

Twelfth Meeting of the Monitoring Committee
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Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

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**REPORT OF THE TWELFTH MEETING OF THE
MONITORING COMMITTEE OF THE CDCC**

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PART ONE

Summary of recommendations and decisions

The twelfth Meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the CDCC put forward the following recommendations and decisions:

- The Secretariat agreed to submit a report on the impact of the work carried out during the biennium at the next meeting of the CDCC in 2006.
- Work on the ECLAC benchmarking report should be continued, since the situation in the Caribbean should be reflected. The Secretariat should look at what had been done in Santiago and develop its own benchmarking activity for the Caribbean. The Secretariat should codify information in the benchmarking study to represent point schemes for each Caribbean country. The information should be frequently circulated to encourage feedback.
- Further progress on developing an integrated, coordinated oversight mechanism for the implementation process following from the Mauritius International Meeting on the implementation of the SIDSPOA would be reported to the next CDCC meeting in 2006.
- The meeting agreed to present a draft resolution which would urge the Secretariat to take a proactive role in devising a mechanism to monitor the follow-up from the Mauritius International Meeting.
- The Permanent Representatives to the United Nations in New York needed to be kept abreast and informed of all developments in relation to the proposal for securing the international recognition of the Caribbean Sea as a special area in the context of sustainable development in order to ensure proper representation within the General Assembly.
- In the context of the Brussels Programme of Action on Least Developed Countries, the representative of Puerto Rico suggested that ECLAC should undertake a competitive study on conditionalities of international support for development.
- A letter should be sent by the Secretariat to the Embassy of Germany congratulating that Government on its recent admission as a full member of ECLAC and, furthermore, formal contacts should be established by the Director with a view to increasing collaboration between the CDCC and Germany.

The Group of Experts Meeting on the Caribbean Information Society put forward the following recommendations and decisions, which would be brought to the attention of the next session of the CDCC:

- The Secretariat should assist CDCC countries to ensure that national e-strategies for all CDCC countries were prepared by 2005, and encourage countries to develop partnerships in keeping with the requirements of the WSIS Plan of Action.
- ECLAC should commit to placing greater emphasis on ICT and knowledge management in its activities and develop its own strategies for the use of the ICT strategic plan.
- ECLAC should also develop partnerships with other agencies of the United Nations, such as the ITU, as well as with regional institutions such as CARICOM.
- ECLAC should support technical assistance requirements of governments with respect to ICT strategies in keeping with the WSIS action plan.
- ECLAC should coordinate activities with CARICOM and other agencies to facilitate an understanding in the region of the issues surrounding internet governance. The Secretariat should promote dialogue and regional cooperation on issues and experiences related to internet governance, and participate actively in deliberations in this area.
- ECLAC should use its expertise and experience in this area to construct databases and gather information for use by the CDCC countries.

The Group of Experts Meeting on Science and Technology Policy in the Caribbean put forward the following recommendations and decisions, which would be brought to the attention of the next session of the CDCC:

- The Meeting recommended that the CDCC re-establish a working relationship with the CCST.
- The CDCC Secretariat, in collaboration with the CCST, should identify the science, technology and innovation components of the Millennium Development Goals and link the key elements of both programmes to a work plan in science, technology and innovation for the subregion.
- It was further recommended that strategies be developed to raise public awareness of the critical role of science, technology and innovation in development.

PART TWO

ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

Place and date

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean convened the twelfth Meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) on 12 May 2005 in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

Attendance

The meeting was attended by representatives of the following CDCC member countries: Cuba, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. The participating associate members were Aruba, British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands. The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) also attended. The list of participants is annexed to this report.

Agenda item 1 - Welcome remarks

Mrs. Alicia Bárcena, Deputy Executive Secretary, welcomed participants on behalf of ECLAC and its Executive Secretary, Mr. Jose Luis Machinea. She expressed her satisfaction at attending this meeting and stated that the CDCC continued to be a relevant organ in the Caribbean since it provided the platform for the assertion of the Caribbean identity within the ECLAC system.

She stated that both the Subregional Headquarters in Port of Spain and ECLAC Headquarters were involved in the efforts that were made by CDCC member countries to enhance the relevance of the Committee over the past four or five years, which included updating its functions and rules of procedure to meet the demands of the new and increasingly liberalized and globalized environment. These efforts by the CDCC countries had borne fruit and the twelfth Meeting of the Monitoring Committee was significant, since, while celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of the organ, it represented the first session of the CDCC to convene since the adoption of the Revised Text of the Constituent Declaration and Functions and Rules of Procedure of the Committee at the thirtieth session of ECLAC, which had been held in Puerto Rico, in June – July 2004.

She noted that the meeting provided the opportunity to briefly revisit the inter-agency regional assessment of progress made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which had become actual benchmarks for the highest expectations of the international

community to build a better future for all mankind. The next phase would, therefore, be a period of action in pursuing the development agenda for the benefit of the peoples of the region.

She formally introduced and welcomed the new Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, Mr Neil Pierre. She expressed her confidence in his ability to lead the Office, referring specifically to his extensive experience in the United Nations system and the hope that he would be able to raise the profile of the Subregional Headquarters as a principal development organ in the Caribbean.

The Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean welcomed the delegates from member and associate member countries; United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Strategic Planning in the Office of the Secretary-General, Mr Robert Orr; and Ms Alicia Bárcena, Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC and other colleagues from ECLAC Headquarters in Santiago.

He thanked the Bureau of the CDCC for its guidance over the last few months and stressed that the twelfth Meeting of the Monitoring Committee should be seen as an additional step in making the CDCC more effective and responsive to the needs of its member governments. The rationale for the creation of the CDCC was that of building bridges between the various cultural/linguistic groups in the Caribbean and between them and Latin America. In addition, from its inception, the CDCC had provided a niche for those non-independent countries to interact on a basis of equality with neighbours, sharing common concerns and objectives, and seeking to arrive at joint solutions to the challenges of development. Finally, the Director made reference to the noble ideals of the United Nations directed at enabling Caribbean peoples to live in larger freedom.

