

GENERAL
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 8 October 1990
 ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
 Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE

CARIBBEAN COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Ninth Plenary Session
 Kingston, Jamaica
 8-10 September 1990

MINUTES OF THE NINTH PLENARY SESSION
 OF THE CARIBBEAN COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (CCST)

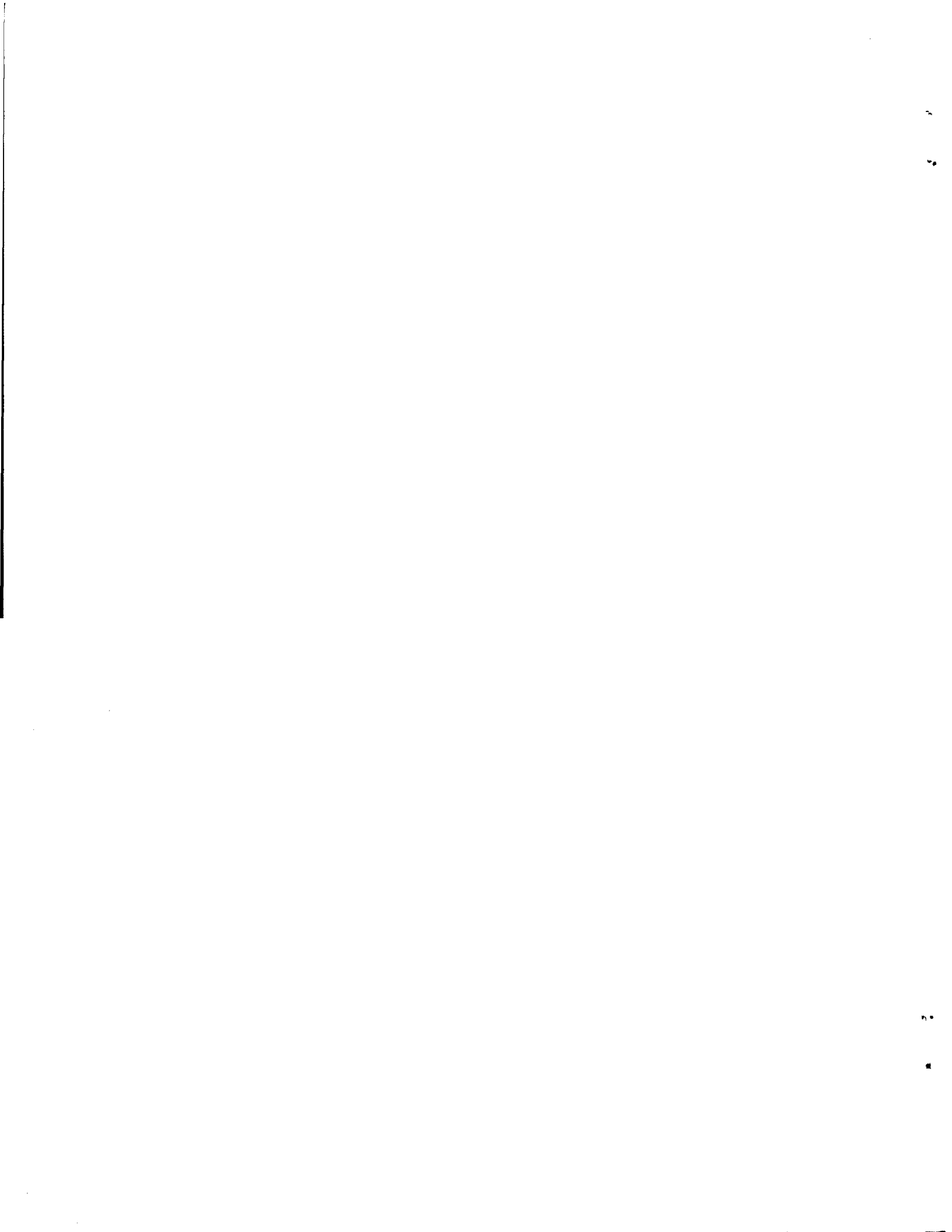
Kingston, Jamaica, 8-10 September 1990



UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
 Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

21 SEP 1990



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I. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

1. The Ninth Plenary Session of the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST) was convened in Kingston, Jamaica from 8-10 September 1990. The Council took the opportunity of the presence, in Jamaica, of a number of member countries for the Meeting of CARICOM Ministers responsible for Science and Technology to convene the session. This reduced both the cost of and the need for additional travel by representatives of some member countries who have, in the past, complained of the frequency of meetings.

