the ECLA Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean has to be included as part of the programme of work of the ECLA System for the period 1986-87,

Decides to convene an Extraordinary Session of the ECLA Committee of the Whole to consider inter alia the 1986-87 Programme of Work for the ECLA Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean which is to be determined by the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC) at its eighth session and the FINAL REPORT of that Session,

Further decides that the Extraordinary Session of the ECLA Committee of the Whole be convened in New York prior to the summer session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) which will be held in Geneva,

Requests the Executive Secretary of ECLA to arrange for the convening of the Extraordinary Session of the ECLA Committee of the Whole.

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