

ECLAC launches International Year of Small Island Developing States



At centre: ECLAC Executive Secretary Alicia Barcena sits with some of the Ministers who attended the IYS event in Jamaica.

THE International Year of Small Island Developing States (IYS) gala held at the Pegasus Hotel in Kingston, Jamaica in April 2014, was indeed a celebration of Caribbean culture.

The high-level event placed the spotlight on SIDS and the upcoming Third International SIDS Conference, to be held on 1-4 September in Apia, Samoa.



Welcoming delegates from the Caribbean member states was host of the event, Chair of the Caribbean Development Coordinating Committee, the Honourable AJ Nicholson, Foreign Minister of Jamaica, and ECLAC Executive Secretary Alicia Barcena.

The evening offered a vibrant and diverse showcase of varying artforms of the region, including drumming, West Indian narrative, steelpan, dance, poetry and song, celebrating the rich cultural heritage of the Caribbean.

Dr Hilary Brown of CARICOM elaborated on the uniqueness of the various carnivals held throughout the year in the islands, along with the musical artforms, which are similar yet indigenous to the various territories.

Several officials present gave their perspective on the Caribbean SIDS experience.

These included Guyana's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett, her Saint Vincent and the Grenadines counterpart, the honourable Camillo Gonsalves, and the Foreign Minister of Saint Lucia, the Honourable Alva Baptiste.



The Akwaba Drummers entertained the audience, along with other cultural performers.

Caribbean Development Roundtable explores Caribbean debt problem

THE Third Caribbean Development Roundtable (CDR), held in Kingston, Jamaica on 23-24 April, focused on strategies to address the heavy debt burden being shouldered by Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Caribbean.

The average debt-to-GDP ratio among SIDS in the Caribbean hovers around 74 percent, with some countries surpassing 100 percent, according to recent ECLAC reports. Regional thinkers in Kingston for the meeting, underscored the seriousness and the urgency required to address the problem.

Jamaican Foreign Minister AJ Nicholson said this meant reduced expenditure for social programs, among other things. The meeting's focus on resilience-building therefore had particular resonance for Jamaica and the rest of the Caribbean.

"Our region is saddled by high public debt

and reduced fiscal space. The debt problem has reached epidemic proportions, forcing a number of countries, including my own, to pursue programs of fiscal consolidation," he said, attributing the debt accumulation partly to the expenditure on reconstruction following natural disasters.

The Foreign Minister urged the region's development partners to be more supportive, given that SIDS are more vulnerable to extreme weather events associated with climate change, such as the torrential rains and flooding that hit the eastern Caribbean in December 2013.

The damage was estimated to be as high as US \$93.3 million, or 13 percent of GDP in St Vincent and the Grenadines, and US \$ 83.2 million, or 6.3 percent of St Lucia's GDP.

"These were sizeable impacts for countries that were just barely recovering from the global crisis. Few countries of the globe can

cope on their own with a sudden and catastrophic event equivalent to the loss of over six percent of their GDP," Nicholson said, adding that Caribbean development partners needed to be more aware of this vulnerability and focus more on cooperation.

The minister insisted that special attention must be paid to developing and strengthening partnerships in areas such as climate change and disaster risk management. "It is only through the identification of integrated strategies for building resilience, that our vulnerabilities can be overcome and Caribbean development assured," he argued.

The roundtable provided a forum for experts to exchange ideas and explore ways to address the economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities of Caribbean SIDS.

The One To Watch

The Regional Roundup

New Antigua-Barbuda cabinet sworn in



The new cabinet.

THE new Antigua and Barbuda cabinet of Prime Minister Gaston Browne was sworn in on 16 June 2014. The ministers took their oaths at Government House before making their way to the Antigua Recreation

Grounds for a public ceremony.

Browne has named a 12-member Cabinet that includes several familiar faces, a female and a few newcomers.

The swearing-in ceremony saw Samantha Marshall, a newcomer, assuming the portfolio of social transformation and human resource development.

Another newcomer, Michael Browne, was appointed minister of education, science and technology.

The country's new minister of foreign affairs and international trade is Charles 'Max' Fernandez.

