



- Antigua and Barbuda
- Aruba
- Bahamas
- Barbados
- Belize
- Br. Virgin Islands
- Cuba
- Dominica
- Dominican Republic
- Grenada
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Jamaica
- Montserrat
- Netherlands Antilles
- Puerto Rico
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Suriname
- Trinidad and Tobago
- U.S. Virgin Islands



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**THE CARIBBEAN IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM,  
 with special emphasis on the CDCC**

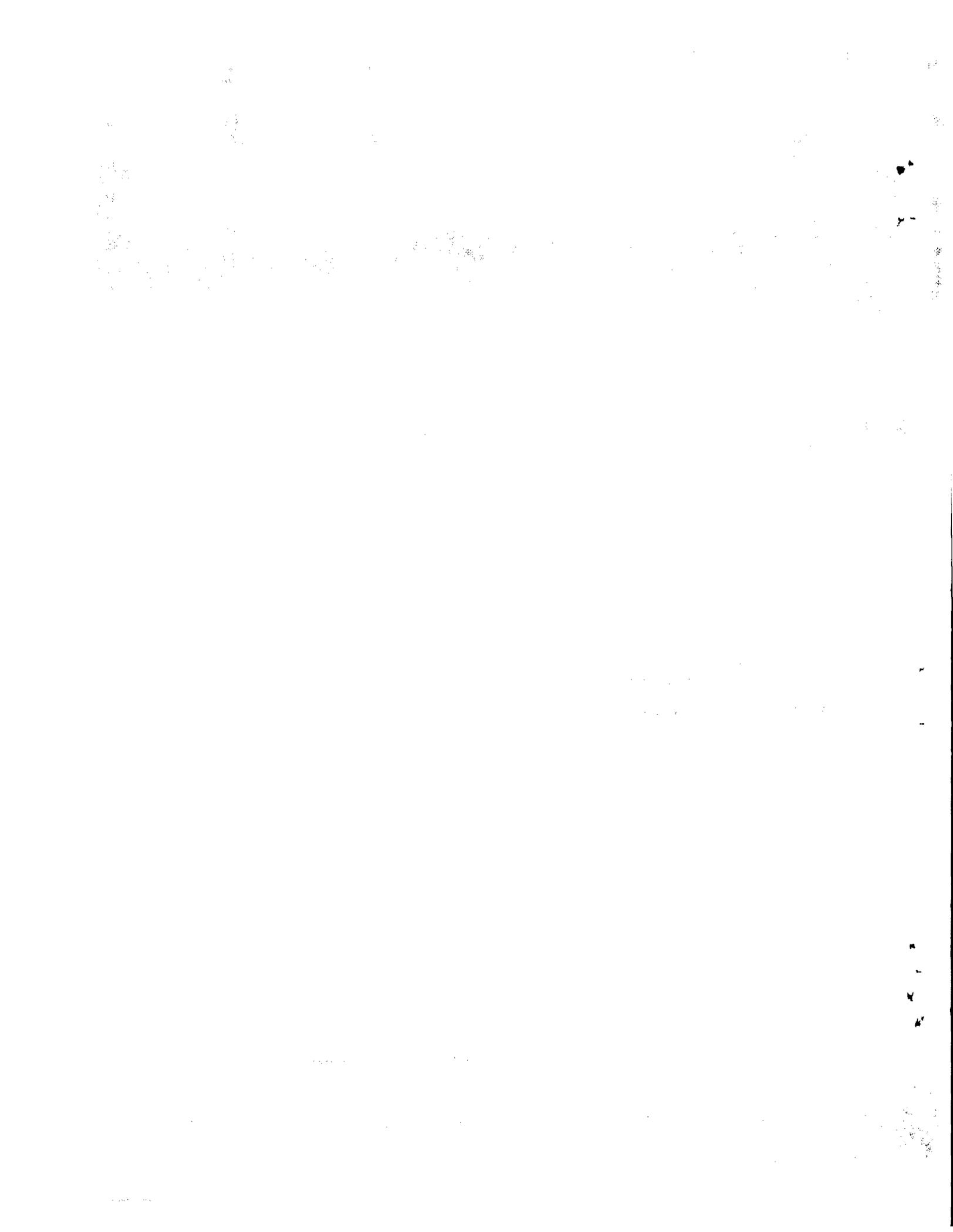
**REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP FOR NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS OF THE CDCC**



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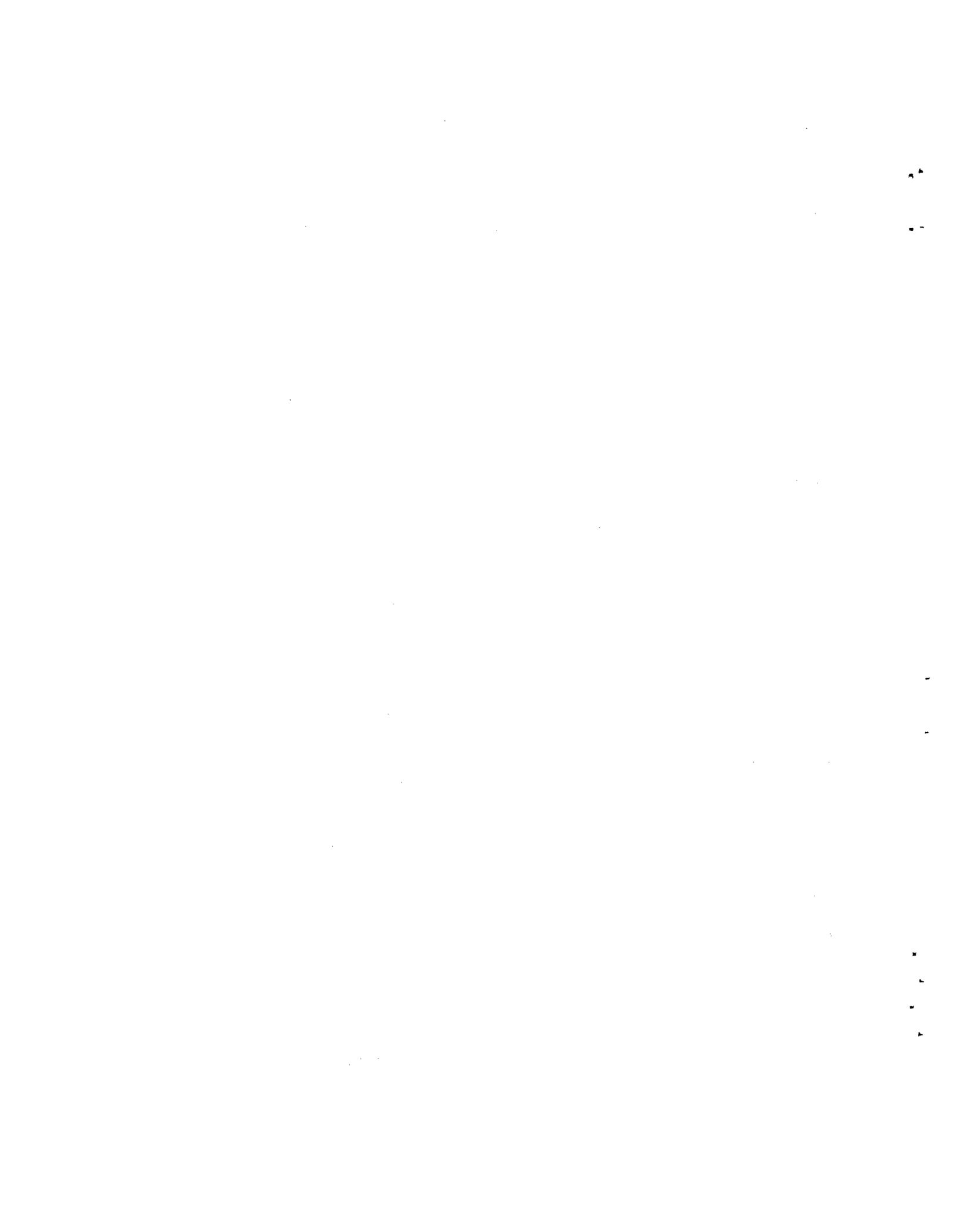
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**THE CARIBBEAN IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM,  
with special emphasis on the CDCC**

**REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP FOR NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS OF THE CDCC**

The Workshop on The Caribbean in the United Nations system, with special emphasis on the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC), was held in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, on 14-15 July 1992. It was convened in response to a mandate from the CDCC that the secretariat organize a workshop for the purpose of exposing the national focal points of the CDCC to the workings of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)/CDCC, and to the functioning of the CDCC within the context of the United Nations system.

A copy of the programme is attached to this report at Annex 1.

A press release issued after the conclusion of the workshop by the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) for the Caribbean area is reproduced at Annex 4 to this report.

A copy of a background note, "The Caribbean in the United Nations system, with special emphasis on the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC): Background note by the secretariat", prepared by the secretariat for this workshop is available under separate cover.

Attendance

Representatives of the following member and associate member countries of the Committee attended the workshop: Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Puerto Rico, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States Virgin Islands. A complete list of participants, including a number of persons who were invited to the workshop in their personal capacities to serve as resource persons, is provided at Annex 2 to this report,

Opening ceremony

The feature address at the opening ceremony was delivered by His Excellency, the Honourable Ralph Maraj, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago. A copy of the address of the Honourable Minister is attached to this report at Annex 3.

The Honourable Minister, in his address, stated that the CDCC had always been of major concern to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. In highlighting the role that the CDCC had played in regional development, Minister Maraj reminded that the CDCC was the only body within the United Nations system in which both independent and non-independent countries participated on the basis of equality. It was a unique forum within which all countries of the Caribbean, including Cuba, had been able to maintain close contact.

The Minister noted that the CDCC had played an instrumental role in initiating and facilitating the process of dialogue, cooperation and interaction among Caribbean nations. This had contributed to widening and deepening the integration process between CARICOM and non-CARICOM countries, and to increasing interaction between the English-speaking Caribbean and Latin America.

Another important role for the CDCC, according to the Minister, was to assist member States to maximize their benefits from the United Nations system, in general. The workshop was taking place as a direct response of the CDCC secretariat to the requests of member States; it would provide an opportunity for the secretariat to learn of the concerns and expectations of member States and for focal points to acquire a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities at their respective national levels.

The Minister congratulated the organizers of the workshop for its timing and the relevance of its theme. He noted that a severe restructuring process was being undertaken within the United Nations system, which had resulted in the dissolution of several departments dealing with social and economic development. He was not at all sure that these outcomes were in the best interests of developing countries.

The plight of developing countries, he continued, would be further exacerbated because of economic recession in the rich countries and diversion of aid to the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. That effectively meant that developing countries must look more closely at ways of assisting each other. In that regard, he was pleased that an entire session of the workshop would concentrate on technical cooperation among developing countries.

Finally, the Minister concluded that CDCC could play a valuable role by mediating between member States and the United Nations. That was especially necessary because most developing countries could not spare the large resources of staff and time needed to understand and, consequently, take full advantage of opportunities at the global level.

Before declaring the workshop open, the Minister told the country representatives that he hoped that they would be returning to their respective countries and ministries with a better appreciation of the fact that "the CDCC is indeed a useful and important body which must continue to make a meaningful contribution to Caribbean cooperation and development". Focal points, he insisted, had a crucial role to play in helping to achieve this objective.

Addresses were also delivered by Mr. Clyde Applewhite, Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, and Mr. Daniel Blanchard, Secretary of the Commission (ECLAC). The vote of thanks was offered by Mr. Carlyle Corbin, third vice-chairman of the CDCC. The opening ceremony was chaired by Mr. Swinburne Lestrade, Deputy Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean and Secretary of the CDCC.