The Chairman of the CDCC, Mr. Carlyle Corbin of the United States Virgin Islands, referred to the twentieth session of the CDCC held in St. Croix in April 2004 at which the Governor, Dr. Charles W. Turnbull, restated the importance of the Committee. On that occasion, he had described it as the most inclusive organ in the subregion with an especially diverse membership of independent and non-independent countries with some having constitutional links to Europe and others to the Americas.

The Chairman stated that since its creation in 1975, the CDCC had continued to evolve as a dynamic regional institution, while remaining uniquely linked to the United Nations family. Part of that evolution had been the creation of the Monitoring Committee, which was mandated to oversee the fulfilment of the resolutions approved at the CDCC ministerial sessions and to assess the implementation of the biennial work programme of the Secretariat. He pointed also to the role of the twelfth Meeting of the Monitoring Committee in reviewing the work and performance of ECLAC for the 2004-2005 biennium. Within this context, he extended a formal welcome to the new Director of the ECLAC subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean.

Finally, he recognized representatives of other associate member governments of the CDCC. He reminded the participants of the CDCC's importance in providing a niche for the associate members to participate in international forums and emphasized that continued support for the associate members in the international process was an important element in the regional integration process.

Agenda item 2 - Adoption of the agenda

The meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Welcome remarks
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Procedural matters and organization of work
4. Progress report on the implementation of the programme of work for the 2004-2005 biennium as at April 2005
5. Review of preparations for the implementation of the 2006-2007 programme of work as approved by the thirtieth Session of ECLAC
6. Five-year review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration:
 - i) Review of the Report of the Secretary-General
 - ii) Presentation of the status report on the MDGs in Latin America and the Caribbean
7. Follow-up of the outcomes of the Mauritius International Meeting
8. Report of the Group of Experts Meeting on the Caribbean Information Society
9. Report of the Group of Experts Meeting on Science and Technology Policy in the Caribbean
10. Follow-up to the Brussels Programme of Action on Least Developed Countries (LDCs)
11. Developments in relation to the proposal for securing the international recognition of the Caribbean Sea as a special area in the context of sustainable development
12. Date and venue of the twenty-first session of the CDCC
13. Other matters
 - Admission of the Federal Republic of Germany to ECLAC
 - Discussion of 1998 and 2004 ECLAC resolutions on the participation of AMCs in ECOSOC and in the General Assembly
14. Consideration and adoption of the draft report of the twelfth meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the CDCC
15. Closure of the meeting

The representative of Aruba, on behalf of the associate members of ECLAC/CDCC, requested that under Agenda item 13 – Any other matters - the meeting be informed of the outcomes of the resolutions to include participation of the Associate Member Countries (AMCs) in the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations and the General Assembly, which were adopted at the ECLAC sessions held in Aruba in 1998 and in Puerto Rico in 2004.

Agenda item 3 - Procedural matters and organization of work

The Chair informed the meeting that two members of the current Bureau of the CDCC, the Dominican Republic and St. Kitts and Nevis, were not present and would be replaced by Cuba and Montserrat. In addition, Anguilla, the Rapporteur, was also absent and would be replaced by St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The meeting adopted its hours of work and other arrangements of a procedural and organizational nature and the Chairman urged participants to keep the proceedings within the prescribed time frame.

Agenda item 4 - Progress report on the implementation of the programme of work for the 2004-2005 biennium as at April 2005

The Secretariat presented a progress report on the implementation of the programme of work for the 2004-2005 biennium as at April 2005.

With additional outputs and activities brought forward, the work programme for the 2004-2005 biennium encompassed 167 items. In relation to the available resources, this was an exceptionally high number, reflecting a fragmented work programme. As of April 2005, 94 outputs had been completed and 11 were in progress. With the convening of the Monitoring Committee Meeting, another dozen documents and three meetings would be added to that total. With that addition, the progress for the work programme was practically on schedule, except for "other substantive activities" which included databases and public information activities. Due to the freeze on recruitment of General Service staff, it was expected that a number of other substantive activities would be only partially achieved during this biennium.

The Secretariat then highlighted some of the most important achievements of the biennium. These included the Economic Survey of the Caribbean, which covered for the first time the non-independent countries; studies on the impact of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME); the provision of technical assistance in the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) negotiations process; expansion of the Caribbean Digital Library (CDL); support for the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process; the development of a new version of the Selected Statistical Indicators; preparations for the International Meeting to review the implementation of SIDS Programme of Action (SIDS POA); disaster assessments and training workshops; research on social vulnerability issues; migration; ageing; support for implementation of the Millennium Declaration and gender mainstreaming.

The Secretariat informed the meeting that it was implementing a system to measure the impact of the work programme. A report on the impact of the work carried out during the biennium would be presented at the next meeting of the CDCC in 2006.

In response to the query from the representative of the Netherlands Antilles, the meeting was advised that the use of impact indicators had been incorporated into the United Nations evaluation processes, which involved the application of a comprehensive methodology to measure the impact of work completed. It was also noted that information was continuously monitored over the two-year work programme period. To this end, the Secretariat was planning to solicit feedback on all current publications to evaluate and measure their usefulness.

Agenda item 5 - Review of preparations for the implementation of the 2006-2007 programme of work as approved by the thirtieth Session of ECLAC

The Secretariat presented proposals for the reorientation of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean in order to effectively respond to the mandate of Caribbean development. The Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean presented a brief overview of the changing context against which the Secretariat operated and which would guide it in the coming years. He observed that the Caribbean comprised small societies with weak institutional structures, uneven socio-economic performance, persistent poverty and inequality and challenges in production and trade competitiveness. He also informed of changes at management levels at both the Caribbean Subregional Headquarters and the ECLAC Headquarters that had influenced the need for a new approach.

The Director noted that Caribbean economies faced a changing development environment characterized by increased liberalization and market-opening policies. Those elements posed significant challenges to the development process of small economies, such as those in the Caribbean in their pursuit of sustainable development. In an effort to address these challenges, he saw the need for ECLAC to develop partnerships with other regional and international agencies such as the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), CARICOM, the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the European Union (EU) and other United Nations agencies. Caribbean countries could also enhance their development by expanding local capabilities through the harnessing of knowledge and the active and efficient use of information technology and new channels of communication.

He listed some of the main accomplishments of the Secretariat over the years which included the formation of the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST); the introduction of the CDL as part of the information management programme; the development of statistical databases; the adaptation of ECLAC's disaster assessment methodology to suit the specificities of Small Island Developing States (SIDS); and the work in gender, population and social policy.