Opening session

2. The CCST Chairman Dr. Gladstone Taylor of Jamaica welcomed delegates to the meeting, noting that he was particularly happy to see that Belize was represented, and that he hoped that this signalled a renewed interest in the Council.

Attendance¹

3. Representatives from the following CCST member countries were present: Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Cuba, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago.

4. The representative of Antigua and Barbuda although present, informed the meeting that he had no mandate to commit his Government on any issue and that he was merely observing the proceedings.

5. Representatives of the Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) attended as observers.

6. The United Nations ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, which serves as interim secretariat to the CCST,

¹ The list of participants is given at Annex I.

provided secretariat services for the meeting, assisted by the Government of Jamaica, through its Scientific Research Council.

II. SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS

Approval of the agenda²

7. The proposed agenda was adopted with the following changes: on agenda item (2) it was decided that member States should submit to the secretariat, at least three months in advance of the plenary sessions, a document outlining science and technology activities in their countries. This document would then be circulated to all member countries so that, at the plenary sessions, issues could be elaborated or selected for discussion.

8. Agenda item 4 was omitted since the issue had been discussed in the preceding CARICOM meeting, and the intended Guest Speaker was not available.

General discussion on the role and functioning of CCST

(Agenda item 2)

9. The Chairman outlined the discussion that took place at the eleventh Executive Committee meeting of the Council, the report of which appears in document CCST/90/3. He informed participants that in the quest for a specific role for CCST, in light of changing circumstances and events in the region, the Executive Committee decided on the Mission Statement, which appears on page 2 of the report, as the first step in orienting the Council. From the mission statement, the work programme of the Council could be decided upon to meet the objectives outlined.

10. Following the Chairman's summary, the delegate of Trinidad Tobago, and, subsequently other delegates, expressed doubts that

the mission statement reflected or captured the mandate of the CCST as specified in article 3 of the statutes. In particular, the statement did not mention "science and technology". In a sense, that clarity which the mission statement should provide, which would then inform the work programme, was not present or apparent.

11. It was agreed that the Secretary, in consultation with other members, would draft another statement for the consideration of delegates. This statement, submitted for consideration of member countries reads:

"CCST is concerned with facilitating, promoting and fostering co-operation among member countries and at every level the promotion of and appreciation for scientific and technological occurrences in the society. In that context, the collection, systemization, documentation and dissemination of knowledge for use in the productive sector is to be undertaken".

Report of CCST activities

(Agenda item 5)

12. The Secretary outlined the activities of the Council since the last plenary session, in document CCST/90/6 as well as document CCST/90/1 and the reports of the Executive Committee meetings in CCST/89/2 and CCST/90/3. The highlight of the presentation was the document of CCST achievements since its formation, the projects it has undertaken, issues dealt with and what has happened to them over time, the development of the project proposals on "A science and technology extension service" and "A history of science and technology in the region".

13. Discussion on this agenda item reiterated the need for greater visibility for CCST and that CCST should undertake projects and programmes in which no other organization was actively involved.

It should also serve as a mechanism for bringing the scientific community together, as well as highlighting to member countries issues that were likely to affect them in the global, regional and national setting. In that context, linkages with other agencies, such as UNESCO, CARICOM, United Nations Centre for Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD), University of the West Indies (UWI), etc., could be extremely useful as the Council could not only draw on resources of these institutions and agencies, but could also assist them in identifying issues which their own organizations could deal with.

14. It was suggested also that the CCST could undertake work on one issue, deal with it over a period of time, and then assess its performance to determine to what extent it was successful in bringing about a change in the situation through the application of science and technology.