## SESSION 1

### *The United Nations system and implications of restructuring, with special reference to the Caribbean*

The presenters for this session were: His Excellency, Mr. Don Mills, Ambassador, Jamaican Centre for International Affairs, and Mr. Rashleigh Jackson. The discussant was Ms. Siegmen Staphorst, Head, United Nations Section, Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Suriname. The session was chaired by His Excellency, Mr. Louis Wiltshire, High Commissioner to the Caribbean Community and to Barbados, Guyana and the Eastern Caribbean countries.

#### Presentation by Ambassador Mills

In his presentation, Ambassador Don Mills informed the meeting that the theme of restructuring was a recurring one in the context of the United Nations.

In providing some background to the United Nations system, he pointed out that the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) was intended to be central to the United Nations system. However, it had not functioned effectively and as a consequence, there had been a proliferation of subsidiary bodies which were themselves seen to be ineffective in dealing with fundamental systemic problems.

Restructuring occurred, or was urged, whenever the effectiveness of the intergovernmental system was in question. He cautioned that motives for restructuring had varied, and that there had, in fact, been a multiplicity of motives. Decentralization had been one of the motives.

He noted that in dealing with the issue of restructuring, the question of power was always pertinent. He informed that the initiative for restructuring in the 1970s had come from the developing countries. Since the 1980s, however, the political power of the developing countries had declined and there was a perception that the United Nations was now controlled by the industrialized countries which appeared to perceive of the United Nations primarily as an instrument of peace and security.

Ambassador Mills drew attention to the fact that whereas changes in the past had been made as a result of General Assembly directives, there appeared to be an element of arbitrariness about changes in the structure of the United Nations Secretariat which were made by the new Secretary-General.

He argued that what was achieved in the 1970s by the developing countries was now being reversed in the 1990s, and he bemoaned the lack of reaction of developing countries to these recent developments. He felt strongly that developing countries needed to take some initiative and present their own counter proposals for restructuring. He advocated more effective participation of Caribbean countries in the United Nations system. Simultaneously, he stressed, there was need for national coherence in order to meet the new requirements of multilateralism in the present international context.

#### Presentation by Mr. Jackson

Mr. Rashleigh Jackson, in his presentation, took a completely political perspective. He gave an overview of the United Nations system and stated that networking and coalition-building were essential tools in the decision making process in the United Nations. He discussed issues of restructuring and power relations in the United Nations, the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and national coherence.

In his analysis of restructuring, he perceived of the United Nations as being in continuous evolution, in response to the needs of member countries - "an evolved and evolving response to the growing needs posed by increasing interdependence among States".

He made reference to Articles 3 and 4 of the United Nations Charter, in which members of the Organization were referred to as States. He emphasized the importance of the concept of States, implicit in which was the notion of power. It was understood that States did not act to relinquish power but to retain it.

Although the arguments for restructuring were based on cost efficiency of the United Nations, the responses were strategic and tactical. In addition, one needed to understand that restructuring was cyclical.

Since the exercise of power in the United Nations system was an obvious result of the pursuit and defence of national interests, finding ways of defending Caribbean national and regional interests was of extreme importance. This, he suggested, would involve consistent, logical analysis of changes and trends and articulation of ideas and positions based on these.

He identified NGOs as one important group in the power relations within the United Nations system. Traditionally, human interest groups had great influence on United Nations policies and actions and the current enhanced role of NGOs also required the attention of Caribbean policy makers. The NGO movement provided lessons for the future and policy makers needed to determine the nature of their relationships with these organizations. An example of the influence of NGOs was their role in environmental issues.

In regard to national coherence, Mr. Jackson pointed to factors which would contribute to success in promoting Caribbean interests. Representatives of developing countries often took different policy positions on the same issues in different forums. He surmised that there was need for greater internal coordination at national levels with a view to ensuring national coherence. The absence of such coherence diminished the capacity of States to benefit from the resources available from international organizations.

There was need for coalition-building in multilateral organizations. National coherence and coalition-building would be reinforced by an understanding of the role and functioning of the United Nations as a bureaucracy.

In the context of the theme of power and influence, Mr. Jackson introduced the concept of "foci of power", which promoted the idea that bureaucracies were subject to influences of key persons within the system. It was, therefore, important to understand the power relations and to monitor changes in, and create linkages with, the "foci of power" within the system; as well as to determine how these could be used to advance national, subregional or regional interests.

He emphasized the need to understand what the "restructured" system meant for the Caribbean in terms of posts and power. This implied the need for an analysis of the Caribbean in the United Nations system.

He concluded that the United Nations remained critical for new States and lauded the role of the Organization as a "unique instrument".

#### Comment by Ms. Staphorst

The designated discussant, Ms. Siegmien Staphorst, supported the main thrusts of the presentations by Ambassador Mills and Mr. Jackson, and argued that there was need for reform in the United Nations system in order to meet the challenges of the post cold war era. The present changes concentrated on institutional changes and neglected the broader issues of power in the interests of developing countries.

She explored two aspects of United Nations reforms which had implications for the Caribbean: the United Nations role in resolving regional and interregional conflicts; and issues of poverty and development.

In regard to peace-keeping, she stated that the United Nations was not well adapted to the task of peace-keeping, which now imposed different kinds of demands. Although, the risk of nuclear war had diminished, there had been an increase in risks, such as regional and civil wars, based on ethnic, religious or internal political differences. This had been manifested within the Caribbean subregion by the situation in Haiti.

She proposed that it was necessary to work out a Caribbean perspective on the peace-keeping role of the United Nations in the region; and it was also necessary to ensure that there was a balance between the need for peace and security and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

Current global realities determined the need for reform of the United Nations Security Council. The Caribbean needed to play its part by making a critical evaluation of the role of the Security Council and determining the implications for the region.

In the area of preventive diplomacy, Ms. Staphorst proposed that the United Nations needed new approaches. She felt that there was need to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations in this sphere, by identifying potential conflicts and dealing with them early.

Within the Caribbean, there was need for a common position among the region's governments on security issues, in light of the fact that action in any Caribbean country, as demonstrated in Haiti and Suriname would have implications for the Caribbean area as a whole.

Starting from the position of the ineffectiveness of the economic role United Nations, Ms. Staphorst concluded that the challenge for the Caribbean lay in determining modalities for strengthening the regional commissions to deal with economic issues, and in focusing attention on the structural issues of poverty and debt.

#### General discussion

Participants acknowledged that NGOs were a powerful force and that it was necessary to relate to them. NGOs, whose role and status had been acknowledged by the United Nations, were a major development in national and international affairs. NGO participation in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) was phenomenal in transforming the issue of governance within the United Nations system. It greatly influenced the conclusions embodied in Agenda 21.

It was noted that there was an increasing flow of financial resources to NGOs, even as the resource flow to governments decreased.

It was emphasized that there was need for a more coherent approach to NGOs in the Caribbean, by Caribbean organizations, including the CDCC.

On the subject of restructuring, it was suggested that developing countries should advance their own proposals for restructuring; and that the Group of 77 played an important role within the United Nations system. The Group of 77 could be persuaded to forward proposals to the United Nations General Assembly; these proposals could have a positive impact on the deliberations of the United Nations.

Participants stressed the need for greater coordination among countries in order to exercise power and influence. The largest solidarity mechanism within the United Nations system, the Group of 77, was proposed as an appropriate mechanism for reinforcing regional coherence.

#### SESSION 2

***The ECLAC system: Structural, operational relationships;  
activities; funding, budgeting; rules of procedure;  
participation of Caribbean countries  
in ECLAC meetings and programmes***

The presenters at this session were Mr. Daniel Blanchard, Secretary of ECLAC and Mr. Rashleigh Jackson. The discussant was Ambassador Don Mills. The session was chaired by Mr. Swinburne Lestrade, Deputy Director of ECLAC, Port-of-Spain, and Secretary of CDCC.

Presentation by Mr. Blanchard

Mr. Blanchard provided factual information on the ECLAC system: membership, history, structure, organization of meetings, staffing, and the geographical location of its offices. Organizational charts of ECLAC and other printed material on the main bodies and the membership of the ECLAC system were distributed to participants.

Mr. Blanchard identified three broad areas in which ECLAC served its members. These were (a) as a regional "think-tank" on social and economic issues; (b) as a forum for Latin American and Caribbean States to discuss development problems and develop joint positions; and (c) as a source of technical assistance for member countries.

He informed that the intellectual heritage of ECLAC had given the Commission its distinctive perspective of universal problems of development and shaped its policy prescriptions. This heritage meant that political economy was a major focus of the Organization which influenced development thinking in the region, and fashioned ECLAC as a forum for issues of development. The Organization's research activities had also contributed to national policy-making in the region and ensured that global issues were brought to the attention of member States and, conversely, that regional concerns were brought to the attention of the global community.

He made reference to the comparative advantage of ECLAC over other intergovernmental bodies as a consequence of the multidisciplinary nature of the work programme and output. The work of the Organization involved contact with governments as well as non-governmental organizations.

The meeting was informed that in its operational activities, ECLAC provided technical assistance to its member countries that was consistent with national objectives and with the overall strategies, policies and priorities of the United Nations General Assembly and ECOSOC. The regional commissions had had a long history of operational activities. Extrabudgetary resources for those activities had come from a number of United Nations agencies and bilateral sources - industrialized countries such as the Netherlands, Italy, Canada, and Germany, as well as from countries within the Latin American region such as Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Mexico.

On the issue of restructuring, the Secretary preferred to look at the potential role of ECLAC and other regional commissions in a "restructured UN" - in which increased decentralization was expected. He informed that preliminary reflections on the matter had been sent to the new Secretary-General of the United Nations and he expressed the hope that, in the attempt to make the United Nations more responsive to new global realities, ECLAC would retain its key role precisely because of its multidisciplinary approach and close proximity to the field.

Other issues dealt with by Mr. Blanchard included budgeting and funding in ECLAC; planning and programming within ECLAC and the United Nations Secretariat; extrabudgetary projects and the criteria for the inclusion of projects and programmes in the work programme. He informed that planning, programming and budgeting were based on medium-term plans and the biennial work plans of the United Nations.

Mr. Blanchard concluded his presentation with a plea for increased participation of Caribbean countries in the regional ECLAC forums. The many advantages to be derived from such participation included the following:

- The intellectual contribution which the Caribbean could make at the regional level to influence regional debates;

- The ECLAC forum, with its regional representation, was a logical one for strategic planning to address issues in the United Nations system or prior to negotiations at the global level;

- In the context of integration processes internationally, ECLAC was a useful forum in which to promote multilateralism;

- In pragmatic terms, it was very important that the Caribbean was well represented at ECLAC meetings in order to influence the crucial decisions which were taken and which would have serious implications for the subregion.

#### Presentation by Mr. Jackson

The second presenter, Mr. Rashleigh Jackson, drew attention to what he referred to as the special nature of ECLAC, that is, as the only regional commission which welcomed the participation of "former colonial powers" as members of the Organization. He wondered whether this meant the availability of more resources or more governance as to how we deal with the resources that were made available to the Latin American/Caribbean region.

On the issue of Latin American/Caribbean relations within the ECLAC system, Mr. Jackson made reference to nomenclature. As it had developed in relation to ECLAC, it had implied and reflected a "grafting" of the Caribbean onto the Latin American body politic. He wondered whether there were tensions in that arrangement as the region pursued its "integrationist vocation".

He made reference to a study by Don Mills and Vaughan Lewis on Caribbean/Latin American relations and wondered what had been its impact. He advocated more analysis in the area of integration of the Caribbean into the wider Latin American system. He perceived the establishment of the Latin American Economic System (SELA), in 1975, as a response to the need for more effective integration, not then fulfilled by existing institutions. The existence of both organizations, ECLAC and SELA, serving the same constituents was the cause of some concern, especially with regard to possible duplication of effort. Mr. Jackson reiterated his plea for greater institutional coherence within the region.