The present development context required policy solutions with positive effects on the welfare of the Caribbean and its population. Evidence-based policy formulation and reporting requirements could provide a vehicle to efficiently guide economic policy choice in a changing environment.

It was observed that ECLAC had a strong history of contributing to development thinking and that the CDCC functioned on the basis of mandates from governments and with direct links to ECOSOC, the General Assembly and the United Nations Secretariat.

The approach of the Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean to this current development context should therefore place emphasis on increasing flexibility, teamwork, focus on a narrower range of thematic issues, fewer streamlined outputs, the identification of flagship products, the building of strategic alliances, and the more efficient use of resources.

This approach should materialize in the creation of more effective teams, the reorientation of existing units in order to deliver the CDCC work programme in a timely fashion, an increasing focus on the measurement of progress in the achievement of the MDG goals; a narrower focus on

science and technology policy analysis, and the addition of disaster risk reduction and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) knowledge management to the work programme.

The Secretariat identified flagship outputs such as a revised format for the Caribbean economic survey and a new biennial publication on Caribbean Development and the benchmarking of progress in ICT.

In response to the presentation, the Chairman emphasized the need for collaboration between the Secretariat and other institutions with a view to maximizing available resources. He informed the meeting that not all associate member countries were dependent territories and that some were indeed self-governing. He, therefore, requested the use of "non-independent countries" as a standard reference to this group.

The representative of Guyana expressed his appreciation for the assessment of the impact of recent floods in his country carried out by ECLAC. Congratulating the Director on his new visionary approach, he noted that after three decades, it was time for introspection to see how the Secretariat could position itself and he applauded the vision to create synergies in order to serve the region more effectively.

Specifically, he noted that the merging of the science and technology and sustainable development units might represent a step backwards in as much as it seemed to replace "sustainable development" with "environment". He suggested that the Secretariat might wish to follow the terms set out in Agenda 21, in particular section 2 on resource management, emphasizing that there ought to be a differentiation between "sustainable development" and "environment".

In reference to the Secretariat's proposal to develop flagship activities, he wondered whether this would result in narrowing its focus and reduce its ability to respond to requests for support from governments.

Referring to work programme subject area 12.5: Science and Technology Activities, he indicated that this was a timely intervention in light of the United Nations Decade on Water. He informed delegates that a Caribbean group on the global water partnership had been launched in June 2004. The CCST would be responsible for temporarily providing the Secretariat for the Caribbean component of the Global Water Partnership. He informed that the target group for the programme was the Wider Caribbean and suggested that relations between the CDCC and the Global Water Partnership – Caribbean (GWP-C) be strengthened.

The representative of Jamaica praised the Secretariat on its insightful presentation. He voiced concern on the creation of the Environment and Technology Unit and sought clarification on how the new Unit would differ from what existed presently. He expressed appreciation for the work carried out by ECLAC through its disaster impact methodology, pointing out, however, that the methodology should seek to improve its capacity to assess environmental impact. He also noted that the term 'hazard risk mitigation' might be preferable to "disaster risk reduction".

The representative of the Netherlands Antilles also thanked the Secretariat for its presentation of the new orientation and enquired whether formal procedures would be required to implement the changes in the approved work programme for the 2006-2007 biennium.

The representative of the CARICOM Secretariat welcomed the focus of the new vision and expressed appreciation for the support of ECLAC in several areas of work. She indicated that CARICOM would soon be appointing a new director of sustainable development, which was a cross-cutting area, but separate from that of the environment.

The Director thanked the delegates for their comments and encouragement. He noted that “sustainable development” was the all-encompassing theme in the Secretariat’s work and that the nomenclature of the new merged unit was by no means an indication of abandoning the sustainable development approach. It would entail closer collaboration between “sustainable development” and “science and technology” in order to optimize the use of human and financial resources. Referring to the discussion on flagships, he distinguished between “flagship issues” and “flagship products”. While there would be continued focus on thematic issues, flagship products would transcend specific biennial work programmes. In relation to the water resources programmes, he noted that ECLAC was in the process of redefining its relationship with the CCST.

In reference to the query on the use of the term "hazard risk reduction", the Director pointed out that this term would effectively broaden the scope of responsibility beyond the resources and competencies of the Secretariat. In terms of required formal procedures relating to the approved work programme, he noted that this would merely require the reformulation of some outputs in respect of which there was a degree of flexibility and concluded that no major changes would be brought about in the work programme. This was confirmed by a representative of ECLAC Headquarters.

Finally, the Secretariat emphasized that the ECLAC disaster assessment methodology was under constant revision and observed that environmental degradation often increased the impact of natural disasters. The present methodology had been revised to take into account sustainable livelihoods, while lessons had been learnt from the impact of each disaster, such as the need to put in place adequate systems for disaster prevention through improvements in the planning process.

Agenda item 6 - Five-year review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration

i) Review of the Report of the Secretary-General

Mr. Robert Orr, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Strategic Planning, in prefacing his presentation of the United Nations Secretary General’s report, "In Larger Freedom... Towards development, security and human rights for all", stated that this was an extraordinary year in the life of the United Nations. He advised that the Caribbean should ensure that over the next few months it was fully engaged in the process leading to the General Assembly September 2005 Summit, so that it could protect and advance its own interests.

He then presented an overview of the report examining its four central areas namely: freedom from want; freedom from fear; freedom to live in dignity; and strengthening the United Nations, and highlighted what he perceived as issues that might be of particular interest to the Caribbean.

With respect to the development agenda which was captured in the proposals centering on freedom from want, he advised the meeting that steady progress was being made in the negotiations but noted that this group of reform proposals was seen as a package in relation to all the reform proposals. The first principal component of the development agenda pertained to the pursuit of the MDGs, which he described as a device that had succeeded in mobilizing many governments to focus on development issues. He suggested that it was likely that the United Nations target of a contribution of 0.7% of the Gross National Product (GNP) for developed countries to Official Development Assistance (ODA) would be reached as part of this package. He further suggested that there was broad support to increase commitment to the MDGs, an area that was progressing speedily, and advised that governments needed to develop national strategies for achieving the goals as an essential requirement for taking advantage of resources that were likely to be committed.