Budget performance

(Agenda item 6)

15. The Secretary informed the meeting that the budget sheet was missing from the documentation and that his office would be requested to fax it to Jamaica. Discussion on this item was postponed pending the availability of the document. This document is presented as Annex III.

Work programme

(Agenda item 7)

16. The proposed work programme as appears in document CCST/90/6 was presented by the secretariat.

17. A number of delegates asked for a more detailed proposal on the Regional Workshop to Evaluate the National Consultations, to

ensure that the evaluation exercise would be meaningful. The secretariat replied that to the extent that the national consultations were to assist the countries in organizing science and technology at the national level and that different approaches were employed in different countries, it was necessary to assess the usefulness of these approaches, complete the exercise where it had not yet been completed, and decide on future action through experience sharing. The proposed budget was only an indicative figure and the proposal would have to be costed when it was fully developed in terms of who would attend, duration, venue, etc.

18. The Council gave its approval for the project, after mandating that the reports of the completed workshops be finalized and serve as the documents for the evaluation meeting.

19. The representative of UNESCO indicated that his organization would be willing to assist in ensuring that the reports were completed.

20. Delegates had strong reservations about the usefulness of the meeting for General Discussion on Selected Science and Technology Topic particularly on the broad topics mentioned in the document. A pre-requisite for such a meeting, it was felt, would be to develop a roster of activities both proposed and ongoing, by various agencies and these would then be looked at against a list of issue areas identified by member States, organizations, institutions and individuals. Any item or items on which activities were not proposed or ongoing would be acceptable topics for CCST to consider.

21. The secretariat was asked to initiate contact with various organizations, agencies and individuals with a view to developing

the list of issues, and to develop a project showing objective, linkages, modality and implementation aspects for the proposed meeting.

22. The representative of UNESCO also indicated that his organization would be interested in such a project and that the issue area would be identified early so that the project could be incorporated in UNESCO's own work plan for funding.

Other topics suggested for consideration were:

- (a) Microcomputer and computer literacy;
- (b) Disaster preparedness and the role of science and technology;
- (c) Housing and transportation;
- (d) A science and technology input in a public sector activity in the service sector.

The project on a science and technology extension service was approved.

23. On the project, "History of Scientific and Technological Development in the Caribbean", it was agreed that the core group should meet as soon as possible to review the work presented so far, and to decide on the next phase of activities.

CCST organizational structure and arrangement

(Acenda item 8)

Secretariat

24. The Chairman reminded member States that this issue had been the subject of discussion for a number of years now, and that at the eleventh Executive Committee meeting the various options outlined by the interim secretariat were examined and a decision taken to write the Executive Secretary of ECLAC regarding the allocation of posts in order to assist the Council in arriving at a decision. Unfortunately, no reply was received from the Executive Secretary. Nevertheless, the interim secretariat had

prepared a document outlining preliminary costs for a permanent secretariat, which appears in document CCST/89/1, along with document CCST/90/4 which suggests guidelines for any country wishing to host the secretariat.

25. Reacting to the Chairman's statement, many delegates were of the opinion that the cost of establishing a permanent secretariat seemed prohibitive, at the moment, and that it might be more prudent if funds were available to spend on projects.

26. The members also felt that the Executive Secretary again be asked to explain the position of ECLAC vis-a-vis CCST, but that the Council should itself develop a strategy for ensuring that it had a functioning secretariat in place in order to carry out its mandate, including some modification of the present arrangement to ensure that the science and technology officer devoted most of his/her time to science and technology and CCST matters within the ECLAC/CDCC system.

27. On the matter of a location for a permanent secretariat it was agreed that member States wishing to host the secretariat should so indicate by a formal communication to the CDCC secretariat, taking into consideration the two documents mentioned above.

Interorganizational Cooperation

28. The need for increased collaboration and co-operation between the various regional institutions, agencies and national institutions was again stressed and it was felt that CCST should redouble its efforts in this area, serving as a possible conduit for regional co-operation, given its wide membership.