He concluded that it was necessary to consider the need to restructure regional organizations to ensure that they were more relevant to the aspirations of their member countries.

#### Comment by Ambassador Mills

The discussant, Ambassador Don Mills, referred to the minimal participation of Caribbean countries in the ECLAC forum. He questioned the perception of ECLAC by the newer member countries, specifically the English-speaking Caribbean, which tended not to view itself as part of the Latin American family. He echoed the concerns of Rashleigh Jackson with respect to the responsiveness of the ECLAC system to the changes in the global economy. He sought to situate the role of ECLAC within the context of the trend of multilateralism in the global system.

He questioned ECLAC's capability to adapt to the requirements of the changing global order. He was aware of the fact that newer countries in the system were overstretched in responding to the needs of the international system. In that connection, he cited the Lome Convention on Cooperation between the European Community and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of countries, the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI), and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). He repeated his earlier reference to the political and perhaps security roles which may be expected of the regional commissions. As an example of changing roles, he referred to the expanded role of the Association

of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), which had amplified its original mandate of security concerns to include the creation of an economic community. He reiterated his concern that political factors must be taken into account within the region such as the case of Haiti and the refugee situation. All these circumstances implied either an expanded role for ECLAC or changes in emphasis and direction.

#### General discussion

Participants raised a number of questions on Caribbean/Latin American relations, the effect of restructuring on ECLAC, and the budgetary allocation for the ECLAC/CDCC Office.

There was extensive discussion of Caribbean/Latin American relations. There was concern at the limited perceptions of Caribbean countries of the importance of developing these relations, and it was suggested that these countries should take the initiative and reach out to Latin America. One area in which links could be strengthened was in the export sector.

Within the ECLAC system, it was suggested that the Caribbean Subregional Headquarters should enjoy the same status as the Mexico Office of ECLAC.

There was the view that human development courses organized in Latin America by ECLAC tended not to provide for Caribbean participation; but there was also the view that the Caribbean did not take sufficient advantage of courses offered by ECLAC.

The Secretary of ECLAC responded to questions on the system of allocation of funds to the Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean. He informed that the United Nations had faced recurrent financial crises which had depleted its resources. An obvious consequence of these crises had been a reduction in the budget allocations made by the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly, and these had been insufficient for the expanded role mandated by member Governments of ECLAC. It also meant a reduction in allocations to ECLAC/CDCC. He added that any attempts to improve the financial situation must be directed to those decision-making bodies previously mentioned.

Linked to the discussion on budgetary allocation was the issue of restructuring. Mr. Blanchard informed that, to date, restructuring had meant a reduction in the "tremendous bureaucracy" at the United Nations Headquarters and had not yet been extended to the regional commissions. He admitted that, within the United Nations system, there was the need for greater decentralization, which implied an enhanced role for ECLAC - especially with its interdisciplinary approach to development issues.

Mr. Blanchard agreed with the sentiments expressed by the two other resource persons about the lack of coherence in international forums and the fact that it resulted in a repetition of mandates, resolutions and recommendations. However, within Latin America he posited that the situation did not pertain to ECLAC and SELA since there existed an excellent relationship which precluded duplication.

On the issue of refugees in Latin America, he noted that the Commission had no mandate to deal with that issue.

Regarding the participation of former colonial powers in ECLAC, Mr. Blanchard suggested that this was an advantage since major issues discussed at ECLAC sessions were brought directly to the attention of the donor countries.

There was concern about what was perceived to be the poor image which ECLAC/CDCC had within the Caribbean subregion. It was recommended that the

secretariat issue press releases on the work of the Organization with a view to ensuring greater public awareness of its work.

### SESSION 3

***The CDCC: Its purposes and activities; programme of work; relations with ECLAC; relations with governments; staffing and financial resources; constraints; cooperation with other international organizations; role of the Monitoring Committee***

The presenters for this session were: Ambassador Don Mills and Mr. Clyde Applewhite, Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean. The discussant was Mr. Donatus St. Aimee, Economic Affairs Officer (ECLAC/CDCC). The chairman of the session was Mr. David Lewis, Assistant Secretary of State for Caribbean Development, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Ambassador Mills emphasized the uniqueness of the CDCC among Caribbean institutions. It was necessary for a review process to be put in place if the institution was to develop. In the case of the CDCC, the Organization needed to continuously review and rationalize its raison d'être to ensure that it remained relevant.

He wondered whether there was some degree of ambivalence towards the CDCC in light of the quest for membership of a number of CDCC member countries.

On the issue of CDCC/CARICOM relations and Caribbean/Latin American relations, he queried the extent to which the two were counterpoised. He felt that the process of improved Caribbean/Latin American relations was still diplomatically incomplete and perceived the reason for this as the lack of coherence on the part of the Caribbean towards Latin America.

He questioned the extent to which the CDCC was distinctive and the extent to which it overlapped with the activities of other organizations in the region. He drew attention to one of the more recent additions to the international agenda - environment and sustainable development - and inquired about CDCC's role in that area. He suggested that it should be an analytical role which could assist (for example) in the development of newer forms of national accounts. Such analysis would fill a niche for environmental accounting.

Ambassador Mills stressed the need to take cultural factors into account in the development process and indicated that CDCC was well placed to incorporate that aspect of development within its purview. He suggested the need to link language training with culture and also the need for creativity in the teaching of languages; both of which were important for CDCC. Also important was to ensure the fullest possible information exchange in spite of existing language differences.

In reflecting once more on the United Nations system, Ambassador Mills reiterated that there was a general lack of knowledge of the United Nations system on the part of foreign service personnel, and a lack of coherence on the part of Caribbean Governments, which worked to the disadvantage of the subregion.

In preference to the concept of "focal point", Ambassador Mills suggested that of "national network". Implied in that concept was an improved system of dissemination of information on the United Nations system within each country and within the region as a whole. He expressed concern that the notion of a focal point or ministry limited the process of dissemination, especially since ministries of foreign affairs were already overextended. The functioning of a

network would improve coherence at the national level; enhance the work of foreign missions; and, strengthen the sectoral and national responses to issues being addressed within international forums.

Presentation by Mr. Applewhite

In his presentation, Mr Clyde Applewhite, the Director of the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat, made reference to the Report of the West Indian Commission and suggested that ECLAC/CDCC was in a position to undertake much of what was recommended in that report, and should be considered a vehicle to implement those recommendations which fell within its mandate.

With regard to the work programme of ECLAC/CDCC, he informed participants that the work programme was approved three years prior to implementation, and was always in danger of becoming irrelevant because of the constantly changing global environment and priorities of member States.

On the subject of the management of the work programme, he referred to a supplementary work programme which was developed on the basis of extrabudgetary funding. This programme was, therefore, dependent on, inter alia, the preferences of donors and their financial capacities. There was also a tendency for changes in priorities over time. He impressed upon the meeting that extrabudgetary resources were essential for the functioning of the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat.

Mr. Applewhite discussed the practical aspects of the relationship between the regular United Nations funding, the development of the work programme and the requests and needs emanating from member countries.

Mr. Applewhite drew attention to the severe financial constraints and stringencies of the United Nations system which limited the possibility of expansion of its work programme. As an example, he noted that one of the priority needs of the CDCC was the expansion of information services, but that as a result of budgetary limitations, such expansion was not easily possible.

He agreed with earlier statements on the need for a constant review of the role of the CDCC. He stated that, in addition to financial constraints, the secretariat faced the pressure of a multiplicity of bodies to which it had to report - the United Nations Headquarters, ECLAC Headquarters and the Governments of the subregion. This presented certain difficulties.

Mr. Applewhite commended the Monitoring Committee of the CDCC for the role that it had played in assisting the secretariat in its work. He was concerned, however, that there were limitations in its present approach which did not allow for a wider dialogue, but had been limited to certain types of issues. He advised that the Monitoring Committee should be a forum which would monitor and advise on the relevance of the work of the Organization, moreso its ability to meet the overall social and economic development needs of members in the subregion.

Comment by Mr. St Aimee

The discussant, Mr. Donatus St. Aimee, stated that inherent in the Constituent Declaration of CDCC was that there would be a reciprocal relationship between the secretariat and the member Governments.

He stressed the importance of the establishment of priorities in the programmes of the CDCC and the need to be always conscious of the relevance of its programmes. It was necessary for the programmes to be developed with a long-term perspective, with the emphasis on programmes, not projects.

In relation to national focal points, he noted that the focal point was generally understood to be the point for receipt of communication and for the dissemination of information; and in the case of the CDCC, the focal points were the ministries of foreign affairs. If there were to be a desirable level of reciprocity in the flow of information between the focal point and the line ministries, the information network at the national level would need to be strengthened.

Mr. St. Aimee commented on the subject of Caribbean/Latin American relations and stated that these relations needed to be improved as there remained a gap in the relations between the two groupings.

He stated that the CDCC operated with inadequate financial resources. It was important, nevertheless, for there to be an awareness of its capabilities, and member countries should organize themselves to take full advantage of its potential. It afforded the opportunity to expand south-south cooperation, and to liaise with other regional commissions in areas of common interest.

#### General discussion

There was general support for a high level of importance to be attached to the fostering of greater cooperation relationships between the Caribbean and Latin America. Reference was made to the issue of bananas, in this context.

It was suggested that the attainment of more effective coordination and coherence at the national level was necessary if countries were to improve their relations with regional organizations; and that the concept of focal point extended beyond the CDCC to include other sets of activities, hence the need for a more coherent approach. It was further suggested that a ministry of regional affairs be established to coordinate all issues at the national level.

Participants expressed interest in the CDCC's approach to coordination with other regional organizations. They inquired about the secretariat's strategies for achieving more effective coordination. They explained that their governments were ill-equipped, in terms of human and financial resources, to deal with the large number of international organizations with which they needed to relate. Consequently, innovative ways had to be found to cope with that situation. It was suggested that the CDCC ought to serve as a mechanism for pooling resources and facilitating regional and south-south cooperation for more effective participation within the United Nations system and generally at the global level.

It was suggested that the CDCC appeared not to be fulfilling the requirements of member countries, and that this was a possible explanation for the increasing interest in CARICOM on the part of certain other Caribbean countries. One needed to make a distinction between the two organizations, recognize their various advantages, and take advantage of their resources and capabilities.

It was pointed out that the major difference between the two organizations was the political underpinning. CARICOM dealt with political issues and was held together by a political force. There were certain limitations associated with observer status in that body.

With regard to Caribbean/Latin American relations, it was suggested that recent dialogue between the countries of CARICOM and Central America was an acknowledgement of the need to improve relations, even in the face of cultural, legal and constitutional differences.

With regard to national coherence, it was suggested that one means by which this could be achieved was by control of flows of information and the maintenance of effective information links with the international organizations. The region

should find ways to be equipped with an effective and efficient information network which would keep countries fully abreast of all relevant information.

#### SESSION 4

*The work of ECLAC/CDCC: Economic analysis, social affairs, women in development, environment, science and technology, information, statistics, population, industry and tourism, international trade, development cooperation*

This session was chaired by Mr. Swinburne Lestrade. The discussant was Mr. David Lewis, Assistant Secretary of State for Caribbean Development, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

In this session, staff members of the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat informed participants of the work programme areas for which they had responsibility.

#### Staff presentations

##### Documentation and information

Mrs. Wilma Primus, Chief, Caribbean Documentation Centre (CDC), informed that the Center had been established at ECLAC/CDCC in 1977, with the objectives of providing informational support to the work of ECLAC/CDCC; and promoting access to information resources available within and outside of the Caribbean.

