



## CARIBBEAN DEBT

ALICIA BÁRCENA REVIEWS  
PROGRESS ON ECLAC'S DEBT FOR  
CLIMATE ADAPTATION SWAP

## SAFE SCHOOLS

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MODEL  
SAFE SCHOOL PROGRAMME IN  
THE CARIBBEAN (MSSP)

## OUR OCEANS

OCEAN GOVERNANCE DISCUSSED AT  
CARIBBEAN ECOSYSTEM MEETING IN  
PANAMA



ECLAC

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Issued on a monthly basis, The Hummingbird offers strategic insights into the latest projects, publications, technical assistance missions and research carried out by ECLAC Caribbean. In addition to these, sneak previews are provided of the most salient upcoming events, alongside enriching follow-ups to previously covered issues. With a view to featuring a variety of facets of Caribbean life and lifestyle, The Hummingbird also zooms in on cultural activities and landmark occurrences through an eye-opening regional round-up.

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International Day of Older Persons  
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International Day of Non-Violence  
2 October 2019

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World Mental Health Day  
10 October 2019

24

United Nations Day  
24 October 2019



**ECLAC Caribbean**

Posted Oct 7

The adoption of e-governance solutions would increase the availability, quality and accessibility of public services in multi-island States and territories across the Caribbean.



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Authorities from Latin America and the Caribbean Approved Regional Agenda to Promote Inclusive Social Development



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**ECLAC Caribbean**

Posted Sep 23

The Executive Secretary of #ECLAC, Alicia Bárcena, met with Caribbean. More info here: <https://bit.ly/2mIB5GI>



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## CARIBBEAN JOINS LATIN AMERICA IN SIGNING AND RATIFYING THE ESCAZÚ AGREEMENT

**A** year after being opened for signature, the first regional treaty on environmental matters was signed Saint Kitts and Nevis, and ratified by Bolivia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Uruguay, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines at the UN headquarters in New York on 26 September 2019.

The Escazú Agreement promotes Regional Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean. In particular, the ambition of the Agreement is to ensure that people have access to timely and reliable information, can participate effectively in the decisions affecting their lives and their surroundings, and are able to access justice with regard to environmental matters, thereby contributing to the fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This historic legal instrument – which is Latin America and the Caribbean’s first environmental treaty and the only one of its kind in the world that has emerged from the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development



Meeting of the signatories of the Escazú agreement

(Río+20) thus far – was opened for the signature of all States on 27 September 2018. To date, it has garnered 19 signatory countries, and six nations have ratified it out of the 11 States Parties needed for its entry into force.

The signature ceremony was presided over by the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and UN Legal Counsel, Miguel de Serpa Soares, and included the participation of foreign ministers and other authorities from Bolivia, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and

Uruguay. ECLAC’s Executive Secretary, Alicia Bárcena, was represented by the Director of the organization’s subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, Diane Quarless.

The Escazú Agreement was one of the four environmental treaties highlighted by the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, at the Treaty Event 2019, a ceremony held each year to promote States’ participation in the multilateral treaties in which the Secretary-General is the depositary, the motto of which is “in support of the 2030 Agenda”. ■



## JAMAICA TO LIST CARIBBEAN'S FIRST GREEN STOCK BOND



Grenada becomes the 20th signatory country of the Escazú Agreement as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Labour, Peter David, signed the landmark treaty



Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saint Kitts and Nevis, Mark Brantley, at the signing of the Escazú agreement

Jamaica has been given the go-ahead to list the first-ever Caribbean green bond on the stock market, which will be used to raise money to fund environment-friendly projects.

and we will continue playing our role of regulator and market maker to attract more private sector investment into the green economy," he further stated.

Prime Minister Andrew Holness made the announcement on 07 October 2019, while speaking at the Green Climate Fund (GCF) Private Investment for Climate Change Conference in Incheon, South Korea.

"With hotter temperatures, coastal encroachment, shorter and more intense periods of rainfall, longer and more intense periods of drought, and more frequent and destructive hurricanes, climate change is our daily reality. For us, climate change spells disaster. The physical damage and human suffering visited upon countries like The Bahamas, Dominica, and Antigua and Barbuda is well told. The fiscal and economic damage, however, is not as well known. Climate-related shocks, whether sharp and swift hurricanes or lingering and debilitating droughts, have a long-term effect, particularly on economic growth trajectory and the public debt of small developing states and least developed countries," Holness concluded. ■

The GCF, which gave the approval, was established in 2010 as a global platform to respond to climate change by investing in low-emission and climate-resilient projects, the Prime Minister said in his presentation.