Relationship with Governments

29. Member countries were again urged by the Chairman to make every effort to promote CCST in their own national setting; to

respond in a timely manner to secretariat and Executive Committee communications, and also to try to meet their financial commitments to the Council.

Date and venue for next plenary session

(Agenda item 9)

30. It was agreed that the interim secretariat and the Executive Committee would consult with member countries to determine the date and venue, but that in keeping with the efforts to rejuvenate the Council, a plenary session should be held in 1991 to continue the momentum of discussions and the interest of member States.

Any other business

Agenda item 10

31. At the eleventh Executive Committee meeting, it was suggested that in view of the fact that the secretariat was not functioning as envisaged, it would be desirable to have an Executive Committee which would provide continuity and direction over a period of time longer than one year, as mandated in the statutes. In that respect, member countries were asked to give consideration to that proposal for a three-year term, at least on a trial basis, and to confirm the addition of a member in place of the Treasurer, which post has not been operational for over seven years.

32. Both suggestions were agreed to for an interim basis, to be evaluated at the end of 1992, which would be the three-year period of the present Executive.

33. There being no other business, the Chairman thanked delegates for their attendance, and the long hours devoted to ensuring that the CCST remain a valid mechanism for co-operation in science and technology in the region, and he hoped that the efforts would pay dividends in the long run, as science and technology made a greater impact on the development strategies adopted by our countries.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1. CCST Member Countries

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Mr Oscar Bird
Chairman
Conservation Commission

BELIZE

Ms Ann Gillett Elvington
Academic Dean
University College of Belize
Belmopan

CUBA

Mr Tirso Saenz
Director, Centre for the Study
of History and Organization of
Science
Academy of Sciences
La Habana

GRENADA

Mr Guido Marcelle
Chief Analytical Chemist
Produce Chemist Laboratory
Tanteen,
St George's

JAMAICA

Mr Gladstone Van Taylor
Executive Director
Scientific Research Council
Kingston 6

SAINT LUCIA

Mr Aloysius Barthelmy
Principal Assistant Secretary
Ministry of Planning
Government Buildings
Castries

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Mr Louis Wiltshire
Director
Political Affairs, Science and
Technology Division
Ministry of External Affairs
and International Trade
"Knowsley"
Queen's Park West
Port-of-Spain

2. Others

CARICOM

Mr Herman Rohlehr
Chief
Industry, Technology and Tourism
Section
CARICOM Secretariat
Georgetown
GUYANA