The Centre had acquired extensive collections of Caribbean material covering all areas of economic and social development, and sought to bring these to the attention of potential users by various means.

The meeting was informed of the development within the CDC of two information networks, the Caribbean Information System for Economic and Social Planning (CARISPLAN) and the Caribbean Patent Information Network (CARPIN). CARPIN was coordinated by the Patent Information and Documentation Unit (PIDU) at ECLAC. The main objective of this Unit was to strengthen and improve industrial property systems in the region and to promote the use of technological information from patents as an input into industrial development. The PIDU Unit produced a Caribbean Patent Index and a quarterly newsletter.

Participants were given some insight into technological and substantive developments in databases in the Caribbean subregion. ECLAC/CDCC had introduced remote on-line access to a number of databases and had recently begun to implement a pilot project jointly with the Telecommunications Services of Trinidad and Tobago (TSTT) to promote and develop skills in the use of computer-based communication throughout the Caribbean subregion.

The information provided by the officer was supplemented by a handout which provided details of the databases which could be accessed through ECLAC/CDCC and the equipment which was necessary to facilitate such access.

##### Statistics

Mr. Lance Busby, Economic Affairs Officer (Statistics) informed the meeting that ECLAC/CDCC sought to provide statistical information to inform the economic and social development planning processes within the CDCC subregion. Activities were carried out in close collaboration with the Statistical Unit of the CARICOM Secretariat. The work, however, was impeded by a deficient statistical infrastructure in the Caribbean subregion.

The secretariat also provided technical assistance to member countries and to subregional institutions such as the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), in the setting up of databases and in the designing of information systems.

Ambassador Mills stated that he deplored the poor state of statistics in some Caribbean countries and he posited that it was a result of a lack of official appreciation of statistics. He advised that it was necessary to raise awareness of the importance of statistics.

In response to a question, Mr. Busby informed that the secretariat also provided assistance in analyzing data, in response to requests from governments for such assistance.

#### Regional economic advisory services

Mr. Trevor Harker, Regional Economic Adviser in the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat, endorsed Mr. Blanchard's earlier identification of an important function of ECLAC as a think-tank and a forum for economic and social analysis.

He informed participants that his work programme included analysis of short-term economic indicators and the carrying out of longer-term (10-year) economic reviews. He conducted an annual regional economic survey which had constituted an input into the annual survey for purposes of the annual CARICOM Heads of Government Conference; and he also carried out studies in response to specific requests from member governments.

In carrying out his work, Mr Harker interfaced with non-governmental organizations which were engaged in similar work, and he made reference to a special relationship with the Association of Caribbean Economists (ACE).

#### Social development and women in development

The Social Affairs Officer, Ms. Betty-Ann Russell, told the meeting of the work of the office in the area of social development. She emphasized the need for more importance to be attached to the area of social development. The present work programme of ECLAC focused on research on poverty and the role of NGOs in the development of the subregion.

The secretariat's women's affairs officer had had the greatest interaction with NGOs, but the relationship had been mostly of an ad hoc nature and there was still a critical role for the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat to play in supporting the work of NGOs in the subregion. Selective partnerships could be formed for carrying out research, projects and programmes in sustainable development and in poverty alleviation. At any rate, the secretariat needed urgently to meet with the NGO community with a view to defining the nature of its support to that community.

Having had temporary responsibility for the Women in Development (WID) programme, Ms. Russell informed the meeting that this area was well established in the work programme of ECLAC and in the Caribbean subregion. Through the support of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the secretariat was able to appoint a women's affairs officer in 1979. The secretariat had made substantive inputs into the advancement of women in the Caribbean subregion through research, publication of data and the dissemination of information. The secretariat had hosted and serviced subregional meetings and facilitated the exchange of knowledge and experience among CDCC member countries.

The secretariat provided technical assistance to governments and NGOs; and collaborated with other Caribbean regional organizations, academic institutions,

the media and NGOs. Its women's affairs officer acted as a liaison between the Caribbean subregion and Latin America and the United Nations system. Recent energies of the Officer were concentrated on preparatory activities for the 1995 United Nations Global Conference on Women in Development.

On the issue of NGOs, Ambassador Mills noted that the issue of allowing the natural organic growth of NGOs was a delicate one. However, the importance of these organizations could not be understated. He referred to the fact that the World Bank had increased its cooperation with NGOs, which further signified their increased importance. The most recent acknowledgement of this was contained in Agenda 21, one of the major products of the Rio Summit. He suggested that the CDCC examine that document in order to determine any possible contribution to its implementation in areas such as poverty, health and human settlements.

#### Environment and development

Mr. Erik Blommestein, Economic Affairs Officer (Environment), informed the meeting that the objective of the CDCC work programme element in environment and development was to strengthen the capabilities of the CDCC member countries to incorporate environmental considerations into development planning.

The meeting was informed that most of the work in this area in the recent past had been related to national and regional preparations for the UNCED. Mr. Blommestein detailed those activities for the benefit of the participants. He stated that a number of proposed activities were dependent on the availability of extrabudgetary activities for their execution, including follow-up to UNCED, and technical assistance activities.

Mr. Blommestein wondered whether the secretariat had discontinued activities in the area of sustainable development in view of financial and other considerations. He linked this question to the high expectations of Caribbean countries which had resulted in the special recognition which had been granted to small island States and low-lying coastal States in Agenda 21 and the other UNCED conventions.

The Officer elaborated on two other aspects of the work programme, the preparation of a report on evaluation techniques incorporating environmental considerations into development planning; and the establishment of a computerized environmental database.

Mr. Blommestein's presentation generated discussion on the structure of the ECLAC/CDCC budget. Participants requested clarification on the use of the terms "regular budget resources" and "extrabudgetary resources", as used in the work programme. More generally, participants sought information on the criteria used to determine the allocation of resources among elements of the work programme.

#### Industry and tourism

Mr. Larry Willmore, Economic Affairs Officer (Industry and Tourism), reported that he had been working mainly on tourism during the 10 months since his transfer to Port-of-Spain from the Mexico Office of ECLAC. He had utilized the database of the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) to specify and estimate models for forecasting tourist arrivals in the countries of the subregion. This was done for 26 countries, and the results were published in document LC/CAR/G.358, "Forecasting tourist arrivals in the Caribbean", which had been circulated to tourism, planning and research institutions throughout the subregion.

It was emphasized that far from duplicating the work of other institutions, the document was a unique contribution to planning in the Caribbean, and was

apparently very well received by the countries and by regional institutions. The forecasting model and software had been made available to interested persons in the hope that planners in each country, and the CTO itself, would update those forecasts on a continuing basis.

The meeting was informed that industry would be the focus of attention for the next 12-month period. The Office would contribute Caribbean case-studies to work being done on Export Processing Zones (EPZs) by the Mexico Office and by Headquarters in Santiago. It was hoped that the case-studies would include Jamaica, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Barbados, Saint Lucia and Puerto Rico.

#### Science and technology

Information on the work programme in science and technology had been circulated to participants. Mr. Donatus St. Aimee, Economic Affairs Officer (Science and Technology), informed participants that a long-term science and technology work programme, outlining the technological input into development, had been prepared by the secretariat. He referred to the fact that Agenda 21 had stressed that technological inputs were necessary for the preservation of the environment.

The Officer also informed that financial resources from ECLAC's regular budget were the source of funds for meetings of the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST) which he served as secretary, and that the work programme was funded from extrabudgetary resources.

#### Population and development

Ms. Barbara Boland, Population Affairs Officer, emphasized the close interrelation between population and development, and lamented that this interrelation was not always understood, nor had implications always been recognized by Caribbean Governments. She outlined some of the consequences of changes in demographic patterns which had occurred in Caribbean countries over the past two to three decades.

The Demography Unit in the Port-of-Spain Office was established to strengthen governments' efforts in social and economic development through the integration of population into their development programmes, and the formulation and implementation of population policies. The Officer informed that a multi-pronged approach had been adopted, which included the following:

- The formulation and implementation of population policies which were geared to assist governments to design measures and programmes to contribute to the achievement of developmental goals by affecting critical demographic variables;
- Institution-building through the establishment of population units in planning ministries, and national population councils in six countries in the subregion;
- Assistance to countries to incorporate population inputs into social and economic programmes and development plans; assistance included preparation of data, estimates and projections;
- Data generation and evaluation and research. A central store of data had been developed for use by planners and policy makers and included a socio-demographic data bank and an improved vital statistics and vital registration system;

- The development of a population information, education and communication subprogramme; and
- Training.

Some of the work carried out by the Unit had been accomplished in collaboration with other United Nations agencies and Caribbean organizations.

The meeting was informed that future activities of the secretariat would focus on preparations for the United Nations World Population Conference in 1994. A preparatory regional meeting of government experts would be convened in Saint Lucia in October to review and evaluate regional population experiences, and forge a Latin American and Caribbean position on the issue of population and development. Ms. Boland stressed the importance of that meeting for the Caribbean and stated that there was need for greater subregional coherence on these issues.

In the discussion, reference was made to the failure of the Rio Conference to make definitive statements on population issues. These issues, although popular among donor countries, were not given due attention in that forum.

Information was sought on whether studies were being carried out on migration. A question was raised on the status of the latest census data and the use to which such data were being put. Dr Boland indicated that data from the most recent census were still being processed.

#### Comment by Mr. Lewis

The discussant, Mr. David Lewis, thanked the staff members for their informative presentations and took note of the capabilities of the staff and the usefulness of the work of the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat. He suggested that the CDCC secretariat might make its documents available in the official languages of the subregion for use by policy makers.

He suggested that ECLAC/CDCC might produce documents specifically for the benefit of the subregion's private sector. That would fill an important need since the private sector needed to improve its knowledge of international developments and how these might impact on business ventures.

He praised the CDCC secretariat and the wider ECLAC system for the high quality of its work. In extending his discussion to the role of Caribbean regional organizations, he offered some comments on the workings of the CARICOM system, especially in the areas of functional cooperation and the limitations placed on countries with observer status in that regional body.

In concluding the session, it was pointed out by the chairman that in addition to the areas of work on which presentations had been made in the course of the session, there were a number of activities on which it had not been possible to report because of the constraint of time.

#### SESSION 5

##### *Interests/expectations of countries and country groupings within CDCC: OECS, CARICOM, non-CARICOM and non-independent Caribbean countries*

The panel of presenters at this session consisted of Mr. Ramiro Leon Torras (Cuba), Mr. Johannes Leonce (Saint Lucia), His Excellency Mr. Louis Wiltshire

(Trinidad and Tobago), and Mr. Carlyle Corbin (United States Virgin Islands). The chairman and the discussant were two staff members of ECLAC, Mr. Donatus St. Aimee and Mr. Trevor Harker, respectively.

Mr. Johannes Leonce spoke from the perspective of the countries of the OECS. He referred to some of the objectives of the CDCC as stated in its Constituent Declaration, and he expressed concern at the "toughness" of the United Nations system; he wondered whether this would not negatively affect those countries which had only recently enrolled in it.

In a critical evaluation of the system's programmes, he also expressed concern that those programmes which emanated from within the system were designed without adequately taking into consideration the interests and expectations of the member countries. These programmes must always reflect the priorities of member States. With regard to the subregion as a whole, he expressed concern at the tendency for marginalisation of the Caribbean within the ECLAC system.

He felt that in the intellectual environment of ECLAC, staff members could easily lose sight of the importance of seeking to advance the peoples of the region. He felt that the Caribbean had reached saturation point as far as research was concerned. There was more need for the practical applicability of research findings.

He praised the CDCC's efforts in the area of the removal of language barriers but noted that these had not had the anticipated results. He advised that the emphasis must be to develop a multifaceted programme which would tackle the problems of language barriers at all levels and ensure exposure of all our peoples to all the languages of the subregion.