"We reiterate our support for a successful replenishment of the Green Climate Fund, which is today the most important institution that channels climate finance to developing countries,



Alicia Bárcena reviews progress on

# DEBT FOR CLIMATE ADAPTATION SWAP

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**E** CLAC's Executive Secretary, Alicia Bárcena, recently reviewed progress on the Debt for Climate Adaptation Swap Initiative, including the creation of a resilience fund for Caribbean SIDS, proposed by ECLAC.

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# Alicia Bárcena reviews progress on ECLAC's Debt for Climate Adaptation Swap

On 23 September 2019, Bárcena met with Prime Ministers Gaston Browne of Antigua and Barbuda, Allen Chastanet of Saint Lucia, and Ralph Gonsalves of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, who collectively thanked ECLAC for the proposal and acknowledged the urgent need for rapid implementation.

This initiative is a response to the Caribbean's most urgent development needs: its high level of debt, and vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters. "This proposal goes

beyond a traditional debt restructuring, since it links debt relief to investment in sustainable development and green economy projects. In other words, it offers a strategy to provide fiscal space and relief to economies overburdened by public debt and debt servicing costs, while at the same time directing increased resources towards investment in climate adaptation projects and green industries to build resilience," Alicia Bárcena highlighted.

According to ECLAC's estimates,

a reduction in the debt-to-GDP ratio of at least 12.2% in Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines would allow for generating at least one point of GDP growth in each country. Bárcena proposed that while debt negotiations are taking place, countries should also pursue the establishment of a Caribbean Resilience Fund (CRF).

"This Fund could, on the one hand, attract resources (concessional and grant) from countries and agencies that want



Hon. Frederick Stephenson (left) meets with ECLAC Executive Secretary Alicia Bárcena



“

*This Fund could, on the one hand, attract resources (concessional and grant) from countries and agencies that want to support climate resilience building in the region and, on the other hand, could also be capitalized from resources arising from the successful implementation of the debt for climate adaptation swap initiative.*

Alicia Bárcena - Executive Secretary, ECLAC.

”

to support climate resilience building in the region and, on the other hand, could also be capitalized from resources arising from the successful implementation of the debt for climate adaptation swap initiative,” she stated.

Several Caribbean countries rank among the most highly indebted in the world. In 2018, the average Caribbean debt was 70.5% of GDP. According to ECLAC’s assessment, without meaningful intervention, the countries of the Caribbean

cannot grow their way out of the current debt crisis.

It is to be noted that since 1990, more than 385 climate-related disasters have been recorded in the subregion. Since 2000, the Caribbean has suffered at least eight disasters with an annual cost of between 33% and 200% of the GDP in the affected countries. Average annual losses due to ever more catastrophic climate events in the Caribbean are estimated at \$3 billion dollars. ■



Hon. Samantha Nicole Marshall (left) meets with the ECLAC Executive Secretary Alicia Bárcena



## CASHING IN ON CREATIVITY: CARIBBEAN ANIMATION IS AN INDUSTRY ON THE RISE

**W**hen young artists first come through the doors of Malfinis Film and Animation Studio Inc. in Castries, Managing Director Milton Branford is surprised at what he sees: “The first thing they draw is Japanese anime. None of them can draw themselves, Saint Lucians, the people in their communities. We do not tell our own stories enough.”

Caribbean animators may not be well-versed in telling their own tales, but that’s set to change as the industry matures. Long neglected as a small niche within the cultural and creative industries, animation is now gaining new traction as established artists push for progress.

A veteran of the Saint Lucian arts scene, Branford believes that, with the right support, the burgeoning Caribbean animation industry can support economic growth, sustainable employment and diversification opportunities for the entire region.

“There is a great deal of talent in the Caribbean,” he says. “It is undeveloped as it is now, but it is beginning to blossom. This is a billion-dollar industry that we have not tapped, but we have the potential to do so.”

The global animation industry was worth US \$259 billion last year, and it is projected to total US \$270

billion by 2020 with most segments in the market growing at a rate of 2% each year.