UNESCO

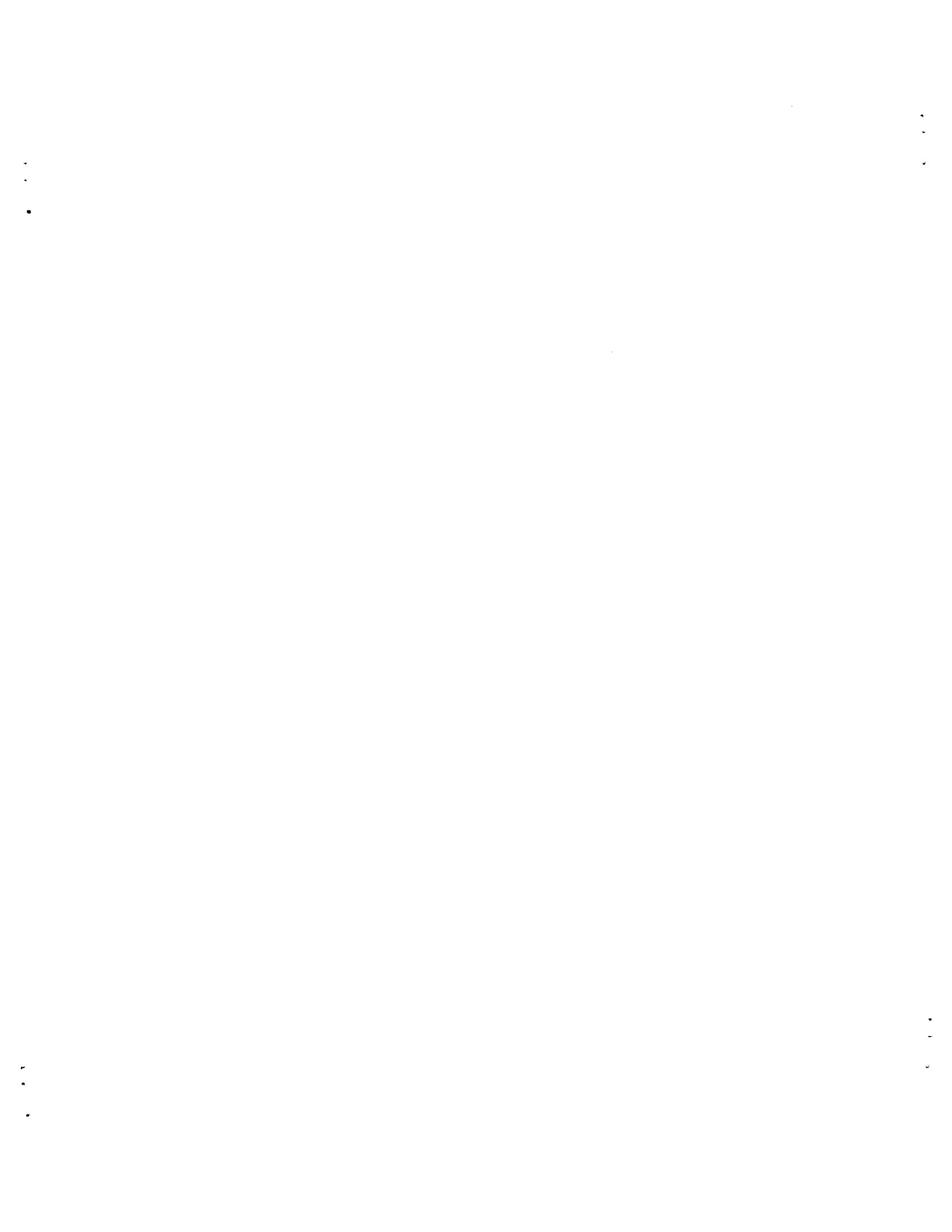
Mr Winthrop Wiltshire
Subregional Advisor for Science
and Technology,
8 Elizabeth Street
Port-of-Spain
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

3. ECLAC

Donatus St Aimee
Economic Affairs Officer
UN ECLAC

AGENDA

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. General discussion on the role and functioning of the CCST.
3. Presentation of country reports on progress of science and technology activities since last plenary.
4. Report on CCST activities.
5. Budget performance.
6. Work programme.
7. CCST organizational structure and arrangements:
 - (a) Secretariat;
 - (b) Inter-organizational co-operation;
 - (c) Relationship with governments.
8. Date and venue for next plenary session.
9. Any other business.



