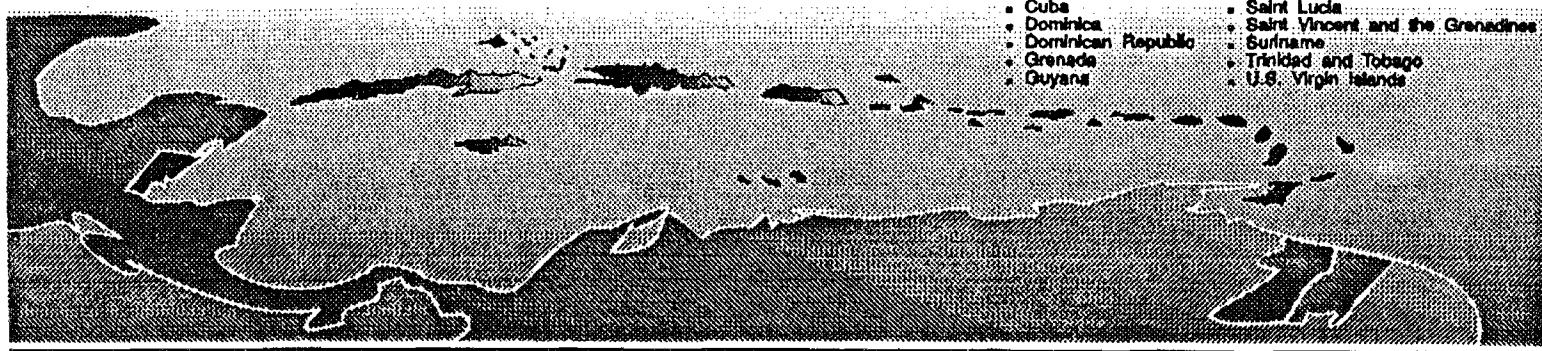




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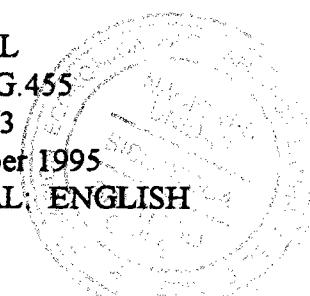
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- Haiti
- Jamaica
- Montserrat
- Netherlands Antilles
- Puerto Rico
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Suriname
- Trinidad and Tobago
- U.S. Virgin Islands

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CARIBBEAN COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

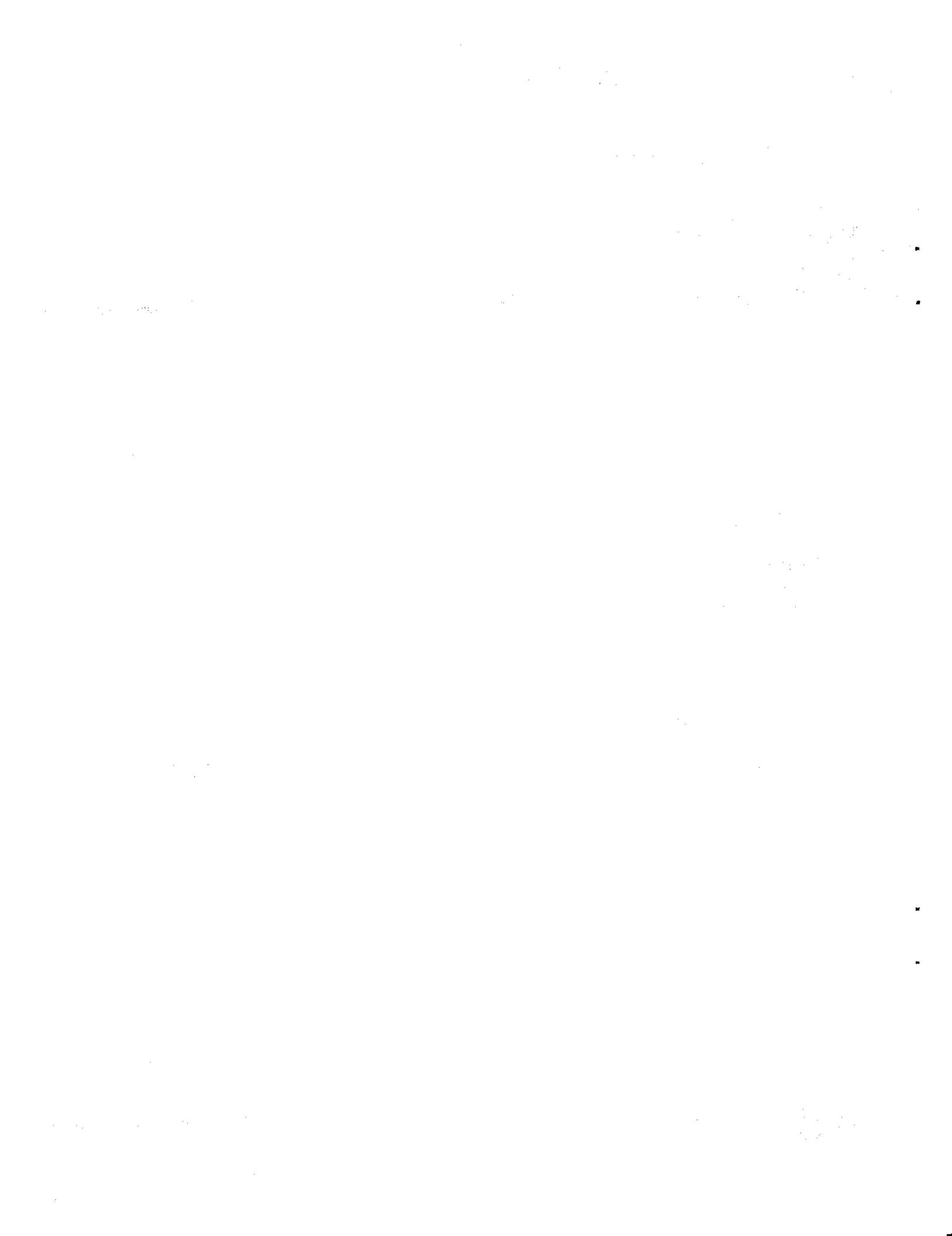
Thirteenth Plenary Session
Havana, Cuba
24-26 September 1995