The home of animation in the Caribbean is Trinidad and Tobago, which has been leading the pack in terms of carving out a thriving industry. Trinidad hosts the region’s largest animation festival, Anima Caribe, which began in 2001 and has grown to encompass game development, 3D printing, virtual reality and other emerging technologies.

In 2013, festival founder Camille Selvon Abrahams, teamed up with business development expert Jason Lindsay to launch Full Circle Animation Studio. Full Circle is now one of the biggest names in the business, working on international projects for HBO, Disney, Dreamworks, Nickelodeon, Amazon and Netflix.

Lindsay says this borderless business model isn’t just good for Full Circle, but also animators across the entire region as the studio contracts with smaller operators such as Malfinis to increase its production capacity.

“The animation industry is digital so the entire production pipeline is virtual,” he says. “That model is more efficient and develops capacity in other islands. Caribbean collaboration is the only way we will maintain sustainability.” ■



## TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS TO MULTI-ISLAND CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED AT ECLAC MEETING

**C**aribbean countries that adopt electronic governance solutions could benefit from increased availability and accessibility of services, while reducing service delivery costs. Experts in the field of information communication technologies (ICTs) came to this conclusion during an expert group meeting (EGM) convened by ECLAC Caribbean on 03 October 2019.

The EGM was based on a study that investigated the contribution that ICTs and KM are making to sustainable development across multi-island Caribbean SIDS.

Focusing on the areas of health, education and governance, the study used the multi-island SIDS of Saint Kitts and Nevis, Trinidad and Tobago, and Turks and Caicos Islands as case studies to explore inter-island differences in ICT and KM capacity and the scope for its strengthening. The EGM reviewed and provided feedback on the findings of the study, with a view to validating its conclusions and recommendations.

During the EGM, the experts said that ICT and knowledge management are valuable tools to support sustainable growth and the delivery of public services in multi-island settings, since they provide virtual connectivity to mitigate the effects of physical

constraints on movement of people and goods between islands.

The potential of ICT is largely untapped across the Caribbean, so much so that more than half of the households in the subregion still lack internet access, and small and outlying islands are particularly underserved. In many islands, insufficient bandwidth and unreliable connections prevent the effective, integrated use of internet in education, health and other sectors.

The study made recommendations for strategic intervention applicable to all Caribbean multi-island SIDS, and identified opportunities for further analysis and investigation.

ECLAC intends to raise awareness on how ICTs and KM can be used to improve the delivery of public services in small and outlying islands. It is expected that greater awareness will enhance discussions, and motivate the implementation of ICT and KM solutions aimed at ensuring that small and outlying islands in multi-island countries benefit equally from development efforts. ■



## IMPLEMENTING THE MODEL SAFE SCHOOL PROGRAMME

**T**hroughout the Caribbean region, the education sector is highly vulnerable to the range of natural hazards. Over the last two decades, the sector has experienced significant damage and losses due to the impact of such hazards.

The passage of Hurricane Ivan on 7 September 2004 — what can be considered a landmark event in the history of Grenada — resulted in damage to 75 of the 78 schools on the island, disrupting their operations for up to three months (The World Bank, 2005).

More recently, the passage of Hurricane Maria on 18 September 2017 wreaked havoc on the entire island, flattening schools and leaving more than a third of government-owned schools out of operation even two months after the initial impact (United Nations, 2017). The threat that accelerated climate change poses to the increased frequency and intensity of such hydro-meteorological hazards is expected to have a direct bearing on the education sector. On July 20, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) approved grant funding of EUR 746,000 to the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency Coordinating Unit (CDEMA- CU) to further implement the Model Safe School Programme (MSSP) toolkit in four countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis and St. Lucia.

The toolkit was developed by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) to guide governments on the development of National Safe School Policies and to offer tools for assessing the level of safety and greening of schools.

The Implementation of the Model Safe School Programme in the Caribbean (MSSP) was designed to, among other things, enhance the capacity of Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis and St. Lucia to incorporate and mainstream risk and disaster management considerations in education sector policies, planning and operations.