On the issue of debt, he reminded the meeting that the Caribbean subregion had a significant number of highly indebted poor countries (HIPC) and informed that the Secretary-General had proposed that debt should be cancelled for these countries and reduced for highly indebted middle-income countries. The main challenge in the negotiations, he observed, was to realize agreement on debt reduction in time for the G7 Summit.

In regard to trade, he suggested that it was important that developing countries agree on both the content of the Doha round and on the timetable for its implementation.

Other areas of interest highlighted with regard to development were: increased funding for the Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS); early global warning systems for natural disasters and climate change. In this regard, the meeting was reminded that the Kyoto Protocol expired in 2012 and countries ought to begin work on new commitments for facing the challenges of climate change and global warming. He also highlighted a science and technology programme comprising commitment to research on health, agriculture, natural resource management, and climate change.

With respect to “freedom from fear”, he indicated that a Peace Building Commission was being recommended, and that Haiti could be the first country to benefit from such a body.

The other issues in regard to security, were terrorism, nuclear proliferation and small arms. It was suggested that a comprehensive Convention on Terrorism would allow for multilateral approaches to its management and elimination, but Mr. Orr noted that difficulties persisted with respect to the definition of “terrorism”. Other concerns related to nuclear proliferation which, if unchecked, could have devastating effects on the Caribbean, whose Governments had been too silent on this issue. In regard to small arms and light weapons, agreement had not yet been reached on measures for their control.

In regard to "Freedom to live in dignity", Mr. Orr suggested that the safeguarding of human rights had been one of the most significant achievements of the United Nations, however, the Commission on Human Rights had been degraded, through politicization and a new Human Rights Council had been proposed. The concept of “responsibility to protect” addressed situations in which genocide and war crimes were taking place. Mr. Orr stressed that although the Caribbean might be free from such situations, Africa had articulated a need for this level of protection. The Security Council should have responsibility to act to protect citizens as in the case of Rwanda.

A major issue, with respect to the reform of the United Nations, was the reform of the Security Council. It was noted that none of the countries in the region were vying for a seat on that body, however, the region had a stake in determining the allocation of permanent seats, a first vote on which may well take place by June 2005. The Secretary-General had suggested that a more representative Security Council would be desirable, one which looked more like 2005 and not like 1945. Other issues explored were reform of the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the Secretariat, to ensure increased levels of accountability and the introduction of measures regarding human resources and the budget. Mr. Orr concluded that the present 'oil-for-food' scandal had shaken confidence in the United Nations and that this implied a greater need for increased accountability, transparency and streamlining of functions and mandates.

In the discussion that followed the presentation, the representative of the Netherlands Antilles thanked the Assistant Secretary-General for the inspiring overview of the document and for his insight into the plans for reforming the United Nations system. He noted that Caribbean SIDS were caught in the middle of the illicit trafficking in drugs, and enquired whether, and how, these matters were addressed in the Secretary-General's report.

The Assistant Secretary-General suggested that Caribbean SIDS could call on all other countries to ratify the relevant treaties and support strengthening of the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC). He also suggested that Heads of State might declare the illicit trafficking in drugs an area of concern at the September Summit. He concluded that there were many issues in which small States were caught in the middle. The best place, he recommended, to deal with these issues was in the United Nations, where the special needs of SIDS were recognized.

The Chairman reminded the meeting that the Chairman of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) had made a presentation on the special needs of SIDS at the General Assembly, and in regard to the issue of security for small States, such aspects as economic and social security were important. The Chairman also indicated that, among several other groups, SIDS were making important headway in obtaining the recognition of the international community.

ii) Presentation of the status report on the MDGs in Latin America and the Caribbean

The status report on the MDGs in Latin America and the Caribbean was presented by the Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC. She noted that the report, which was prepared through collaboration among several United Nations agencies and which would shortly be launched, analyzed the region's status in terms of the MDGs and provided an appraisal of the progress made in achieving the Goals. The report identified priorities for development and offered policy recommendations for the attainment of the MDGs. The Deputy Executive Secretary explained that Latin America and the Caribbean had recorded some progress in the achievement of these Goals: the levels of extreme poverty and malnutrition had been reduced; most countries in the region had already attained high primary education enrolment rates; 20 countries had reduced their mortality rates; and progress had been made in providing access to drinking water and to sanitation services.

In her presentation, the Deputy Executive Secretary noted that there were a number of critical issues at the hemispheric level that posed important challenges to the achievement of the MDGs. Those included adverse structural patterns, distributive tensions, persistent inequality of

income and assets, the uneven distribution of benefits and opportunities of free trade, and environmental degradation. However, the progress recorded had been slow, incomplete and uneven. Some countries and regions, in particular the poorer countries and rural areas, had failed to make headway in the above-mentioned areas. In addition, for most countries of the region, universal coverage in education remained below targeted levels and gender inequity remained an important obstacle to the achievement of the MDGs. Finally, issues such as the patterns in intensity in the use of energy and environmental degradation demanded particular attention.

The analysis of the status report underscored the need to define goals that were more attuned to the region's needs and capabilities in education, health and environment, and the eradication of hunger. This initiative would benefit from the establishment of a global partnership for development. It would also profit from the implementation of a series of policy measures at the regional level with the aims of, inter-alia, improving growth, macroeconomic performance and environmental sustainability, reducing structural heterogeneity and achieving higher levels of social cohesion by greater investment in human capital and the creation of sound social policy institutions

The representative of Guyana raised several concerns harboured by Caribbean countries with respect to issues which were inimical to achieving the MDGs. He noted that the policies and decisions of developed countries and their actions in organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) often undermined the achievement of sustainable development goals by developing countries. Privatization and cost recovery, for instance, were emphasized in relation to all aspects of social development. The achievement of the goals, in his view, was dependent on the attainment of structural changes in international trade and economic relations which governments and the United Nations should advocate in September.

The representative of Guyana expressed the view that the abuse of good governance considerations as a conditionality for the receipt of development assistance further undermined the achievement of the MDGs and sustainable development and interfered with the sovereignty of independent States.

He also remarked that, while the realization of the MDGs was essential for developing countries to move away from the cycle of poverty, this would be impossible unless there were also fundamental structural changes in global relations. An enabling environment needed to be created for developing countries to achieve the MDGs, and organizations such as the United Nations needed to play an important role in creating such an environment.