CCST BALANCE SHEET

Balance end October 1988

-1,166.07

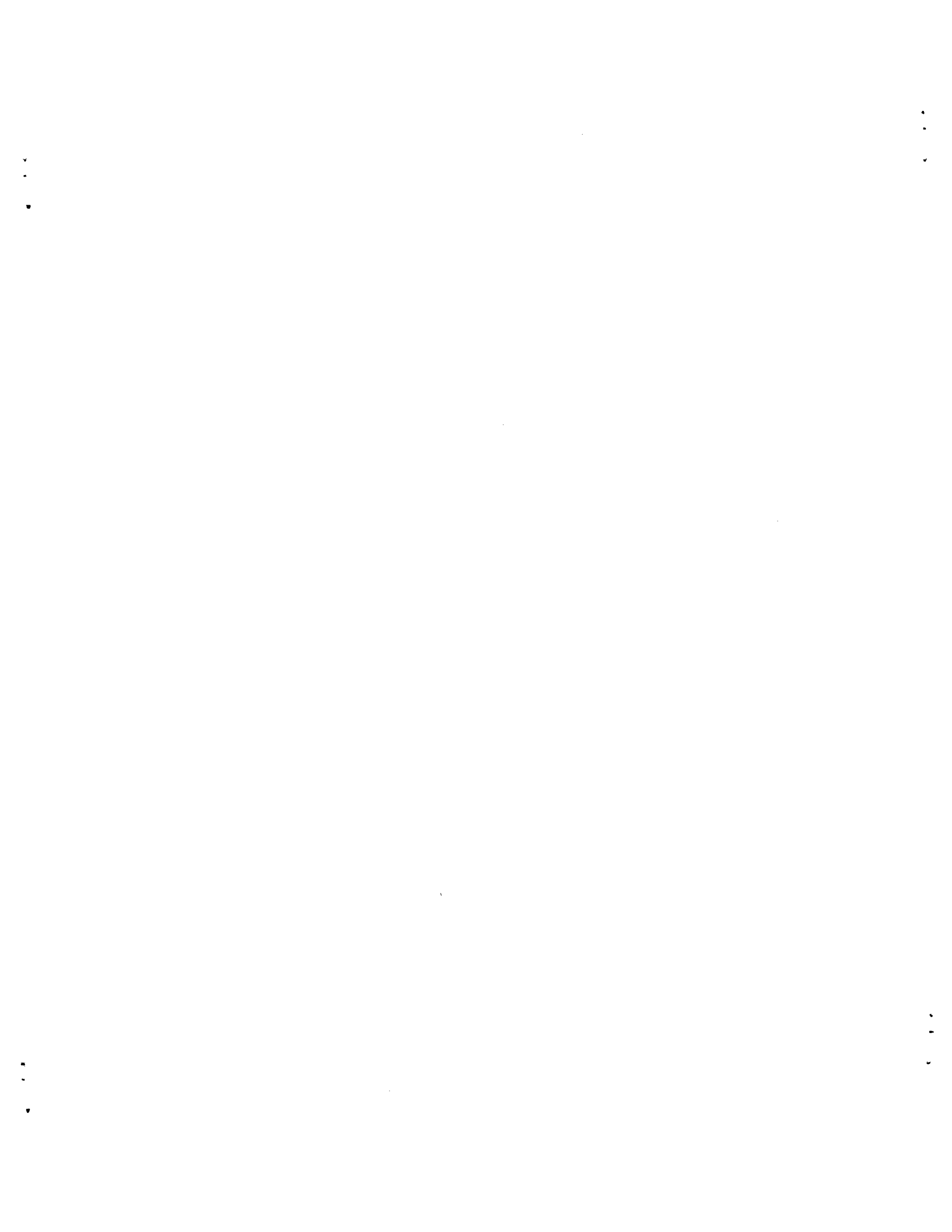
INCOME

Contributions from governments:

| | | |
|--------------------|---|-----------------|
| Cuba (1988) | - | 8,589.90 |
| Saint Lucia (1988) | - | 2,000.00 |
| Saint Lucia (1989) | - | 2,000.00 |
| Cuba (1989) | - | <u>8,338.33</u> |
| | | 20,928.23 |

EXPENDITURE

| | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|----------|
| Eighth Plenary Session | - | 4,169.68 |
| Animal Feed Project | - | 308.22 |
| Commonwealth Science Council Meeting | - | 144.94 |
| Discussions for National Consultations | - | 692.12 |
| Saint Vincent National Science and Technology Consultation | - | 2,177.92 |
| TCDC Assistance for participation at INTAL, Brazil | - | 90.00 |
| Eleventh Executive Committee | - | 1,713.12 |
| CARICOM Meeting of Ministers and Institutions involved in Science and Technology | - | 523.02 |
| Meeting on Regional Economic Conference and discussions with governments on inputs to national economic consultations | - | 655.77 |
| Regional Meeting on Science and Technology, Costa Rica | - | 1,851.42 |
| UNESCO Expert Group Meeting on Science and Technology, Antigua and Barbuda | - | 1,348.53 |



| | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|----------|----------|
| IICA Workshop on post-harvest handling of agricultural products for export | - | 32.94 | |
| Printing costs for CCST documents | | 130.02 | |
| Computer | - | 3,289.55 | |
| Communications | - | 143.76 | |
| Balance (end August 1990) | | | 2,491.15 |