The project will be executed by CDEMA through its Coordinating Unit (CU). The project will be implemented in collaboration with the Ministries of Education and the Ministries of Public Works or the agency responsible for school construction and maintenance, school administration and the National Disaster Management Office in each country. Funding is being provided under the African Caribbean Pacific-European Union-Caribbean Development Bank Natural Disaster Risk Management (ACP-EU-CDB NDRM). ■



## TURKS & CAICOS FILM FESTIVAL WILL FEATURE ENVIRONMENTALISM

**T**he inaugural Turks & Caicos international film festival will celebrate filmmakers who are making a difference to the environment and it will honour those who promote an understanding of ocean conservation issues.

The event, taking place from 15-17 November 2019 will have the theme of 'Green & Blue' – the environment and the ocean. Some highlights include films and documentaries many of which are on the fast track to awards success, with gala presentations each evening.

The opening will include the most current conservation film, "Sea of Shadows", with one of its producers, Ru Mahoney, making an introduction alongside Captain Peter Hammarstedt, Operations Director of Sea Shepherd (the film features his work in the Sea of Cortez).

Speakers will include Emma Freud and Richard Curtis, who co-created "Red Nose Day", as well as Jonny Keeling, the Executive Producer of the world-renowned BBC Natural History Unit, who will share his insights into how coverage of climate change and plastic ocean pollution has moved

global opinion.

Celebrated director, F. Gary Gray in the meantime, will guide young film-makers through the intricacies of his craft. On the award-winning beach of Grace Bay, there will be open-air screenings of popular family films, all framed by an ocean theme.

Behind the glamour is a game-changing purpose. Throughout 2019, the team has been working with local schools to teach film-making skills with the goal of telling captivating conservation stories about their country. This has run nationally across all the islands and will culminate in workshops for the pupils during the festival.

The Turks & Caicos International Film Festival (TCIFF) is a not for profit organisation run by a committee comprising several nationalities – Turks and Caicos Islanders, British, Irish, Canadian and American – all of whom have businesses and homes on the main island, Providenciales, where the festival will be held.

The Festival Director is Colin Burrows, a film executive with over 30 years experience in the industry. ■



## ECLAC SUPPORTS TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO WITH NEW TRADE POLICY

**T**he government of Trinidad and Tobago (T&T) recently launched a new trade policy for 2019-2023, which is designed to enhance diversification of its economy through expansion into non-traditional markets such as Latin America, African and Asian countries.

ECLAC Caribbean supported the development of this policy document, which had its roots in a meeting between Prime Minister, Dr. Keith Rowley and ECLAC's Executive Secretary, Alicia Bárcena, during a State visit to Chile in 2017.

Speaking at the launch was ECLAC Caribbean's Deputy Director, Dr. Dillon Alleyne, who highlighted some of the trade challenges faced by Caribbean countries, including the disruption of the financial crisis of 2007-2008. "This demonstrated the vulnerability of the subregion to external shocks, and was particularly damaging for the service-producing economies of the Caribbean and affected their performance for several years after. While the goods-producing economies (which include Trinidad and Tobago) were able to weather the storm of the financial crisis, they were affected by the gradual decline in commodity prices that began a few years later."

Dr. Alleyne further explained that the implications of these challenges on the economies of the Caribbean have been persistent primary deficits, increased debt and debt service burdens and low growth. He said that ECLAC's work in recent years has focused on responding to these challenges with various projects and programs that have been implemented throughout the Caribbean.

Dr. Alleyne pointed out that while the subregion has gone through some difficult times over the past decade, the resilience and solidarity of Caribbean people has helped to overcome them.

He described the new trade policy as a centre piece in the government's efforts to strengthen economic ties within the Caribbean, Latin America and beyond. As the Caribbean's largest exporter and main export destination, the Trade policy provides an opportunity for Trinidad and Tobago to strengthen its position as a major player while assisting in the revitalization of the Caribbean economy.

"ECLAC is very happy to support our Member States in identifying areas of opportunities and work

collaboratively with them to provide technical assistance when needed. We were happy to support the Ministry of Trade and Industry in its efforts to produce this Trade Policy and we stand ready to provide any further assistance where and when needed," Dr. Alleyne ended.

Also speaking at the launch was Trinidad and Tobago's Minister of Trade and Development, Paula Gopee-Scoon, who explained that while trade and investments will be maintained in traditional markets, like the US and Europe, the policy seeks to diversify into other areas.

"The consultative process revealed that, exports best match the imports, or is more compatible with, the imports of Caribbean, Latin and Central America, African and Asian economies."