The representative of Cuba noted the critical situation existing in the implementation of north-south cooperation and the necessity of strengthening south-south cooperation. He also pointed out that there was no mechanism for complementary action to such efforts in the Millennium Declaration. The region needed to improve existing levels of cooperation, taking into account the interests of the countries. In relation to the MDGs, the Cuban delegation had presented Cuba's first report as an expression of the efforts made by his country within the framework of its national social and economic development. Cuba had since circulated to delegations the agreement concluded by the Heads of State of Cuba and Venezuela on the implementation of the Bolivarian Alternative (ALBA) as an example for the present and the future. The representative of Cuba urged that Caribbean countries consider how south-south cooperation could be conducted in order to achieve the MDGs with the support of the organizations of the United Nations system. Finally, the

representative of Cuba congratulated the Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC for her presentation on this item.

Mr. Robert Orr addressed the issue of the abuse of governance considerations raised by the representative of Guyana, noting that the debate needed to go beyond the issue of governance and focus, instead, on sustainable partnerships as agreed in the Monterrey Consensus.

The representative of the British Virgin Islands raised the issue of the lack of data from the Caribbean in the report on the MDGs for the OECS and Barbados and the regional overview of the MDGs that was delivered by the Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC.

The Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC noted that lack of data was a difficulty in the Caribbean and that, frequently, secondary sources, such as World Bank reports and reports of other international agencies had to be used for the compilation and monitoring of the MDGs. She noted that Caribbean countries might be willing to provide data but that they needed to improve the coordination of the data collection for such reports. In this regard, she stated that the collaboration of Central Statistical Offices in data collection mechanisms would represent a significant step forward.

The Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean drew attention to ECLAC's role in data management and highlighted three particular problems areas that persisted in the Caribbean:

- Household surveys were not undertaken on a regular basis;
- Lack of comparability of data; and
- The lack of data disaggregation.

Agenda item 7 - Follow-up of the outcomes of the Mauritius International Meeting

The outcomes of the Mauritius International Meeting as contained in the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy were highlighted. The concept of "vulnerability" was seen as a major concern and hence there was need to develop and strengthen effective disaster reduction, early warning systems, emergency relief and rehabilitation and reconstruction capacities.

The presentation stressed the importance of building resilience in SIDS through technology development, institutional capacity building and human resource development and through trade. It also pointed to the need to address the health concerns of SIDS in relation to HIV/AIDS.

The issue of erosion of the "SIDS" concept was also raised. It was pointed out that there was a need to establish clear criteria for defining SIDS. This was important in relation to securing special treatment of SIDS. It would also help to clarify the ambiguity of whether SIDS should indeed constitute a special group and it was suggested that proposals for such treatment should be limited to a few critical areas.

The call was repeated for the compilation of a single index encompassing the economic, social and environmental aspects in response to the vulnerability issue.

It was noted that there was no Regional Coordinating Mechanism (RCM) to facilitate the implementation of the SIDS process. However, the Mauritius Strategy provided for regional institutions to play a key role in monitoring the implementation of the strategy.

The Chairman inquired as to the status of the Joint Coordinating Mechanism (JCM) that had been established at the first ECLAC Ministerial Meeting on the Implementation of the SIDS POA, Barbados, 1997. The Secretariat responded that the JCM had become inoperative and that in the present follow-up scenario the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) had indicated its intention to convene regional consultations on the subject, possibly in June 2005, with attempts to extract the most relevant aspects agreed on at the Mauritius International Meeting for presentation and discussion. Thereafter, a possible strategy for implementation would be devised.

The representative of Guyana commended the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for its support at the Mauritius International Meeting and noted that the Caribbean subregion could not confine itself to the issues brought to the forefront at the global level but that it also ought to be mindful of the peculiar problems of the subregion. He noted that SIDS should take a more proactive approach at the international level by presenting their own strategy rather than passively accepting mechanisms designed by other groupings. The proposal for the international recognition of the Caribbean Sea as a special area in the context of sustainable development should also feature prominently in global discussions.

The representative of the CARICOM Secretariat indicated that the CARICOM Secretary-General had been mandated to hold regional consultations on the further implementation of the SIDS Programme of Action, and that the Prime Minister of Belize was responsible for oversight of the SIDS agenda in the region. She observed that the situation regarding a coordination mechanism was still fluid but suggested that no one particular model or structure might suffice. The Secretary-General of CARICOM would continue to work with civil society and other Caribbean regional institutions with mandates of particular concern to SIDS. The monitoring of implementation by CARICOM should be extended to include non-CARICOM countries. She recalled that at the Inter-Secretariat Meeting convened by the ACS in April 2005 it was agreed that a small technical group would review proposals for coordinating implementation and report back to the heads of the respective secretariats. Finally, she noted that it would be very important to link the processes in New York with developments in the Caribbean and indicated that CARICOM and DESA would seek to ensure that multiple meetings were not convened to address the same themes. The suggestion of the convening of a DESA-sponsored meeting in June 2005 was considered unsuitable since there would be insufficient time for preparation within the Caribbean region.

The Director of the Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean stated that information on a meeting to be convened by DESA was conveyed very informally and firm dates had not been set. He confirmed that discussions had been taking place with the ACS, ECLAC and CARICOM. It was agreed at the last Inter-Secretariat meeting that the oversight of the implementation process following from the Mauritius International Meeting might involve more than one organization due to the multiplicity of issues to be addressed. Further progress on developing an integrated and coordinated oversight mechanism would be reported to the next CDCC meeting in 2006. He

observed that the CDCC already had a mandate to deal with non-CARICOM, as well as non-independent countries, and would continue its work in this regard with respect to the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy.

The representative of Cuba cautioned that the discussion should keep in mind that the CDCC coverage was wider than CARICOM membership, while the representative of Guyana suggested that the CARICOM Secretariat approach could provide a good basis for follow-up activities.

The Chairman informed the meeting that DESA had been having discussions with AOSIS in New York, and even now the post Mauritius resolutions were being reviewed. The results of these discussions would be sent to the G-77 and once agreement was reached, DESA would then convene such a meeting. Agreement had been reached on the need to present a draft resolution which would urge the United Nations Secretariat to take a proactive role in devising a mechanism to monitor the follow-up of the Mauritius International Meeting.