He stressed the need for the secretariat to ensure that the nature and emphasis of its programmes reflected a workable balance between economic issues and social concerns. In addition, there was a need for more information and feedback about CDCC, such as the services it provided, its resources and how these were allocated.

There was also need for strengthening and streamlining the reporting mechanism between the secretariat and member countries, and within the wider United Nations system. He suggested that the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat play a key role in disseminating information to member States. Information was especially needed by the smaller islands for purposes of influencing their power structures in their interests and for purposes of national initiatives in a range of areas.

He stressed the need for national focal points to play a more important role as nerve centers of communication and information on programmes and projects. He called on member States to be supportive of the work of the CDCC and stated that the secretariat should faithfully serve the interests of member States and generate an environment of cooperation, in addition to its role as a reservoir of information in all its varied forms. He called for a more direct presence of the secretariat in the smaller islands.

Ambassador Wiltshire began his presentation with reference to the debate on the role of the CDCC which took place in that forum during the early 1980s. He noted that the outcomes of this debate were not satisfactory since many questions remained unanswered. Trinidad and Tobago had given some direction to the Organization in 1988 at the eleventh session of the CDCC, and subsequently. He saw the continuing validity of the Organization, and advised that there was need for a more effective coordinating role in order to draw on the resources of the United Nations system, and to increase accessibility to the inner parts of the system which were not always open to diplomats.

The CDCC remained on the periphery of the system since communication with the centre was routed through ECLAC Headquarters in Santiago. More direct

influence of the CDCC on the centre was essential to ensure that the subregion had impact on structural changes within the wider United Nations system. To some extent, this could be achieved by more in-depth briefing of Caribbean diplomatic personnel on important developments in the system.

In response to the question, "what was the right niche for the CDCC", he stated that it could act on behalf of the CDCC member governments, in regard to the entirety of the United Nations system, even though such a role might create conflict with other parts of the system. He insisted that governments should be assisted in relating to the system so that they could take more effective and timely action, when necessary. At present, Caribbean delegates operating within the United Nations system lacked a central focus. The secretariat should function more systematically to assist member Governments to organize as a group in order to develop positions and improve their articulation of issues which would impact on them. In addition, the CDCC should be an active forum for expressing the views of governments on regional Latin American and Caribbean issues and to ensure that their distinctive perceptions and interests were reflected in the ECLAC system.

On the issue of reporting on work implementation, he expressed the need for a more effective means of estimating the resource requirements of actions requested or mandated by governments, so that programmes could be streamlined to match the available resources. It was obvious that activities requested by member Governments exceeded the capacity of the Organization to deliver. He informed that procedures for budgeting existed within the system.

Mr. Leon Torras noted that the address by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago to the opening ceremony, served as a good guide to the work of the CDCC, and identified a common Caribbean thread in the work of the organization.

He provided the meeting with an insight into the history of the CDCC which he perceived as having developed in two stages. The first period, 1975-1980, was one in which the interests of member countries focused on developing the work programme and establishing the purposes and objectives of the CDCC. Subsequently, the focus was on the development of the subregional headquarters as a fairly autonomous office. That development was an important achievement but the goal of advancing cooperation among the member countries lagged.

He emphasized that the promotion of cooperation was the most important aspect of the CDCC. If the subregion was interested in the development of cooperation among Caribbean countries, it was essential to develop the CDCC. Both CARICOM and the CDCC had important contributions to make to facilitate regional integration. The benefit of the CDCC derived from the fact that it was a part of the United Nations system. It was in the interests of member countries that there should be the greatest possible complementarity between the activities pursued by CARICOM and the CDCC.

He expressed the wish that the Caribbean be seen as one geographical area, with a common culture, and that it should not be separated because of linguistic differences. He stressed that one should curb the tendency to perceive of the Caribbean as "English-speaking."

Mr. Leon Torras recommended that the secretariat undertake an analysis of the Constituent Declaration of the CDCC, in order to assess accomplishments based on the objectives established therein. Such an analysis would ascertain whether governments had the same priorities, as well as the relevance and validity of those stated objectives.

He reiterated his call for a clear distinction between the work programmes of ECLAC and CDCC. The work programme should emphasise concrete action proposed in the CDCC forum, such as regional projects encompassing a few countries and the

CDCC secretariat, for which extrabudgetary funds could be sourced. He stressed that the CDCC work programme should reflect the interests and priorities of its member States and should encourage horizontal cooperation in the implementation of that work programme.

The ECLAC work programme reflected the requirements of the ECLAC work programme cycle, and the CDCC work programme should represent the concrete activities of horizontal cooperation among CDCC member countries, which would be approved at the regular plenary sessions. He suggested that the UNDP indicative resources could be tapped for the implementation of such activities since he was aware that the funds allocated for the Caribbean during the last UNDP budgetary cycle were underutilized. He recommended that the secretariat explore that possibility. He also advised that links with regional institutions, such as the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE), should be strengthened in order that the subregion could benefit from such institutions.

Mr. Leon Torras also recommended that CDCC sessions, at the technical level, should concern themselves with the work programme and should identify financial resources for horizontal cooperation. The results of the technical level meeting would be approved at that level in order to allow the ministerial level meeting to concentrate on policy and political issues. He stated that such a change would augment the substantive value of ministerial participation in the meeting and would serve to promote and enhance regional unity.

In regard to the role of the national focal point, Mr. Leon Torras pointed to the centrality of focal points in the strengthening of the CDCC but cautioned that they should be ministries in the individual countries linked directly to the secretariat. Part of the role of the ministries would be to assist in the implementation of the work programme of the CDCC.

Mr. Carlyle Corbin made his presentation from the perspective of the Non-Independent Caribbean Countries (NICCs). He began by defining that group which he divided into the non-self-governing, the self-governing or associated territories and the integrated territories. That classification determined the eligibility of those countries to participate in programmes and activities of the United Nations system. He emphasized that the CDCC was a high priority for the NICCs since that forum afforded them more involvement than their current observer status in CARICOM. As a result, they had played an important role in maintaining the CDCC when it was in danger of being abandoned by many regional governments. The CDCC was one means of gaining access to the wider United Nations system. However, for NICCs, the issue of representation at the global level continued to be a major concern.

He posited that the subregion was not only culturally, but also constitutionally, pluralistic and there tended to be a lack of familiarity with the various political and administrative systems.

He listed some features of the participation of the NICCs in the CDCC which needed improvement:

- The need for inclusion of the NICCs more fully into the work programme and extrabudgetary activities of the CDCC. He was critical of their non-inclusion in economic analyses and in specific extrabudgetary projects, such as the population project funded by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA);

- The need to increase participation in the programmes and activities of the specialized agencies and technical bodies of the United Nations system through associate membership or observer status;

- The need for more forceful efforts by the CDCC secretariat in regard to the special circumstances of island developing countries; and

- The need to participate as observers in programmes, conferences and other activities of the General Assembly.

He alluded to the successful initiatives taken to ensure the participation of NICCs in UNCED, which resulted in a new category of participation - associate members of United Nations regional economic commissions. He felt that similar efforts should be extended to other important international forums.

He emphasized that it was part of the CDCC's role to facilitate such access to the wider United Nations system. He stressed the need for resources to enable the Working Group to carry out its mandate. Dr Corbin concluded by making reference to some recent developments which would influence the status of the NICCs in the United Nations system.

### General discussion

The participant from the Netherlands Antilles made reference to the role which the Government of the Netherlands Antilles had played in working towards the removal of language barriers in the Caribbean. She sought to find out why the programme on the removal of language barriers had been classified in the work programme of ECLAC/CDCC as "extrabudgetary".

In regard to the issue of the NICCs, it was suggested that in spite of its small size the subregion had developed an influential role. The United Nations faced increasing participation of NICCs and because of this the Caribbean should be in the forefront on this issue.

There was a question raised regarding the general lack of cooperation between Latin America and the Caribbean, and regarding proposals which may have been made for an improvement in that situation.

There was a sense of deja-vu in the discussions on the role and function of the CDCC and a question was posed regarding future expectations of member countries in regard to this issue.

One participant gleaned from the discussion that problems existed between ECLAC/CDCC and Headquarters. He recommended that a study be undertaken to provide a comparison of capacities of the subregional headquarters in Trinidad and Tobago and Mexico and to determine if they were equitably treated by the ECLAC Headquarters. This was later endorsed by one of the panellists who noted that a previous study by the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) had found a difference in the levels of autonomy exercised by the two offices.

There was another recommendation to the effect that there should be a replication of the focal points workshop in each CDCC member country in order to sensitize the countries to the CDCC, and to create a more effective network at the national level, and thereby to advance the process of national coherence.

It was also recommended that an analysis and review of the CDCC Constituent Declaration be undertaken in order to ascertain its current relevance, especially in the context of the restructuring of the United Nations.

It was suggested that there should be cross-fertilization of United Nations personnel from various geographical areas at the policy-making level; and Caribbean representation in the upper echelons of the Commission at ECLAC Headquarters. Without such exchange of personnel there would continue to be no sense of linkage within the Commission and ECLAC Headquarters would remain a purely Latin American institution.

In response to a question on the follow-up to the workshop, the meeting was informed that the report would be submitted for consideration at the fourteenth

session of the CDCC, at which forum member Governments would decide on how to deal with the recommendations from the workshop.

#### SESSION 6

***National focal points: Roles, responsibilities and functions; coordination at the national level; involvement of United Nations permanent representatives; channels of information and communication***

The presenters at this session were: Dr. Barton Scotland, Head of the Department of International Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Finance, Republic of Guyana; and Ms. Gail Mathurin, Deputy High Commissioner, Jamaican High Commission, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. The chairman was Ms. Yvonne Acosta, Senior Research Assistant, ECLAC/CDCC secretariat.

#### Presentation by Dr. Scotland

Dr. Scotland defined the CDCC focal point as the contact point between the national government and the CDCC secretariat. He noted that cooperation and mutual assistance were central in the conceptualization of the CDCC, and that solid and well-established links among CDCC members and between the members and the CDCC secretariat were a continuing necessity.

Some of the points which he identified for consideration by the participants were the need for some form of organization within government ministries which would transmit the results of contact with the secretariat to appropriate persons and/or institutions within the member countries; the suitability of the physical location of the focal point; the "coordination policy" with respect to collaboration on CDCC matters and the flow of information on matters which impact on sectoral programmes of CDCC member countries; and the possible need for decentralization, that is, several sectoral focal points based on sectoral interests, leaving the national focal points free to deal with policy issues in the wider framework.

He identified two main roles for focal points - as conduit and facilitator; and as monitor and evaluator. He based those observations on the resolution which established the CDCC. He charged CDCC with the following responsibilities: collection of information on the activities of the government and those of ECLAC and CDCC; in general, serving as a "post office"; working with the secretariat in monitoring and evaluating projects and programmes; the establishment of channels to obtain information from the secretariat, when necessary; and, facilitating the information needs of the sectoral focal points.

He suggested that the national focal points might become more involved in operational aspects of the CDCC, which would involve additional responsibilities for them, namely, serving as a channel to relay and interpret the work programme of the Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean; determining governments' positions on the work programme; ensuring and coordinating the implementation of national activities related to the work programme; and, formulating proposals to be put to CDCC sessions. He suggested that the Monitoring Committee should have its functions and authority enlarged to enable it to have greater impact on issues which may have policy implications for CDCC's effectiveness and overall performance.

Dr. Scotland saw the necessity of strengthening links between ministerial and technical focal points. It was his view that the focal point system should be decentralized in favour of a system which included separate focal points for

areas of the ECLAC/CDCC work programme which were of particular interest to a member State. Such a system would improve coordination at all levels. The national focal points could keep the secretariat informed, and the "sectoral focal points" would benefit from the possibility of direct links with other sectoral focal points and institutions across the subregion. The national focal points would focus on broader policy issues.