Gopee-Scoon added that the country's rising trade to GDP ratio is currently estimated at 132%, however products are far too specialized, and exports continue to be resource-based and dependent on the energy sector.

"As a consequence, the country's foreign exchange earnings are dependent on narrow range of



## HOW BARBUDA IS GOING GREEN

exports which in turn makes the foreign exchange earnings capacity extremely vulnerable to external shocks. The need for transformation of the economy to increasingly high-value goods and services is a step in the right direction," she stated.

The policy intends to enhance competitiveness, accelerate economic and export diversification and increase the foreign exchange rate potential for TT. It is broken down into five goals and is expected to be pursued over a five-year period. Among the key initiatives is addressing the non-tariff barriers for exporters in the external markets.

In developing the study consultations were held with 33 stakeholders from the private and public sectors, as well as the Tobago House of Assembly (THA). ■

**A**fter the devastation caused by Hurricane Irma in 2017, the beach-filled paradise of Barbuda is about to go green in a major way.

The United Arab Emirates is joining with the CARICOM Development Fund and other partners to build a resilient green power system for Barbuda.

The UAE-Caribbean Renewable Energy Fund will work with the CARICOM Development Fund (CDF), along with Antigua and Barbuda's government and the government of New Zealand to restore power to the island.

"After the devastation caused by Hurricane Irma in Barbuda, we are not only trying to restore electricity to the island — we will work to rebuild it even better," said Sultan Al Shami, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for the United Arab Emirates.

"Providing the island with a solar power plant will solve its energy crisis, provide clean, environmentally friendly energy, and improve the living conditions of islanders who will operate and maintain the new solar

power plant to help reduce the impact of climate change."

The agreement will see the disbursement of \$5.7 million from the UAE to support Antigua and Barbuda through the largest renewable energy initiative of its kind in the Caribbean region.

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda also invested \$1 million through the CDF, and the Government of New Zealand donated \$500,000 to aid in funding the project and building a hybrid solar-diesel power station equipped with hurricane-resilient battery storage.

"This project will be a core component of the efforts by our government to transform Barbuda into possibly the first truly climate-resilient community in our region and doing this within a sustainable energy framework," said Robin Yearwood, Minister of Public Utilities, Civil Aviation, Transport and Energy for Antigua.

"This will also serve as a model for other Caribbean small-island developing states." ■



## OCEAN GOVERNANCE DISCUSSED AT CARIBBEAN ECOSYSTEM MEETING IN PANAMA

**T**he Caribbean Sea and bordering oceans define the historical, geo-political, cultural, economic, social, environmental and future identities of the Caribbean Small Island and Low Lying Coastal Developing States (Caribbean SIDS). In the Caribbean region, approximately 70% of the population live in coastal areas. The Caribbean Sea resources and eco-system services are major contributors to the development of the Caribbean SIDS. A 2016 study by the World Bank put the economic value of the Caribbean Sea alone at US\$407 billion per year. Yet this precious ecosystem is at the heart of competing economic and social demands as well as natural stresses and threats.

These issues were the centre of attention during a Regional Consultation meeting in support of the implementation of the 10-year politically endorsed Caribbean

Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME)+ Strategic Action Programme (SAP).

Representing ECLAC Caribbean was Sustainable Development Officer, Artie Dubrie, who highlighted ECLAC's work in support of sustainable ocean governance in the Caribbean, in addition to discussing preparatory actions for the SAMOA Pathway at the 74th UNGA, and presenting the functioning and lessons learnt of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC)-Regional Coordinating Mechanism (RCM) and as a possible regional governance model for the Wider Caribbean Sea.

The CLME+ SAP acknowledges the critical role of ocean governance in sustainable natural resources management, environmental protection and socio-economic development. In this regard, it calls for the

development of a proposal for a 'Wider Caribbean Sea - Permanent Policy Coordination Mechanism (PPCM)' to achieve better ocean governance in the CLME+ region. The SAP further specifies that such mechanism must have a clear mandate, be financially sustainable, geographically inclusive and politically acceptable.