Agenda item 8 - Report of the Group of Experts Meeting on the Caribbean Information Society

Under this item, the Report of the Expert Group Meeting on the Caribbean Information Society was presented. This meeting, which convened on the eve of the Meeting of the Monitoring Committee, apprised CDCC member countries of the Secretariat's activities in the area of ICT for development; facilitated the exchange of information among countries and agencies in the region with respect to ICTs for development, in general, and the WSIS process, in particular; and received reports on progress made at the national level which showed how the region was positioned in relation to the WSIS Plan of Action.

The meeting witnessed the first public airing of a documentary, commissioned by ECLAC entitled "ICT in the Caribbean" which highlighted developments in and aired different perspectives on information and communications technology in the Caribbean. The meeting also discussed other activities which the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean had undertaken in response to a resolution passed at the twentieth session of the CDCC. These activities included: the hosting of the Caribbean Forum on the Information Society in Port of Spain in October 2004, attended by more than 70 persons from the region; the preparation of a project proposal aimed at strengthening Caribbean participation in the ECLAC-EU ALIS project, which had since been submitted to the European Commission and was being considered for funding; a survey of the capacity of statistical offices to generate ICT indicators; and the WSIS stocktaking report.

Country reports were presented by: the British Virgin Islands, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States Virgin Islands. Common themes that emerged in the discussion that followed included issues of change management, security for e-commerce transactions, and appropriate institutional arrangements.

A presentation on the e-LAC strategy followed. The presenter noted that e-LAC 2007 sought to: build on ongoing intraregional initiatives; harmonize national policies and projects; form

strategic alliances; and initiate joint action where feasible. The representative of the ITU used the WSIS Plan of Action as the point of reference for his remarks, noting that it was important to know what progress had been recorded by the region in implementing the WSIS Plan of Action. He also reiterated the importance of dealing with issues of security. The CARICOM Secretariat gave an overview of some regional initiatives, highlighting areas on which that organization was currently focused.

The following recommendations were presented:

1. Since ECLAC had an important role to play in providing objective technical advice to member countries, the Secretariat should assist CDCC countries to ensure that national e-strategies for all CDCC countries were prepared by 2005. It should also encourage countries to develop partnerships in keeping with the requirements of the WSIS Plan of Action.
2. Work on the ECLAC benchmarking report should be continued, since the situation in the Caribbean should be reflected. The Secretariat should examine what had been done in ECLAC, Santiago, and develop a benchmarking activity for the Caribbean. The Secretariat should codify information in the benchmarking study to represent point schemes for each Caribbean country. The resulting information should be frequently circulated to encourage feedback.
3. ECLAC should commit to placing greater emphasis on ICT and knowledge management in its activities and develop its own strategies for the use of an ICT strategic plan.
4. ECLAC should also develop partnerships with other agencies of the United Nations such as the ITU, as well as with regional institutions such as CARICOM
5. Support should be provided to meet the technical assistance requirements of governments with respect to ICT strategies in keeping with the WSIS action plan.
6. The Secretariat should coordinate activities with CARICOM and other agencies to facilitate an understanding in the region of the issues surrounding internet governance. The Secretariat should promote dialogue and regional cooperation on issues and experiences related to internet governance, and participate actively in deliberations in this area.
7. The Secretariat should use its expertise and experience to construct databases and gather information for use by the countries.

In the ensuing discussion, the CARICOM Secretariat sought clarification on the nature of the assistance that was contemplated, and whether such efforts included the collaboration of the CARICOM Secretariat. The ECLAC Secretariat reiterated its policy of fully cooperating with and sharing information with CARICOM and other agencies, while expressing the hope that assistance outlined in the recommendations would be funded when the Caribbean ALIS Project was approved.

Agenda item 9 - Report of the Group of Experts Meeting on Science and Technology Policy in the Caribbean

The Secretariat presented the report of the Expert Group meeting on Science and Technology. The Expert Group Meeting, which was held on the eve of the Monitoring Committee Meeting, was chaired by the Secretary of the CCST. The Secretariat introduced the session with a presentation on science and technology infrastructure and policy in the Caribbean. This was followed by four panel presentations and discussions, which produced recommendations on the way forward in science, technology and innovation. Recommendations addressed issues of human resource development; research and development; institutional collaboration and coordination; and public information.

New approaches to human resource management and education were envisioned. It was proposed that training in science, technology and innovation be reoriented at all levels of the education system, including the primary level, where learning by observation instead of the memorization of detailed theories should be encouraged. The meeting also emphasized the need to foster a supportive culture that would attract science, technology and innovation specialists from within as well as beyond the subregion, thereby creating a critical mass of educated persons that would encourage foreign direct investment. In these ways the Caribbean could more fully exploit the potential of ICT as a means of overcoming endemic development constraints and for the management and exploitation of the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) of Caribbean SIDS.

The meeting also called for the ongoing development of the science, technology and innovation infrastructure in agriculture and such specialized areas as biotechnology; and to exploit the subregion's SIDS biodiversity and the biological resources of the tropical rainforests.

Science, technology and innovation research and development should be directed towards exploiting countries' competitive advantage. In addition, research and development programmes should be demand driven, and collaboration between research and development institutions and the private sector encouraged. Collaboration at the subregional and regional levels should also be advanced through the establishment of institutional networks and the use of ICTs (such as teleconferencing to bridge physical distances among territories). Examples included the Caribbean Knowledge Learning Network (CKLN), which could support not only training but also commerce, trade and science and technology.

In advocating closer institutional collaboration, the Meeting recommended that the CDCC re-establish a working relationship with the CCST. The Committee should accept the CCST's Regional Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Framework as a base for subregional science, technology and innovation policy development. In addition, the CDCC Secretariat, in collaboration with the CCST, should identify the science, technology and innovation components of the MDGs, as had been done for the SIDS Programme of Action and link the key elements of both programmes to a work plan in science, technology and innovation for the subregion. In this regard, the CCST should be engaged to identify the key science, technology and innovation components of the MDGs and to collaborate with other Caribbean science, technology and innovation focal points in supporting implementation of these and related programmes.