#### Presentation by Ms. Mathurin

Ms. Mathurin focused on the involvement of the Caribbean permanent representatives to the United Nations in the work of the CDCC. She felt there was a need for redefining the role of the focal point in relation to the permanent missions.

She gave an overview of the links between ECLAC, the Caribbean and the wider United Nations system and the roles of the General Assembly and its committees, as well as ECOSOC and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). She stated that policy decisions taken in these bodies should ideally be reflected in the priorities and activities of the CDCC, and vice versa. Consequently, there was a need for a re-examination of the role of focal points in terms of ensuring close coordination and constant interaction, so that the subregion could be kept abreast of developments in international forums. The national permanent representatives to the United Nations needed to be fully aware of what was happening at the level of the CDCC, so as to protect the Caribbean's interests. Knowledge of the budget, staffing and activities of ECLAC/CDCC would assist Caribbean missions in maximizing the impact of their representation.

Ms. Mathurin advised that the role of focal points should be broadened beyond an operational one and called for the strengthening of the relationship between the national focal points and the CDCC. Considering the role of the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat as a regional "think-tank", and ECLAC and CDCC as forums for discussion and consultation, she recommended that the relationship between the national focal point and the secretariat be used to facilitate the formulation of Caribbean positions to be presented in United Nations forums. This was especially necessary given the changes taking place globally and the ongoing restructuring within the United Nations system. She concluded that there was need for a two-way flow of communication between the national focal points and the secretariat; permanent representatives in New York and Geneva would have the responsibility of feeding in information on issues pertinent to the CDCC. Simultaneously, focal points had the responsibility of coordinating the relevant national sectoral interests. She argued that the effectiveness of the focal points depended in part on their locations within the governmental systems.

#### General discussion

A number of participants did not think that national focal points were able to fulfil the tasks which were apparently expected of them, in view of resource scarcities at the national level, and a continuous increase in the responsibilities of these persons. Focal points, therefore, would continue to rely on the secretariat to keep them abreast of important developments within the United Nations system.

It was also suggested that creative ways could be found to expand the horizons as well as the depth of output from personnel in government bureaucracies.

A recommendation made at an earlier session, found favour with a number of the participants that each member country should convene a national workshop of all "sectoral focal points", and that the secretariat should make a commitment

to participate fully in such workshops. It was agreed that various sectors within the public administrations would benefit tremendously from the kind of exposure which participants were receiving at the workshop. On the issue of the secretariat's links with permanent missions to the United Nations, it was suggested that such links existed through the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) forum.

Participants stressed the importance of coordinating domestic and foreign policies within the context of a coherent national development policy. It was emphasized that only with such a coherent policy could issues be effectively dealt with at the level of the CDCC. The complexity of coordinating domestic and foreign policy was acknowledged, but it was thought to be imperative to pursue this, since it would facilitate the job of the focal point who had the responsibility for making a meaningful input into the work programme of the ECLAC/CDCC. It was suggested that coordination of policies would help to avoid duplication of the work of multilateral organizations.

It was suggested that emphasis should be placed on the removal of obstacles to the effective functioning of focal points. The secretariat could contribute by keeping focal points well informed of its activities, preparing a briefing paper for governments and foreign missions immediately after sessions and other meetings of the CDCC.

It was also suggested that the role of the secretariat in assisting focal points to overcome time and resource constraints should be examined; and that a position paper be prepared to determine how the secretariat's information systems could be used to increase the coalescing of national, regional and foreign policy considerations, especially for the benefit of diplomats of Caribbean States.

## SESSION 7

### *Technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC): What it is; How to operationalise it*

The presentation at this session was made by Mr. Dominik Bartsch, Junior Professional Officer, UNDP, Port-of-Spain. The chairman was Mr. Johannes Leonce and the discussant was Dr. Barton Scotland.

#### Presentation by Mr. Bartsch

In his presentation, Mr. Bartsch emphasized that technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) was a project modality rather than a financing facility. Clarification of that issue was important since it was on the basis of a common misconception. He informed that TCDC was a cooperative activity which was initiated, organized, managed and, principally financed by the participating countries themselves; but that often there was some external financing. He quoted the Plan of Action of the 1978 Buenos Aires Conference which launched TCDC. The Plan of Action was intended to:

"Promote and strengthen collective self-reliance among developing countries through exchanges of experience, the pooling, sharing and utilization of their technical resources, and the development of their complementary capacities."

Most importantly, it was intended to promote south-south technical cooperation. He noted that TCDC potentially offered a wide variety of untapped opportunities but that it had not yet fully matured. Among other reasons, this was a result of a lack of awareness at the operational level, in many cases, coupled with a lack of political commitment.

Mr. Bartsch informed that the nature of information flows represented one of the drawbacks of TCDC since information on the capacities of even neighbouring countries was not always easily available. He elaborated on the existing information sources which could be tapped, including match-making services on training and technical expertise which were available through the Special Unit for TCDC in New York.

He informed that the costs involved in TCDC exchanges were borne by the participating countries. In the case of a training activity, for example, the sending country would cover airfare while the receiving country would finance tuition and possibly assist with accommodation. The Special Unit of TCDC in New York occasionally provided support for the hard currency component, mainly the airfare. For such support, requests had to be channelled through the UNDP field offices.

Funds were also available for the promotion of TCDC, such as the strengthening of existing institutions to engage in TCDC. In some instances, support might be considered to fund a seminar which brought together potential TCDC partners.

He informed the meeting that if it was considered to include TCDC in the UNDP Country Programme, an umbrella project could be designed to allow for the execution of TCDC activities, as and when requested. TCDC activities could also be accommodated under regional projects. He emphasized that many national projects already had a TCDC component, that is, one of the activities, such as training, was carried out in another developing country.

He advised that within government, a focal point for TCDC should be appointed to act as a facilitator both for the formulation of TCDC strategies and coordination among national institutions. It was important for the focal point to have an extensive knowledge of his country's capacities, and of how to promote TCDC and disseminate information effectively.

Mr. Bartsch stated that TCDC projects proved to be more sustainable and costs were lower as a result of mutual sharing between countries. He suggested that the potential for a TCDC system particularly suited to the Caribbean be explored.

#### Comment by Dr. Scotland

The discussant, Dr. Barton Scotland, identified three main areas for consideration when dealing with TCDC: the availability of knowledge and information; resources; and, organization.

With regard to information, he stated that more information needed to be disseminated to governments and by governments on capabilities and needs of countries and institutions. Greater participation of Caribbean countries in the database at the Special Unit was essential if Caribbean expertise was to be included in the network. In fact, the entire approach to TCDC in the subregion - at both the national and regional levels - needed to be more proactive than reactive. He saw a role for ECLAC/CDCC as a "post office" for the facilitation of the transfer of information to member countries.

Lack of a budget for TCDC was often cited as a constraint to the realization of its full potential. A broader programmatic approach to TCDC was required to ensure maximization of its potential benefit.

To ensure continuity in TCDC activities, Dr. Scotland argued that an institutional framework might be required. He recommended a subregional seminar, jointly sponsored by ECLAC, SELA and UNDP, and reiterated the need for countries to become more aware of their own capacities to contribute to developing TCDC.

### General discussion

The meeting was informed of a TCDC programme, the TOKTEN programme, which utilized the expertise of expatriate nationals. It had been successfully used in at least two countries in the Caribbean. It was suggested that a national budget should be available to supplement resources available from the UNDP in order to ensure that resources were available for TCDC activities.

There was discussion on the concept of TCDC and the distinction between the UNDP/TCDC and the broader approach to technical cooperation among developing countries. The meeting was informed that other TCDC programmes existed outside the UNDP framework, for example, programmes developed by the Group of 77 and the Non-aligned Movement. However, it was noted that those had faced some difficulties.

It was observed that there was an absence of Caribbean participation in TCDC activities organized from ECLAC Headquarters. Caribbean countries were urged to take more interest in these programmes.

It was generally agreed that ECLAC/CDCC should play a greater role in promoting TCDC activity in the subregion.

### SESSION 8

#### *Wrap-up: Further discussion of aspects of the functioning of ECLAC/CDCC*

This final session was intended to provide an opportunity to conclude the workshop effectively, by dealing with issues or questions which, for various reasons, may not have been satisfactorily responded to during previous sessions.

The session was chaired by the Secretary of the CDCC who identified six sets of questions which appeared to require more conclusive treatment:

1. What was the nature of the Caribbean's interest in the present restructuring of the United Nations?
2. What was CDCC's "niche"? In what ways did the Organization differ from other regional bodies?
3. How did the CDCC secretariat deal with the need for increased visibility?
4. To what extent could one evaluate parity of treatment of the ECLAC Mexico Office with the Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean?
5. How was the ECLAC/CDCC work programme formulated? What criteria were used to determine which areas of the work programme should be categorized as extrabudgetary?
6. How could the secretariat assist member Governments of the CDCC to access resources of the United Nations system?

## 1. United Nations restructuring

On the theme of the restructuring of the United Nations system, the Director of the Port-of-Spain Office suggested that social and economic development may be affected by the increasing attention being paid to peace-keeping and security, unless significantly increased resources were made available to the United Nations.

With reference to the impact of restructuring on the regional commissions, he emphasized that information had been non-existent to date. Participants were referred to a recent paper prepared by the ECLAC secretariat for the twenty-fourth session of ECLAC, which took place in Santiago in April 1992. The paper was entitled, "Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields: Role and functions of ECLAC" (LC/G.1716.SES.24/18).

The Secretary of ECLAC informed that the paper had been prepared in response to a request from the Office of the Secretary-General to prepare a paper which detailed the resources, plans and the potential for reduction of the activities of the Commission. These issues were to be discussed at a subsequent meeting with officials at United Nations Headquarters. The Secretary did not anticipate that the regional commissions would be greatly affected by the restructuring.

Reference was also made to the resolution "Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and Social Fields: Role and functions of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean", which had been adopted at the ECLAC twenty-fourth session, 8-15 April 1992, and which would be transmitted to the intergovernmental bodies which were charged with the restructuring exercise.

This resolution had placed emphasis on the need for decentralization; improved coordination and secretariat-wide coherence; clearer division of responsibilities regarding regional technical cooperation activities; and, improved effectiveness of the technical cooperation activities provided to countries by the United Nations.

Ambassador Mills expressed concern that there were some disturbing developments in the United Nations Economic and Social Council which were expected to have negative consequences for developing countries. It was possible that recommendations which would emanate from ECOSOC might include the abolition of the Second and Third Committees. He perceived all such developments as part of a broader strategy to restructure the United Nations to the advantage of the developed countries.

He concluded that it was incumbent upon Caribbean countries to create a lobby, which included membership of the Group of 77, and to use that lobby in the interests of the Caribbean subregion and the rest of the developing world.

It was noted that the entire restructuring process had proceeded to the exclusion of the General Assembly. That development was calculated to bring about the emasculation of the traditional power of the developing countries.

Emphasis was placed on the need to improve the knowledge of Caribbean nationals serving in the Caribbean permanent missions to the United Nations. There was need to ensure that links with those missions were strengthened; that, as a group, the missions could prioritise issues, goals and objectives, resulting in improved briefs to ministers of foreign affairs of the subregion who could then determine the strategy to influence developments in the United Nations.

It was felt that the CDCC secretariat could play an important role by participating in a process of networking, exchange of information and coordination and, by bringing its influence to bear on issues important to the Caribbean group of countries in the General Assembly.