REPORT OF THE THIRTEENTH PLENARY SESSION OF THE CARIBBEAN COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (CCST)

24-26 September 1995



UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean
CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION COMMITTEE



**REPORT OF THE THIRTEENTH PLENARY SESSION
OF THE
CARIBBEAN COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (CCST)**

Havana, Cuba, 24-26 September 1995



I. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

1. The thirteenth Plenary Session of the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST) was convened in Havana, Cuba, from 24 to 26 September 1995.

Opening session

2. The Chairman of the Council, Dr Dorothy Byfield of Jamaica, called the meeting to order and declared the meeting open.

3. The representative of Cuba, Dr Tirso Saenz, welcomed participants to Cuba and voiced his regret that some delegations were unable to attend the meeting because of damage caused by hurricanes in their countries. He looked forward to fruitful discussions over the next few days which would strengthen the work of the Council.

4. Mr Daniel Blanchard, Director of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, thanked Cuba for hosting the meeting and welcomed Barbados, soon to be the newest member of CCST, and observer organizations, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) to the meeting. He noted that the latest Human Development Index (HDI) was not helpful to the Caribbean as a region in need of development assistance and warned that internationally, it was not an easy time for funding. He stated, however, that within the context of available funds, ECLAC would continue, as best it

could, to support the work of the CCST. He looked forward to the deliberations of the meeting for guidance from the Council on how best ECLAC could assist the Council.

5. The meeting was addressed by Dr. Ismael Clark, First Vice-Minister for Science and Technology and the Environment, of Cuba. He stated that globally the view has been accepted that science and technology were decisive levers in the road to development. Accordingly, the strategic importance of science and technology had been affirmed in developing countries as a means to assist in reducing shortages and the economic, cultural and ethnic inferiority, which had brought suffering since their inception.

6. Dr. Clark added that measures, programmes and efforts of all types - had been proposed to eliminate the gap which separated the region from the industrialized countries. Nevertheless, the real problem for Third World countries was not so much in lessening, in quantitative terms, the gap which separated them from the industrialized countries, but in trying to build societies with different living and consumer styles. This would enable a more harmonious human development in accordance with their economic and social potential. It would also achieve true sustainable development which would make rational use of natural resources, protect the environment and guarantee a better quality of life for present and future generations. Thus, the problem facing Caribbean countries was really not in terms of bridging what separated them from the industrialized countries but rather in providing what they lacked in order to achieve their own economic and social goals.

7. Dr. Clark also mentioned that, at the same time, international cooperation was the fundamental link in undertaking scientific and technological development. Among Caribbean countries, the attempts at joint efforts to exploit their resources was vital. Their resources, if viewed separately, appeared small and inarticulate but through coordinated efforts would represent a powerful force.

8. According to Dr. Clark, international cooperation included the elaboration of national, scientific and technological policies based on a corresponding strategy of economic and social

development, in accordance with cultural characteristics and the traditions of each country. He went on to state that there was no better forum to discuss this subject than the CCST. The Caribbean sphere, he said, multiple in its unity, singular in its plurality provided the stimulus for policy-makers to advance their countries toward a better life.