It was further recommended that strategies be developed to raise public awareness of the critical role of science, technology and innovation in development.

The representative of Aruba stated that science and technology should be the vehicle for growth, development and dissemination of information. However, while the Caribbean was investing considerable resources in training it was losing human resources through the brain drain. It was, therefore, necessary to identify the causes underlying the loss of trained human resources, as well as to examine the costs and benefits of training.

The Secretariat pointed out that the recommendation emphasized the need to attract and retain trained human resources from the region as well as from outside the region.

The representative of Puerto Rico, commenting on the Secretariat Report on Science and Technology, stated that the report was acceptable in principle but that it should be expanded to include other countries in the CDCC. He also sought clarification on the draft resolution appended to the report of the Expert Group Meeting.

The Secretariat informed the Meeting that while the resolution had been drafted by the Expert Group Meeting, the Monitoring Committee of the CDCC could not adopt resolutions but was limited to the presentation of recommendations to the next ministerial meeting of the CDCC. The Secretariat further advised that the draft resolution should be deleted from the report since its contents would be captured in the final version of the Expert Group Meeting report and the resolution itself could be presented to the Ministers at the full CDCC meeting early in 2006.

Agenda item 10 - Follow-up to the Brussels Programme of Action (BPOA) on Least Developed Countries (LDCs)

A brief report prepared by the Secretariat on the status of implementation of the BPOA with respect to Haiti was circulated for discussion. Member States took note of the support provided by ECLAC and endorsed the report as an input into the process for the review of progress in the implementation of the BPOA which would take place in 2006.

ECLAC had contributed through the provision of technical assistance to the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries. Much of the technical cooperation activity was conducted in support of Haiti and was executed by the Subregional Headquarters of ECLAC in Mexico and Trinidad and Tobago, under the overall guidance of the Executive Secretary of ECLAC.

Since the adoption of the Brussels Declaration and the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, as a member State of the CDCC, Haiti was the recipient of technical assistance from the Subregional Headquarters of ECLAC for the Caribbean. Technical assistance focused on natural disasters (assessment and training courses) and gender, social policy formulation and macroeconomic policy.

The representative of Puerto Rico thanked the Secretariat for its informative presentation and expressed his concern about the conditionality of international support for Haiti. As an example he mentioned that in order for Haiti to receive international assistance, it was required to have a functioning judicial system in place. This type of conditionality was not imposed on other countries. He therefore suggested that ECLAC should undertake a comparative study on conditionalities of international support for development.

The representative of the ITU informed the meeting that his organization had a significant work programme in Haiti, although under the current conditions, some of the activities were stalled. Furthermore, ITU had decided to provide support to Haiti from its Caribbean Office instead of from its Geneva Headquarters as obtained before. This was being done at the request of Haiti which wished to strengthen its ties with the Caribbean Community.

The representative of the CARICOM Secretariat informed the meeting of the status of CARICOM/Haiti relations. She stated that CARICOM had established a task force on Haiti dealing with many of the issues that were also on the ECLAC work programme. She therefore suggested that the CDCC and CARICOM Secretariats work closely together to achieve synergy in their combined work programmes for Haiti and advised that contact should be made with the head of the CARICOM Task Force, Mr. Hugh Cholmondley, to discuss further collaboration.

Agenda item 11 - Developments in relation to the proposal for securing the international recognition of the Caribbean Sea as a special area in the context of sustainable development

The Secretariat presented document MONCOM 12/5(LC/CAR/L.37) entitled, “Recent developments in relation to the proposal for securing the international recognition of the Caribbean Sea as a special area in the context of sustainable development” which reviewed the progress of the proposal since the twentieth session of the CDCC which convened on 22-23 April 2004. Attention was focused, in this regard, on resolution 59/230 which was adopted by the General Assembly on 16 November 2004.

Providing the context for the evaluation of this resolution was the review undertaken in the document of all four resolutions that had so far been adopted by the General Assembly on this issue. These resolutions had served to entrench the regional approach to the management of the Caribbean Sea area. They also recognized the fragility of the Caribbean Sea ecosystem, as well as the need to incorporate social and economic concerns in the analyses and policy recommendations. Moreover, they called on the international community, including the multilateral financial agencies, to support the Caribbean subregional initiative.

From the technical perspective, the resolutions had identified a number of important international conventions and other instruments relevant to the Caribbean Sea proposal and, pinpointed a number of operational elements for incorporation into the proposed regime for the Caribbean Sea as “a special area in the context of sustainable development”.

Finally, attention was drawn to the ongoing efforts of the Secretariat to have the technical work on the proposal relaunched at the subregional level at an early date. The ongoing preparation by the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean of a Draft Position Paper and Work Programme as a major technical input into the process was highlighted in this regard. This report should convey a step-level progression towards the early commencement of the implementation of the proposal for the international recognition of the Caribbean Sea as a special area in the context of sustainable development.

During the ensuing discussion, the representative from Cuba enquired on the response of the ACS to ECLAC's position paper. Further clarification was sought on the activities envisaged by the ACS for moving forward with the Caribbean Sea proposal.

ECLAC informed the meeting that the ACS had a special mandate to deal with the political aspect of the proposal, with ECLAC undertaking the responsibility for the technical inputs. The Position Paper and Work Programme being prepared by ECLAC would be submitted to the ACS in this context. ECLAC had urged the reconvening of the Technical Advisory Group and it had been agreed to keep the issue on the agenda at the ACS Inter-Secretariat Meeting in order to avoid the resolution faltering at the level of the United Nations General Assembly Session in 2006.

The representative of the CARICOM Secretariat indicated that CARICOM had agreed that the ACS would be better placed to be oversee the political aspects of the advancement of the proposal due to its larger geographical coverage. To reinforce the process, CARICOM was committed to moving the issue back to its political agenda, acknowledging the loss of momentum that had occurred, and expressing its continuing commitment to ensuring the eventual approval of the Caribbean Sea proposal. The CARICOM representative emphasized the need for completion of the technical work, in order to complement the parallel political process feeding into the sixty-first session of the General Assembly and recognized ECLAC's contribution at the technical level. She noted the importance of broadening the base of expertise of the Technical Advisory in the various disciplines (economic, social and environmental).

The meeting was informed that the ACS had agreed to keep the resolution on its work agenda.