Mr. Rashleigh Jackson was of the view that although restructuring was inevitable, moreso, in light of the recent Rio Summit on the environment, the Caribbean must make use of the General Assembly to influence the direction of change. He advised that the Caribbean "orchestrate a chorus of discontent" with the nature of the restructuring, which would ensure that this issue was not ignored by the United Nations General Assembly.

One means to that end could be the appointment by the CARICOM Foreign Ministers, of a working party to consider the issue of restructuring. In addition, GRULAC and other international groupings could be approached to cooperate in developing positions on the issue, but he questioned if such coordination could materialize unless there was political will to deal with such fundamental issues.

It was suggested that CDCC member Governments might attempt to influence the restructuring process to the advantage of the secretariat. This position was endorsed by Mr. Jackson, who suggested that the present opportunity to strengthen the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat be utilized.

The chairman posed the question as to the message that the Caribbean wanted to communicate. More precision in our thinking and in our recommendations on the present developments was necessary if we were to seek, in an informed manner, to influence change to the benefit of the Caribbean subregion.

It was suggested that there was need for in-depth analysis of the issue, perhaps by the secretariat, in order to assist Caribbean delegations for purposes of discussions at the General Assembly.

## 2. CDCC's niche

On the subject of the niche of the CDCC, the Secretary of the CDCC identified aspects of the role and function of the CDCC as a "think-tank", which would provide analyses of development problems and issues, and develop a long-term perspective and strategic outlook on those issues. He agreed that the secretariat should play a significant role in analyzing and challenging the dominant development paradigms from the perspective of Caribbean relevance. An example of such an approach was the development of the theme of social equity and changing production patterns, from a Caribbean perspective.

He stated that there was need for the CDCC to rationalize its work programme within the limits of its available resources, while making every effort to secure the collaboration of other United Nations bodies, and of Caribbean regional organizations. He emphasized the need for direction by CDCC member governments to inform the work programme, within the framework and constraints of the rules and regulations of the United Nations system. The development of the work programme should be done, taking full account of the roles of other subregional organizations, and on the basis of regular and organized consultation with their representatives.

The Secretary indicated that the CDCC secretariat had already played an important, and in some cases, a leading role in research and analysis of national and regional policy issues, and had made contributions in certain sectoral areas, such as statistics, population and development, sustainable development and information.

He cited areas of possible linkage with the implementation of recommendations contained in the recent Report of the West Indian Commission. In that connection, he identified another area of strong interest to the CDCC as the promotion of development cooperation in the wider Caribbean, in addition to a programme of work which reflected the particular interests of the NICCs. A programme relating to the issues of concern to island developing countries should perhaps be an integral part of the work programme of the Organization.

The foregoing were intended as examples of areas in which the CDCC might take a special interest, and not a complete statement of directions which the secretariat should take.

Participants recognized the constraints which affected the functioning of ECLAC/CDCC, and suggested that it was imperative to take early action to ensure that the secretariat evolved in certain positive directions, and obtained political support for its work.

It was suggested that the secretariat prepare a paper on the subject of the niche of the CDCC for the consideration of member countries.

### 3. Improving visibility

In regard to the question of increasing the secretariat's visibility, participants noted the importance of country support in assisting the Organization to improve its visibility. They suggested the use of the Organization's expertise in information and documentation, and the development of a strategy for public information. They urged the preparation of post-meeting press releases.

### 4. Parity of treatment

Regarding parity of treatment between the Mexico and Port-of-Spain Offices, the meeting was informed that the difference lay more in resources available to the offices, than with their linkages to ECLAC Headquarters. A recommendation made earlier was repeated, that there should be a study of this matter, which should take into account a report which was produced a few years ago.

### 5. Formulating the work programme

With reference to clarification of the formulation of the work programme of ECLAC/CDCC, the chairman noted that the formulation of the work programme was an issue which would always be around, given the nature of the Organization, and the changing regional and global settings.

There was discussion on the role and effectiveness of UNCTAD in advancing a programme for Island Developing Countries (IDCs). Participants concluded that UNCTAD's attention to IDCs had been inadequate, and they requested a report on that subject for consideration at the fourteenth session of CDCC. The meeting was informed of plans to convene a meeting to discuss the sustainable development of small islands, which was being organized by the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

Details of the formulation and financing of the work programme were provided by the Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean. He provided details on the following: structure of the programme; the timeframe for preparation and implementation; the process of prioritising; and, financing. He clarified the distinction between regular budget and extrabudgetary activities; and between "substantive outputs" and "operational activities".

### 6. Accessing United Nations resources

With regard to assisting countries to access the resources of the United Nations, there was consensus that one of the functions of the CDCC was to assist member countries to access these resources whether they were finance, technical assistance or information. The carrying out of this function would assist in enhancing the effectiveness of that system from the standpoint of these countries.

This function was especially important to the smaller member countries of the Committee which, for reasons of financial and manpower scarcity, were often unable to be effectively represented internationally. It was recognized that this function was also especially important to the non-independent member countries of the CDCC, for reasons to do with their constitutional status.

#### Closure

The meeting was brought to a close by the chairman of the session, (the Secretary of the CDCC), who thanked the participants for their keen interest and dedication during the two days. He also thanked the resource persons for their invaluable and stimulating contributions.

Participants paid tribute to the immediate past chairman of the CDCC (technical level), Ms. Lucita Moenir-Alam of the Netherlands Antilles, who had originally proposed that the secretariat organize a workshop for national focal points of the CDCC.

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions.

2. It is essential to ensure that all data is entered correctly and consistently.

3. The second section covers the various methods used to collect and analyze data.

4. These methods include both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

5. The third part of the document focuses on the ethical considerations of research.

6. It is crucial to obtain informed consent from all participants and to protect their privacy.

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Annex 1

**PROGRAMME**

**Tuesday 14 July 1992**

8.30 a.m. - 9.15 a.m.

Opening: Feature address by the Hon. Ralph Maraj, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago

9.30 a.m. - 11.00 a.m.

**Session 1:** The United Nations system and implications of restructuring, with special reference to the Caribbean

Chairman: Louis Wiltshire  
Presenters: Don Mills  
Rashleigh Jackson  
Discussant: Siegmien Staphorst

11.00 a.m. - 11.15 a.m.

*BREAK*

11.15 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.

**Session 2:** The ECLAC system: Structural, operational relationships; activities; funding, budgeting; rules of procedure; participation of Caribbean countries in ECLAC meetings and programmes

Chairman: Swinburne Lestrade  
Presenters: Daniel Blanchard  
Rashleigh Jackson  
Discussant: Don Mills

12.30 p.m. - 1.45 p.m.

*LUNCH BREAK*

1.45 p.m. - 3.15 p.m.

**Session 3:** The CDCC: Its purposes and activities; programme of work; relation with ECLAC; relations with governments; staffing and financial resources; constraints; cooperation with other international organizations; role of the Monitoring Committee

Chairman: David Lewis  
Presenters: Don Mills  
Clyde Applewhite  
Discussant: Donatus St. Aimee

3.15 p.m. - 3.30 p.m.

*BREAK*

3.30 p.m. - 5.00 p.m.

**Session 4:** The work of ECLAC/CDCC: Economic analysis, social affairs, women in development, environment, science and technology, information, statistics, population, industry and tourism, international trade, development cooperation

**Chairman:** Swinburne Lestrade

**Presenters:** Trevor Harker  
Betty Russell  
Erik Blommestein  
Donatus St. Aimee  
Wilma Primus  
Larry Willmore  
Barbara Boland  
Lance Busby

**Discussant:** David Lewis

Wednesday 15 July 1992

9.00 a.m. - 10.30 a.m.

**Session 5:** Interests/expectations of countries and country groupings within CDCC: OECS, CARICOM, non-CARICOM and non-independent Caribbean countries

**Chairman:** Donatus St. Aimee

**Presenters:** Johannes Leonce (St. Lucia)  
Louis Wiltshire (T&T)  
Ramiro Leon Torras (Cuba)  
Carlyle Corbin (USVI)

**Discussant:** Trevor Harker

10.30 a.m. - 10.45 a.m.

**BREAK**

10.45 a.m. - 12.15 p.m.

**Session 6:** National focal points: Roles, responsibilities and functions; coordination at national level; involvement of United Nations Permanent Representatives; channels of information and communication

**Chairman:** Yvonne Acosta

**Presenters:** Barton Scotland  
Gail Mathurin

**Discussant:** Donatus St. Aimee

12.15 p.m. - 1.30 p.m.

**LUNCH BREAK**

1.30 p.m. - 3.00 p.m.

**Session 7:** Technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC): What it is; how to operationalize it

Chairman: Johannes Leonce  
Presenter: Dominik Bartsch  
Discussant: Barton Scotland

3.00 p.m. - 3.15 p.m.

*BREAK*

3.15 p.m. - 4.45 p.m.

**Session 8:** Wrap-up: Further discussion on the role and functioning of the CDCC

Moderator: Swinburne Lestrade  
Facilitators: Clyde Applewhite  
Swinburne Lestrade

4.45 p.m. - 5.00 p.m.

*CLOSURE*

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Annex 2

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Mr. Donatus St. Aimee  
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Annex 3

**OPENING STATEMENT BY THE  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
HIS EXCELLENCY, THE HONOURABLE RALPH MARAJ**

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is for me an honour and a pleasure to have been given the opportunity of addressing you during this opening ceremony of the Workshop for Focal Points organized by the secretariat of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee. I would like first of all to welcome to Trinidad and Tobago, the representatives of the member countries of the CDCC who have travelled to Port-of-Spain to attend this Workshop. My welcome is extended also to the moderators, facilitators and discussants who will be animating the Workshop and to the officials of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the parent body of the CDCC, who have travelled to Port-of-Spain to participate in the Workshop.

Mr. Chairman,

The role and functions of the CDCC have always held a special place in the concerns of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in the sphere of multilateral relations. This is so for a number of reasons. First of all, the CDCC is the concretization of the vision of Trinidad and Tobago's first Prime Minister, Dr. Eric Williams, who, at the sixteenth session of ECLA in Port-of-Spain in May 1975, advocated "the establishment of a Caribbean Council of ECLA to deal specifically with Caribbean issues and circumstances and to embrace all Caribbean entities from Belize to Cayenne, irrespective of political status". As you are no doubt aware, one of the distinguishing features of the CDCC is that it is the only body within the United Nations system which counts among its members both independent and non-independent territories, all participating on the basis of equality. This has produced a forum in which all our member States have been able to maintain close contact with each other.

The resolution establishing the CDCC was prepared by Trinidad and Tobago and co-sponsored by Cuba. This was one of the earliest moves to bring Cuba back into regular institutional contact with other countries in the region. I am told that its expectations were amply fulfilled and that this is illustrated by the quality and consistency of Cuba's representation at all CDCC meetings.

At the time of its establishment, Dr. Williams envisioned one of the major responsibilities of the new CDCC would be to initiate and facilitate the process of dialogue and interaction between the countries of the wider Caribbean region. At a time when the voices debating the respective merits of widening or deepening the integration process are growing more intense, it would be remiss of me not to underline the important role played over the years by the CDCC in stimulating actual interaction and cooperation between CARICOM and non-CARICOM countries. Indeed it is out of this process of increased Caribbean awareness that the CDCC, meeting here in Port-of-Spain in 1983, proposed the change of ECLA's name to reflect the reality of Caribbean membership. And so ECLA became ECLAC.

Mr. Chairman,

There are, however, two other reasons which explain the special importance which we in Trinidad and Tobago accord to the CDCC. At its inception, the CDCC was viewed as an essential interface between the countries of the Caribbean which had their own identity and special characteristics and problems and the wider

Latin American region whose culture, socio-political mores and developmental preoccupations were perceived to be different. I am of the view that this aspect of the role of the CDCC is less important now than it was 17 years ago. The political and economic distance between the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean and the countries of Latin America has lessened considerably during the intervening years. This is a direct result of the facilitating efforts of multilateral institutions such as CDCC and ECLAC. This rapprochement also springs from the efforts of our countries, individually and regionally, to increase our contacts in all areas with the States of the wider region.