Sustainable ocean governance is a priority for the countries of the Caribbean subregion, especially since ocean-based economies such as fishing, tourism and maritime transportation are large contributors to the economies of Caribbean SIDS. It also provides for the new and emerging industries such as industrial marine aquaculture, ocean renewal energy, marine biotechnology and other marine-based products and services. ■



# STATE *of* AFFAIRS



Belize

## ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH UAE

- Oct -

The Government of Belize and the Government of the United Arab Emirates signed an agreement on economic cooperation. The agreement establishes a framework for expanding the economic relationship between the two countries in a number of key areas, including: trade, investment, transportation and tourism. The agreement was signed on behalf of Belize by Minister of Economic Development, Petroleum, Investment, Trade and Commerce, Erwin Contreras, and on behalf of the United Arab Emirates by Sultan bin Saeed al Mansouri, Minister of the Economy.

## DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

- Oct -

The Governments of Belize and the Republic of Serbia have established diplomatic relations at the ministerial level. The newly established relationship with Serbia comes as a part of the government's plan to broaden Belize's diplomatic reach and identify potential markets with non-traditional trading partners. Signing on behalf of the Government of Belize was Minister of Foreign Affairs, Wilfred Elrington, and on behalf of the Republic of Serbia was Ivica Dacic, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs.



Dominica

## HOUSING RECOVERY PROJECT

- Sept -

The Government of Dominica launches the Housing Recovery Project (HRP) as an island wide initiative designed to provide support for the reconstruction of 1,700 completely destroyed small houses owned by the most vulnerable. Financing for the HRP was secured via; credit, the International Development Association (IDA) and a Crisis Response Window Grant. The HRP will also ensure that houses will be constructed in accordance with internationally recognised resilient best practices.

## JAPAN DONATES 10 MILLION

- Oct -

The Government of Japan has donated approximately \$10 million dollars' worth of equipment and supplies to the Government of Dominica. The donation, made through the Japanese Grant Aid Programme, included; loaders, chainsaws, dump trucks, command vehicles and compactor trucks. According to Minister for Foreign Affairs, Francine Baron, the investment of the Japanese government will also include some essential capacity building.



Saint Kitts and Nevis

## AID FOR THE BAHAMAS

- Sept -

The Government of St. Kitts and Nevis has approved financial aid to the Commonwealth of The Bahamas to assist in the ongoing recovery and relief efforts following the devastation left in the aftermath of Hurricane Dorian. Additionally, the Prime Minister, Timothy Harris, will authorize the deployment of a number of police officers from the Royal St. Christopher and Nevis Police Force to The Bahamas to provide security assistance to the Royal Bahamas Police Force.

## DIGITALIZATION

- Sept -

The Government of St Kitts and Nevis plans to incorporate digitalization into the country's economy by introducing an e-Governance service to the Citizenship by Investment (CBI) Unit, which is charged with managing the country's famous CBI Programme. Long term plans to implement digitalization reform are expected to include, the expansion of the fiber optic infrastructure and the introduction of the digital Eastern Caribbean Dollar.



## ECLAC IDENTIFIES GROWTH CHALLENGES AND POLICY MISSTEPS AT UWI CONFERENCE

**G**overnment representatives and leading Caribbean academics identified new policy approaches to address development challenges in the Caribbean, at a recent symposium organized by the Institute of International Relations (IIR) at the University of the West Indies (UWI) in Trinidad and Tobago.

The IIR conference, entitled 'The Caribbean on the Edge: Rising Above the Orthodoxy of Development Thinking', was held in tribute to Sir Alister McIntyre from 11-12 September 2019 at the Saint Augustine campus. Sir Alister, who passed away this year, was known as a venerable Caribbean integrationist, who piloted the movement for integration as Secretary-General of CARICOM from 1974 to 1977. He was also a former Vice-Chancellor of UWI from 1988 to 1998.

Representing ECLAC Caribbean at the conference was Deputy Director, Dr. Dillon Alleyne, who presented on "Emerging Policy Directions for the Region's Development – How are they different and relevant?" Dr. Alleyne highlighted some policy directions as well as policy missteps in the subregion. He said that the renewed commitment of ECLAC member states to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) means that the old notions of growth without distribution can be labelled as 'old school'. "Perhaps the most

significant changes in perspective have been the recognition of the vulnerability of small states and their need to build resilience in all areas," Dr. Alleyne highlighted.

To best summarize the challenges and opportunities facing the subregion, Dr. Alleyne focused his intervention on three main pillars.