The representative of Guyana expressed concern at the apparent loss of momentum after the passage of a new resolution at the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly. There was a reaffirmation of the urgency to ensure that the technical work was completed before the convening of the sixty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly. Further, the ACS and ECLAC were urged to take note of other regional initiatives and mechanisms (such as the Integrating Watershed and Coastal Area Management (IWCAM) and climate change initiative), that were ongoing and which might yield valuable technical information and provide an overarching framework for the implementation of the Caribbean Sea resolution.

He recommended that Caribbean Permanent Representatives to the United Nations in New York be kept abreast and informed of all developments to ensure proper representation within the forum of the General Assembly.

Agenda item 12 - Date and venue of the twenty-first session of the CDCC

The meeting agreed that the Secretariat would consult with CDCC member States on the date and venue for convening the twenty-first session of the CDCC.

ECLAC informed the meeting that its next session would be held in March 2006 in Uruguay. Bearing this in mind, the twenty-first session of the CDCC would therefore need to be convened before the ECLAC Session, preferably in January/February 2006.

Agenda item 13 - Other matters

- Admission of the Federal Republic of Germany to ECLAC

The Secretariat presented, for the information of delegations, document MONCOM 12/6, entitled, "Admission of the Federal Republic of Germany to ECLAC". The admission of Germany, as a full member of ECLAC, came into effect at the twenty-third meeting of the Committee of the Whole of ECLAC in New York on 16 February 2005. Attention was drawn to the official Press Release attached to the document under reference, in which Germany was presented as "one of the most active European countries in terms of technical cooperation with ECLAC".

The representative of Puerto Rico recommended that a letter should be sent by the Secretariat to the Embassy of Germany congratulating that Government on this important development and advised furthermore that formal contacts should be established by the Director with a view to increasing collaboration between the CDCC and Germany.

- Discussion of 1998 and 2004 ECLAC resolutions on the participation of AMCs in ECOSOC and in the General Assembly

In response to the request of the representative of Aruba on the outcomes of the resolutions to include participation of the AMCs in ECOSOC and the General Assembly (adopted at the ECLAC sessions in Aruba in 1998 and Puerto Rico in 2004) it was indicated by the Chairman that the Working Group of the Non-Independent Caribbean Countries (NICCs) had reiterated the support of the member countries for the relevant ECLAC resolution 598(XXX): "Implementation of Participation of ECLAC Associate Member Countries in the follow-up to United Nations World Conferences and in the work of the Economic and Social Council."

The Working Group of the NICCs had convened a special meeting within the margins of the twelfth Meeting of the Monitoring Committee to discuss recent developments in the United Nations system affecting AMCs. A report of this meeting is attached as Annex 2.

Agenda item 14 - Consideration and adoption of the draft report of the twelfth meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the CDCC

The meeting agreed that the Secretariat would finalize a summary of the proceedings and submit the report to participants within two weeks for comments and endorsement before wider circulation to member countries of the CDCC.

Agenda item 15 -Closure of the meeting

In his closing remarks, the Chairman expressed satisfaction at the completion of the meeting's agenda in good time and at the very useful decisions that had been adopted. He thanked the delegations for their active participation which ensured the success of the meeting. He suggested that the twelfth Meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the CDCC would be the occasion of his

final participation in the activities of the Committee in which he had been very active over the years. He was grateful for all the support he had received. Particular sentiments of gratitude were expressed to staff members of the Subregional Headquarters of ECLAC for the Caribbean.

The Director of the Subregional Headquarters of ECLAC for the Caribbean also expressed satisfaction with the manner in which the meeting had progressed and with its outcomes. He recalled that this was the first meeting of the CDCC in which he had participated since his assumption of duty. In the context of a summary review of the major outcomes of the meeting, he thanked the delegations for their support and looked forward to the restructured CDCC playing a greater role in the subregion. The support of his colleagues from ECLAC Headquarters in Santiago was highlighted, as was the valuable contribution made by Mr Robert Orr, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Strategic Planning in the Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC, endorsing the meeting as a success and reiterating some of the sentiments expressed in her “Welcome Remarks”, drew attention to the continuing importance and utility of the CDCC as a mechanism for cooperation within ECLAC and for promoting the development of the countries of the Caribbean. Her support for the Committee was also reiterated. With a new Director having assumed office, it was expected that the CDCC would be a factor of increased importance in advancing the development aspirations of its member countries. The meeting was assured of the continuing interest of ECLAC Headquarters, especially the Executive Secretary, in developments in the Caribbean. Appreciation was also expressed for the participation of Mr Robert Orr, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Strategic Planning in the Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

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Annex 2**REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP OF
NON-INDEPENDENT CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES**

The meeting of the Working Group of Non-Independent Caribbean Countries was convened on 12 May 2005. The following associate member governments attended: Aruba, the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Puerto Rico, and the United States Virgin Islands.

The agenda of the meeting was as follows:

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Recent developments in the United Nations system affecting Associate Member Countries
3. General discussion
4. Closure of meeting.

The Working Group discussed the status of implementation of the relevant resolution adopted by ECLAC at its thirtieth Session in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in 2004 that “decided to establish mechanisms for the participation of associate members of the regional commissions in the work of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and its subsidiary bodies.”

The Working Group reviewed a Background Note on the genesis of the resolution, which had been originally adopted by ECLAC at its twenty-seventh Session in Aruba in 1998. At the request of ECLAC member States of ECOSOC, the Background Note had been provided to ECOSOC by the Chairman of the CDCC in 2004.

The Working Group expressed concern that the ECLAC resolution of the thirtieth Session had been deferred several times during the 2004 session of ECOSOC, and was most recently deferred in April 2005 for consideration at the substantive session of ECOSOC in 2005. The Working Group reiterated the importance of access for ECLAC associate member countries to the technical programmes and activities of ECOSOC and its relevant subsidiary bodies in the economic and social sphere.

The Working Group reiterated its support for the relevant ECLAC resolution on participation of associate members of the regional commissions in the work of ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies to be taken up at the 2005 substantive session of ECOSOC.

The Working Group requested ECLAC member governments, which supported the resolution by consensus at the thirtieth session of ECLAC, to maintain that support for the resolution when it is taken up by ECOSOC in its 2005 session.