(CURACAO CHRONICLE)

La Rocque praises Robinson

THE legacy of the Honourable Arthur Napoleon Robinson to the Caribbean Community "has endured and will ensure that he will be remembered as a true Caribbean Man." So said Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Ambassador Irwin LaRocque as he paid tribute to the former President of Trinidad and Tobago who passed away on Wednesday 9 April 2014.

The Secretary-General recalled Mr Robinson's contribution to the landmark Conference of the Heads of Government at Grand Anse, Grenada in 1989 at which he presented a paper "The West Indies Beyond 1992" which among other



The late Arthur NR Robinson of Trinidad and Tobago.

things resulted in the creation of the West Indian Commission.

A national of Trinidad and Tobago, born in Tobago, ANR, as he was known, had an outstanding political career which culminated with his election as PM in 1986 and becoming President in 1997, the only person in his country's history to have served in both positions. (CARICOM)

Guyanese students able to study, practice law in the Caribbean

THE Guyana government has settled the issue of its nationals wanting to study law and practice in the region. A published statement noted that President Donald Ramotar had discussed the issue at a meeting chaired by St. Vincent and the Grenadines Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves and the Chairman of the Council of Legal Education of the West Indies, Jacqueline Samuel-Brown, QC in mid June.

The meeting was held to specifically

address the issue of the impasse affecting University of Guyana law students gaining entry into Hugh Wooding Law School in Trinidad and Tobago generally, the review of legal education in the West Indies.

The statement said it was also "decided that there shall be comprehensive review of legal education in the West Indies, and the modalities extent and financial implications of the same will be discussed at the CARICOM level." (CARIBBEAN 360)

Celebrating girls in ICT

GIRLS in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) joined their counterparts worldwide on Thursday 24 April 2014, to call attention to the opportunities available to them in the field of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

The International Girls in ICT Day was observed under the theme Expanding Horizons And Changing Attitudes. The observance is an initiative of International Telecommunications Union (ITU) member states since 2010, to create a global environment that empowers and encourages girls and young women to consider careers in the growing field of ICTs.

The ITU is the United Nations' specialized agency for ICTs.

Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago were the first CARICOM Member States to observe Girls in ICT Day events in 2012, while Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago continued the tradition in 2013.

This year CARICOM placed more emphasis on ICTs given the importance of the sector to development. CARICOM also mandated heads of governments to pay increased attention on ICT in 2014 and 2015. One of the priority areas in this regard speaks to bringing technology to the people and transforming them to digital citizens, with an emphasis on women and girls. (CARICOM)

Aruba: One Happy Island

ARUBA's healthy tourism economy is fueled by a generous blend of cruise arrivals and hotel guests. Annually this popular desert destination, in the lower reaches of the Caribbean near Venezuela, attracts nearly 1.7 million visitors. It is no surprise that development is booming.

Last December an impressive US \$150 million 320-room Ritz-Carlton opened ahead of schedule. Holiday Inn completed a US \$20 million renovation in January including all rooms, the pool and reception areas and there have been other developments, including a new Hard Rock Resort, and Blue Residences, the first upscale condominium resort to be built in 20 years on Eagle Beach. (CARIBBEAN NEWS NOW)

ECLAC in the Caribbean

Creativity of Caribbean Youth

IN the previous issue of The Hummingbird, we shared the information about the launch of ECLAC's poster and essay competition for primary, secondary and tertiary level students, on the International Year of Small Island Developing States (IYS).

So now we want to share the exciting news about the winners.



Joachim Diaz won the junior category with this poster.



The poster created by Watson Morency of Turks and Caicos Islands, the senior category winner.

Choosing winners was no easy task, according to some of the judges, who were suitably impressed by the quality of the entries.

The competition encouraged the youth of the Caribbean to express, through art and the written word,

their perspective on both the challenges and opportunities of small island living.

A total of seven ECLAC member and associate member states participated: Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Guyana, Haiti, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Turks & Caicos and United States Virgin Islands.

In the end, the winners were Ms Laniqua Williams of Saint Kitts and Nevis, with her essay entitled "Unleashing the Creativity and Resilience of our People to Build prosperous Caribbean Societies", while the poster category entitled "Going Green: Reducing Waste and Promoting Sustainable Energy Use", was the chosen topic for both the Junior winner, Mr Joachim Diaz of United States Virgin Islands and the Senior winner, Mr Watson Morency of Turks and Caicos Islands.