First, in relation to the sustainable growth agenda, Dr. Alleyne noted that since the global crisis of 2008-2009, Caribbean economies have not yet returned to pre-crisis levels of growth and that a few have even been in recession. The commodity producers have experienced a decline in revenue, and in a few cases there have been foreign exchange shortages. In this context, Dr. Alleyne noted that several countries have had to come under the realm of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), more than once, and that fiscal consolidation has been the order of the day. The service producers, in turn, have fared a bit better in light of the improving tourism flows from major source markets.

"Both groups of countries however, are subject to severe negative external shocks due to reliance of a few markets and activities. ECLAC predicts that on the basis of the current configuration of industries and sectors, growth is likely to be modest at best over the medium

term," Dr. Alleyne said.

Secondly, Dr. Alleyne noted that the Caribbean is dealing with high public debt and fiscal stress, with the debt burden higher than in other SIDS regions. The high debt he said, has several challenges although it is not unique to the Caribbean. It restrains growth, raises borrowing costs through a higher risk premium and creates challenges for financing the social sector as resources must be diverted for debt service. Therefore, structural challenges must be overcome, in order for sustainable development to occur.

Dr. Alleyne's third point was on the environmental vulnerability of the subregion. He said "The Caribbean loses an estimated US \$3 billion each year because of storms, and has experienced more disasters than any other SIDS region. The agriculture and tourism sectors are especially vulnerable, since disasters typically reverse or retard hard-won economic gains."

Disaster-related costs are also expected to escalate in Caribbean coastal towns highly exposed to climate change, where 70% of the population lives and the majority of the urban centres are located. This of course presents a real challenge to countries facing low growth and having limited access to concessional finance for development.



## COLLABORATION ENCOURAGED AMONG CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES IN PURSUIT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The immediacy of the challenges raises issues on how to address disaster risk reduction and preparedness and how to finance post-disaster reconstruction and building back better.

Dr. Alleyne acknowledged that with the above challenges came policy missteps, one of which is to imagine that the Caribbean can ride out the current crisis without serious structural change and that proper management through better institution will be the answer. "For some it is return to vibrant oil prices or for other the improvement in tourism receipts. Either way, under the most optimistic scenarios, it is not likely that sustainable growth can occur under the current configuration of sectors and activities."

Among his recommendations was the need for policy makers to pursue an industrial policy that would identify new sectors and activities. Such a policy would emphasize investment in the domestic capital sector to develop the skills base to engage in global service exports. He also said that health and education services plus the creative industries should be seen as export activities and be promoted as such. He called for an expansion of the entrepreneurial envelope by encouraging more women and youth into the business sector. In addition, he argued for a national broadband strategy to encourage interconnection, through ICT, among all segments of the population. ■

Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are being encouraged to take advantage of new opportunities for greater cooperation, as well as for collaboration with development partners and the wider United Nations system in the pursuit of sustainable development. Opportunities and recommendations in this regard emerged from a two-day workshop hosted by ECLAC Caribbean, on 17-18 September 2019.

Convened at ECLAC Caribbean headquarters, in Port of Spain, the purpose of the workshop was to discuss the best strategy for repositioning the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee-Regional Coordinating Mechanism (CDCC-RCM) to support Caribbean states in pursuing a comprehensive strategy towards implementation of sustainable development in the subregion.

Attended by government

representatives, regional experts, UN partners and civil society, the workshop identified a new structure and functioning for the coordinating mechanism, which will ensure an integrated approach to sustainable development in the Caribbean, by enhancing the coherence, complementarity and congruence of development activities.

Meeting participants agreed that the current structure and functioning of CDCC-RCM have to be revisited in order for it to effectively serve the sustainable developmental priorities of the region. Participants also agreed that the CDCC-RCM could be a forum through which Caribbean countries advocate common positions in the international arena.

The workshop also explored new opportunities for SIDS-South and triangular cooperation, including with developmental partners, private-public participation and the wider United Nations system. ■



## IN BARBADOS, THE HOUSE ON RIHANNA DRIVE

**A** one-way street on the outskirts of Bridgetown has two lines of colorful houses just across Spring Garden Highway from the sea.

But it's the green-and-yellow one three quarters of the way down the road that brings the pilgrims. Robyn Rihanna Fenty used to ride her bicycle up and down Westbury New Road, before the Grammys and the Platinum records and the fashion empire — before Westbury New Road received its current name: Rihanna Drive.