The third and last reason is that the CDCC provides the opportunity for member countries to advance their relations with the United Nations system at the functional and operational level. It is this third dimension of the role of the CDCC which I am sure will be highlighted in the course of this Workshop for focal points. This Workshop is a direct response of the CDCC secretariat to the requests of member States which are fully aware of the need to maximize the benefits derived from the CDCC as well as from the other agencies and bodies of the United Nations system to which they belong. The Workshop will facilitate, I am sure, the cross-fertilization of views and ideas. The CDCC secretariat will hear of the interests and expectations of member countries. Focal points, for their part, will no doubt come away with a better understanding of their own role and responsibilities as well as of the need for greater coordination and communication at the national level.

Mr. Chairman,

The organizers of the Workshop must be congratulated for the timing of the Workshop and for the selection of the theme, the Caribbean in the United Nations system with special emphasis on ECLAC/CDCC.

At the present moment the United Nations system is undergoing a far-reaching restructuring process. This long-delayed exercise has been facilitated by the dramatic change in the balance of power in the international system and, consequently, within the United Nations itself, and by the arrival of a new United Nations Secretary-General. One of the first moves in this restructuring process has been to dissolve a number of separate departments dealing with social and economic development and coordination, bringing them together once again under a new Department of Economic Development. Historically, all of the bodies concerned emerged out of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, reflecting this new priority of the areas involved - for example, Transnational Corporations and their activities in the Third World. Although organizations like UNCTAD and UNIDO, which also emerged out of the same process, continue to exist, albeit under strain, the restructuring is widely regarded as a backward move, even if the consequences of this action cannot yet be fully measured. This restructuring has, consequently, generated a fair measure of concern among developing countries for which the area of social and economic development is of critical importance. This apparent downgrading has been effected at a time when increasing energies and significantly greater resources are being devoted to the peace-keeping and security activities of the Security Council. I am, therefore, gratified to see that one of the sessions of the Workshop will focus on the implications of this restructuring exercise.

Mr. Chairman,

The decrease in the economic growth of the western developed countries and the massive diversion of resources to the former Soviet Union and to Eastern Europe will further restrict the aid and assistance flows to developing countries. Greater efforts must, therefore, be made by our countries to maximize the benefits and opportunities provided by the United Nations system. In this regard the selection of the theme of the Workshop and the focus of the work you will be carrying out over the coming two days are highly commendable.

It is also evident that in the present international context, developing countries will be required to look much more closely at what they can offer each other in their efforts to develop and improve the welfare of their citizens. We are all well informed on our respective weaknesses and shortcomings. We, however, pay much less attention to our individual strengths and to what we, as developing countries, can learn from each other. I am therefore happy to see that a working session will be devoted to the concept of technical cooperation among developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

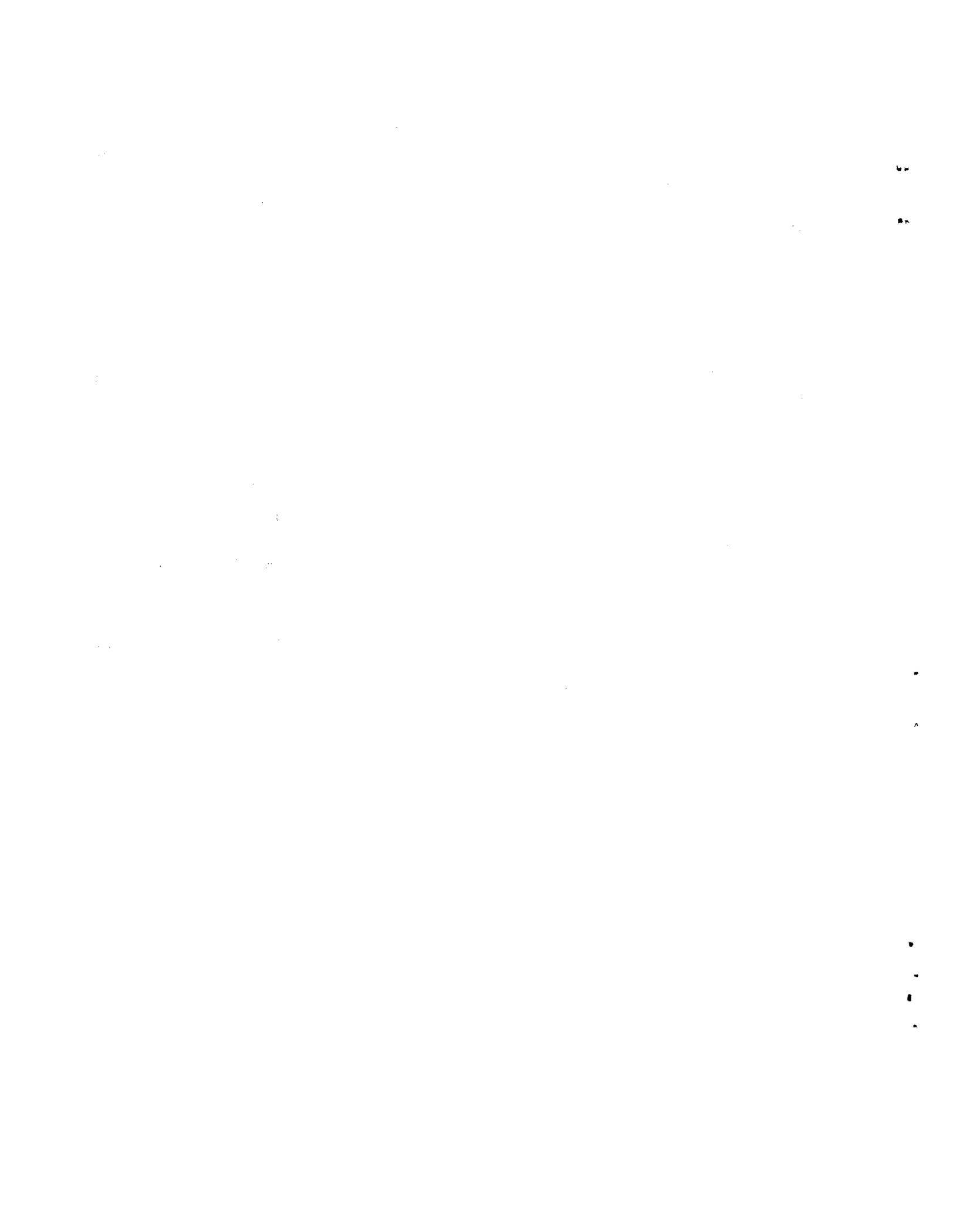
In the context which I have sketched briefly above, it is apparent that if the CDCC can play an intermediary role between its member countries and the complex possibilities of the United Nations system, it will be performing a valuable role. This is particularly so as most of our countries cannot spare large resources of staff and time to come fully to grips with what is potentially available and, I suspect, we accordingly often do not obtain all that we could from this source. If this Workshop can change that, it would have been well worth while.

Mr. Chairman,

My intention this morning was to be quite brief in my opening remarks. I am convinced that at the end of this Workshop the country representatives, or focal points as you call them, will have become better attuned and sensitized to the work of the CDCC and to the operational relations of this body to the wider United Nations system. It is my hope that you, the focal points, will return to your respective countries and ministries fortified with the knowledge that the CDCC is indeed a useful and important body which must continue to make a meaningful contribution to Caribbean cooperation and development. You, the focal points, have a vital role to play in attaining this objective.

I extend to all of you my best wishes for a productive, stimulating and successful workshop. [I take great pleasure in now declaring open the Workshop of CDCC Focal Points].

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.



Annex 4

**PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY THE  
UNITED NATIONS INFORMATION CENTRE (UNIC)  
FOR THE CARIBBEAN AREA**

Information Release 103/92

16 July 1992

CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION COMMITTEE FACES 'GRAVE THREAT' TO ITS WORK

Former Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations and current Executive Chairman of the Jamaican Centre for International Affairs, Mr. Don Mills, has issued a warning to Caribbean States that the present restructuring process taking place in the United Nations system represents a "grave threat" to the work of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC), a permanent subsidiary body of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

The former ambassador, serving as one of two resource persons at the disposal of the two-day (14-15 July) CDCC workshop held at Kapok Hotel in Port of Spain, explained on 15 July that the restructuring process involved the de-emphasis of the social and economic mandate of the United Nations and an almost exclusive preoccupation with peace. Because the meat of the CDCC mandate incorporates social and economic programmes, he felt justifiably alarmed by the restructuring process which has so far involved, in his opinion, a number of changes which were not properly effected, that is in accordance with "due process". Mr. Mills wondered aloud what would be the fate of the United Nations economic commissions. The other resource person, Mr. Rashleigh Jackson, a former Permanent Representative of Guyana to the United Nations, agreed with the sentiments and perspective of Mr. Mills.

Mr. Jackson suggested that the feelings and concerns of the Caribbean be raised in the general debate of the upcoming General Assembly which begins on 15 September 1992 in New York. He advised that the Caribbean "orchestrate a chorus of discontent to the existing process" and let them raise their voices in the General Assembly forcing it to pay attention to the issue.

The well-attended two-day CDCC workshop was held to sensitize national focal points or country representatives from the various Ministries of External or Foreign Affairs to the structure and functions of the Committee and the international, regional and subregional contexts within which it operates. To do this, the workshop closely examined those aspects of the structure and functioning of the United Nations system relevant to the CDCC. It also discussed the ECLAC system, in particular the relationship existing between the Port of Spain Subregional Office and the Commission's headquarters in Santiago, Chile.

The workshop was opened on Tuesday 14 July by Trinidad and Tobago's Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honourable Ralph Maraj, who gave the cue for the nature of the discussions concerning the United Nations restructuring process. He mentioned the compression of United Nations bodies dealing with social and economic development and coordination and pointed out "the restructuring is widely regarded as a backward move, even if the consequences of this action cannot yet be fully measured. This restructuring has, consequently, generated a fair measure of concern among developing countries for which the area of social and economic development is of critical importance. This apparent downgrading has been effected at a time when increasing energies and significantly greater resources are being devoted to the peace-keeping and security activities of the Security Council".

As the workshop moved towards its conclusion, the issue of the role of the CDCC or the "niche" it should fill arose. Commenting on the matter, Mr. Swinburne Lestrade, Secretary to the CDCC and Deputy Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, raised a number of questions. Noting, first of all, that the CDCC operates within a "wide spectrum" because of its manifold responsibilities, he asked: "Should it be a think-tank? Should it merely carry out social and economic projects? As an intergovernmental body, should it only concentrate on meeting the needs of governments?" Responding to some of his own questions, Mr. Lestrade noted that there was no shortage of regional institutions to serve the needs of the area. As a "think-tank", the CDCC could serve to influence the thrust of the development process in the region. He pointed to the need "to engage in strategic, long-range thinking", the purpose of which would be to propose alternative models for the region. In its support role, the CDCC should "uphold the integration process at various functional levels" and it should promote "cooperation in the wider Caribbean", this process would embrace non-Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries as well. Mr. Lestrade also reflected on how the work of the Committee could be done with its existing budget.

Indeed budgetary concerns did engage the attention of delegates attending the two-day workshop. They were informed, for instance, that the Subregional Office was still awaiting funds to complete its budget for the year 1992. In fact, no financial commitments could be made beyond the month of July. Moreover, the CDCC faces a possible reduction in its funding for the present biennium as compared to the previous biennium.. There was a feeling that the unavailability of funds could be linked to the restructuring process.

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