Jamaica assumes Chair of CDCC

AJ NICHOLSON, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica, assumed the Chair of the CDCC, when that country hosted the 25th session of the CDCC in Kingston, Jamaica on 25 April 2014.

He takes over from Foreign Minister of Guyana, the Honourable Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett, who served as Chair of the CDCC for the previous two years.

The ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, acts as the secretariat of the CDCC.

This year, CDCC focused on issues related to SIDS, in preparation for the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States.

The session also considered the programme of work for the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, and welcomed new associate members of ECLAC to CDCC, namely Bermuda, Curacao, Guadeloupe and Martinique.

Discussing Small Island Developing States issues

THE sustainable development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) was the focus of a meeting hosted by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, on 15 April 2014 in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

This was the Sixth Meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee of the Regional Coordinating Mechanism (RCM) for the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for Small Island Developing States.

The RCM was established through a decision taken by governments and United Nations agencies in the Caribbean, with a mandate to coordinate activities to support the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA) and the Mauritius Strategy and provide oversight of both.

The meeting addressed the development of a coherent strategy for the

Caribbean's participation in the Third International Conference on SIDS to be held in Apia, Samoa on 1-4 September 2014.

At the closing of the session, the Chair of the TAC, Navin Chandarpal, underscored some of the issues raised. These included a suggestion that the region should prepare specific and targeted proposals to focus on strong partnerships, given that the overarching theme of the Third International Conference on SIDS in 2014 is "The sustainable development of SIDS through genuine and durable partnerships."

Participants also reviewed the progress made at the national levels towards implementation of the Mauritius Strategy.

The meeting concluded with a recommendation to be taken to the CDCC meeting in Jamaica would be that the CDCC should review effectiveness of the support provided by ECLAC as the Secretariat of the RCM.

Staff picnic at Wild Fowl Trust, Trinidad

Staff at ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, Port of Spain, Trinidad, visited the Wild Fowl Trust in Pointe-a-Pierre on 28 June 2014. The outing, organised by the Social Events Committee, was great fun, despite the rain.

Staff, family and friends alike, enjoyed

a picnic lunch in the company of a white wild fowl, then embarked on a short walk through the Trust.

It was a journey of enlightenment and fun. The group learned the benefits of some local and very common fruits and their trees, such as the mango, the seed of which may contain healthy nu-

trients. Along the way, there was also a “paper bark” or eucalyptus tree, a one-finger (as opposed to five finger) tree, and several species of ducks, a peacock, and of course, the magnificent scarlet ibis, red and pink, to be seen.

Below are some photo highlights of the outing:



Lunch time!



Ready for the rain!

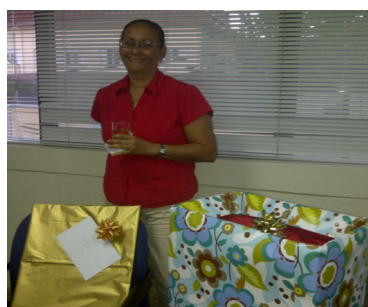


A happy group at the end.

Wendy Jones retires

THE end of June 2014 marked the end of a rewarding career for Library Assistant Wendy Jones. After serving at ECLAC Port of Spain for close to 30 years, it was time for Wendy to bid adieu to the organization.

We will miss Wendy and wish her all the best as she embarks on the next phase of her journey. She will always be a part of the ECLAC family.



Wendy Jones at her farewell function.

What's Up ... Upcoming events in the Caribbean

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
5-9 May	Thirty-fifth session of ECLAC	Peru
10-12 June	Dialogue session: “Building Resilience in Caribbean Small Island Developing States: The way forward to Samoa”	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
21 July—4 August	Crop Over Festival	Barbados
1-8 August	Summer Festival	Anguilla
10-14 August	Spice Mas	Grenada

Recipe: Jamaican Stout Punch

Ingredients:
 12 oz. bottle stout
 ½ cup sweetened condensed milk
 ½ teaspoon nutmeg
 1 teaspoon cinnamon
 1 raw egg (beaten)

Preparation:



Brawta: Something extra!

Break and beat the raw egg in a bowl.

In a blender, combine the stout, raw egg and condensed milk for about two minutes.

Add some crushed ice if you desire. Pour into a jug and add cinnamon and nutmeg.

Serve cold, store in the refrigerator.