Willmar's Bar is an important stop on the journey to Rihanna Drive.

It's on this very street in the parish of St Michael where one of the most impactful music careers of this century began.

There are two rum shops at the end of the road, and you can't go to either one without finding a neighbor who was there in the beginning.

Mary Allman, who operates Willmar's Bar (it's the white-walled one on the north corner), smiles as she pours a small bottle of Cockspur rum.

"We all watch her," she says.

In 2017, the Barbados government officially changed the name of Westbury New Road to Rihanna Drive, honoring the woman who has become the island's

most famous brand and one who has deftly added the title of entrepreneur.

"My whole life was shaped on this very road," Rihanna said at the renaming ceremony. "I was just a little island girl riding bikes, running around barefoot and flying kites in the cemetery, but I had big dreams. Dreams that were born and realized right here."

Today, Rihanna's biggest fans make the pilgrimage to this street, stopping at the yellow-and-green house and, if they are lucky, spending an afternoon moment or two with the charming Mary.

On a quiet city road, the home instantly reminds of how the Caribbean region has always punched above its weight, how this region has produced some of the biggest stars, the biggest names and the biggest legends, in the academy and the arts, the world has ever seen.

It's no coincidence that Rihanna used to listen to Bob Marley as a child, another Caribbean star that became a global icon.

And yes, Rihanna, who is also a cultural ambassador for the island, does return home, a ritual of her own, usually twice each year, a neighbor tells me, though she does have a home on the West Coast as well. ■

# ECLAC CARIBBEAN *Family*

## Advocating for EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION for LGBTQI+ Issues

It is important to promote dignity and inclusion in the UN system workplace by raising awareness on unconscious bias, inclusive language, and the human rights of LGBTI persons, those with a disability and people who use substances.

In this regard, a UN Staff Sensitization session was organized, towards advocating for equality and non-discrimination for LGBTQI+ Issues, on 09 October 2019, at UN House in Trinidad and Tobago.

Some of the highlights of the session were videos relating to LGBTQI experiences, discussion on why the UN supports the rights of the LGBTQI community, and PAHO/WHO's mandate in this capacity. Several staff members also shared their personal experiences in LGBTQI and related areas. ■



# Salmon Beurre Blanc

'Beurre blanc' directly translates (from French to English) to white butter. It's a classic French sauce that is made by emulsifying butter with a reduction of white wine (in this case) or vinegar. Though it requires some technique, the simple but delicious sauce pairs well with delicate meats like fish.

Yields: 4 servings

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Total Time: 45 minutes

## What you will need:

4 8-ounce fillets pink salmon  
Salt, to taste  
Black pepper, to taste  
4 teaspoons olive oil  
1 large white onion, finely diced  
1 large carrot, finely diced  
1 large red bell pepper, finely diced  
1 large yellow bell pepper, finely diced  
4 ounces white wine  
Parsley, to garnish

## For the beurre blanc:

1 cup white wine  
2 ounces lemon juice  
2 ounces cooking cream  
8 ounces cold butter, cubed  
Salt, to taste  
White pepper, to taste

## Method:

1. Season the salmon pieces with salt and black pepper and set aside.
2. In a non-stick sauté pan over medium-high heat, add olive oil. Place the salmon fillets on one side. To cook evenly, the pan must be very hot (not smoking) before the fish is placed in. Cook each piece for three minutes on either side. Resist the urge to fiddle with the salmon or flip before its time.
3. When both sides are cooked and golden brown, remove from the heat.
4. In the same sauté pan, add diced onions and allow to cook until softened. Add carrots and bell peppers, and allow to cook with the onions. Then, add the white wine and let reduce.
5. Season the salmon pieces with salt and black pepper and set aside. Remove from the stove and add parsley to garnish.
6. For the beurre blanc, combine white wine, lemon juice and cooking cream in a sauce pot and bring to a simmer.
7. Cut butter into large cubes and slowly begin adding to the warm liquid mixture. Whisk each addition until well blended. Ensure that the heat is low.
8. Once all the butter has been whisked in, the emulsified mixture should be thick and very smooth. Add salt and white pepper.
9. Place a pool of beurre blanc on a serving plate. Place salmon filet on top and generously spoon sautéed vegetables over the top of the salmon.



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