



GENERAL

LC/CAR/G.154

28 May 1985

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH



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

CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE

Ninth Session
Port of Spain, Trinidad
29 May - 5 June 1985



REVIEW AND PERSPECTIVES ON THE ROLE AND WORK PROGRAMME
OF THE CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE (CDCC)



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Introduction

This note is intended to stimulate reaction and to elicit comments in order to ascertain the relevance of ongoing activities and the prospects for new undertakings after ten years of CDCC's existence and the hope for its continuation in a dynamic economic milieu. The meeting may wish to formulate new or revised mandates for the Secretariat or indeed to reaffirm the current ones.

Background

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, (ECLAC), at its sixteenth session held in Trinidad and Tobago in 1975, recognized that special attention should be paid to the needs of its Caribbean member countries. It was agreed then that the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC) should be established as a permanent subsidiary body of ECLAC.

The inaugural session of the CDCC was held in Havana, Cuba, where the terms of reference, rules of procedure and first programme of work of the Committee were approved. In that work programme areas were identified with the objective of promoting social and economic development and horizontal co-operation among CDCC member countries, and between them and other countries particularly those in Latin America. Co-ordination of activities with subregional, regional and international organizations was also stressed.

At its third session in 1978, the Committee reviewed its past activities in an effort to arrive at a more operationally oriented approach to its work. There was agreement on priority areas which were considered crucial to the success of its efforts at co-operation, and co-ordination, and were likely to bring concrete results in the short, medium and long terms. These priorities included the removal of language barriers, maritime transport,

international trade, science and technology, and the development of information and documentation systems, among others.

Co-operation Mechanisms

Since the identification of its work programme in 1975, and following the 1978 review, the ECLAC/CDCC Secretariat has instituted a number of mechanisms for co-operation among its member countries. These include the Caribbean Documentation Centre and Information System, the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology, mechanisms for sharing statistical data and co-ordination machinery in planning at the macro and sectoral levels. Other proposed mechanisms for co-operation in various stages of preparation include:

- The Caribbean multinational enterprise for the production and distribution of printed and audio-visual materials.
- The Caribbean Council for social and economic development.
- The Agricultural research network.
- The Patent Information and Documentation Unit.

Approach to new perspectives

In light of the current difficult economic and consequent social situation affecting CDCC member countries, and the resource constraints being experienced by the Secretariat, there is need to examine new perspectives on the role and work programme of the CDCC, and to explore and assess new modalities for making the Committee more responsive and relevant to the needs and aspirations of its member countries.

Consideration may therefore be given to the desirability of the following:

(a) Increased monitoring of the activities of United Nations Agencies, other international bodies such as the Group of Seventy Seven, the EEC/ACP, and regional and subregional institutions such as ALADI, CARICOM, OECS and SELA. The function of the CDCC Secretariat would be to bring to the attention of its member countries information on activities within these bodies of direct relevance to member countries economic and social development and the promotion of co-operation among them as well as with other developing countries.

(b) Development of closer working relations with the Permanent Missions of CDCC member countries to the United Nations both in New York and Geneva, including, to the extent possible, monitoring of the deliberations of the Latin American Group (GRULAS) in both cities. This would facilitate activity (a) above and many other aspects of the work of the Secretariat.

(c) Increased efforts at resource mobilization from traditional and non-traditional donors as well as from CDCC member countries themselves.

(d) Establishment of formal institutional linkages as well as ad hoc arrangements with United Nations System Agencies for collaborative efforts, at the request of member countries, in undertaking programmes and implementing projects within the framework of the CDCC work programme. In this respect greater attention would need to be given to the interdisciplinary and multi-sectoral approach to programme development and project formulation.

Other possible activities

Identification of modalities for increased contacts between CDCC member countries and the Secretariat, in particular at the sectoral level, also for promotion of the CDCC's work programme within member countries by both Governments and the Secretariat

- Examination of various modalities for trade promotion among CDCC member countries, such as barter trade.
- The establishment of mechanisms for consultation on matters of common interest to CDCC countries relative to issues of regional and international importance, for example, meetings of country's experts and policy makers.
- Arrangements for national or secretariat representation at meetings on behalf of CDCC country groupings and the modalities for reporting to all countries concerned.
- Closer collaboration with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) at the national and subregional levels.
- Identification of modalities for CDCC Secretariat's linkages with the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations for the provision of services to member countries in relation to the Centre's activities.

- In light of the economic difficulties affecting many CDCC Member Countries, and the formulation and implementation of economic measures for recovery, consideration for undertaking at individual country's request, assessments of the social implications of these processes.