9. It was necessary for national scientific and technological policy to be founded on the desire to maintain a strong link between goods and services and the scientific community. It should also establish systems and mechanisms at different levels, bearing in mind that national efforts in science and technology should result in practical applications in social practice. Special emphasis should be placed on all initiatives which contributed to the development of medium and small business, providing an adequate framework for them to relate efficiently with international organizations as part of wider cooperation programmes.

10. The representative of Saint Lucia offered a vote of thanks to the opening speakers and particularly to the host government, Cuba.

Attendance

11. Representatives from the following CCST members were present: Cuba, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago.

12. Due to the passage of Hurricanes Luis and Marilyn, delegates from the United States Virgin Islands, Dominica and Antigua and Barbuda could not attend.

13. Barbados, a member of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC), was also present. The UNDP, CCA and the IDRC attended as observers.

The list of participants is given at Annex I.

II. SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS

Consideration of the report of the sixteenth Executive Committee Meeting (Agenda item 1)

14. The secretariat presented the document entitled "Report of the sixteenth Executive Committee Meeting" which had previously been circulated to member countries. The Executive Committee had met on 20 and 21 October 1994 and the secretariat had subsequently submitted a summary of its decisions to all members.
15. For the benefit of new representatives, the secretariat outlined the structure of the Executive Committee which comprised Jamaica as Chairman, Cuba as Vice-Chairman and Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States Virgin Islands as members-at-large. It indicated that the Executive Committee traditionally met at inter-sessional periods of the Council to review the work programme of the Council and provide guidance to the secretariat on its operations and it also met immediately prior to plenary sessions.

Consideration of application for admission Agenda item 2

16. The representative of Barbados informed the meeting that his country had hoped to present to the meeting Barbados's letter of accession to the Council. This, however, had not been possible, but the letter would shortly be transmitted to the CCST secretariat by the appropriate government authority. He thanked the Council for welcoming his country into the CCST and looked forward to participating in the work of the Council.

17. The representative of Saint Lucia, endorsed by Jamaica, welcomed the delegate of Barbados. A welcome was also extended to the representative of Haiti, which for some time had not participated in the work of the Council.

18. The representative of Cuba, in welcoming both Barbados and Haiti to the meeting, expressed regret at the inability of the representatives of some member countries to be present because of damage caused to their countries by recent hurricanes. This sentiment was endorsed by the Council and in this regard, the secretariat was asked to communicate it to the affected countries.

Report of the secretariat on the implementation of the work programme
(Agenda item 3)

19. The secretariat presented the document entitled "The twelfth annual report of the CCST" (CCST/95/Rev.1; LC/CAR/G.448/Rev/1). It requested that the following documents be included when considering this agenda item: "Scheme of work for the implementation of the start-up of the project on the history of science and technology in the Caribbean", "Proposed new initiatives for the CCST 1996-1997 (CCST/WP/3)", "Draft proposal for activity of the CCST in the area of water resources management in the Caribbean" (TP;1NFP/1), "Report on Consultation on Caribbean Council for Science and Technology matters" (CCST/86/5); and the work programme of the CCST 1994-1998 (LC/CAR/G.399).

20. The secretariat noted that the two major accomplishments of the Council had been the convening of the High-level Workshop on Renewable Energy Technologies, held in Saint Lucia in December 1994 and the seminar on Training for Scientists and Technologists in Project Preparation and Writing held in Barbados in April 1995. In this regard, as follow-up to the workshop on Renewable Energy Technologies, it proposed to convene a meeting of the stakeholders in energy to develop a mechanism for which renewable energy and energy efficiency projects could be funded.

21. Regarding the distribution of the CCST newsletter, the secretariat requested the support of member countries in both contributing articles and in distributing the newsletter within their own countries, as had originally been intended.

22. The annual report also contained a proposal that member countries would assist the secretariat in resource mobilization and in implementing specific projects. The secretariat suggested that four member countries might accept responsibility for sections of the present work programme. These were: Cuba - History of Science and Technology; United States Virgin Islands - Science Education; Trinidad and Tobago - Science Popularization and Networking; Energy and Technology Extension Service - Saint Lucia.

Discussion of the report of the secretariat

(Agenda item 4)

23. The meeting agreed that follow-up activities proposed from the Caribbean High-level Workshop on Renewable Energy Technologies should be carried out and agreed to include this under the discussion on the work programme of the Council. These included a seminar on financing mechanisms for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects.

24. The meeting expressed the view that the training of scientists and technologists in project writing skills had been extremely valuable and that this should be an ongoing part of the Council's work programme. The secretariat was asked to explore the possibility of a longer term agreement with the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and other institutions for such programmes. Members expressed their appreciation to the UNDP Special Unit for Technical Development Among Developing Countries (TCDC) for the financial assistance which made it possible to hold the Workshop on Project Preparation and Management in the Science and Technology Sector.

25. It was agreed that the Council should seek to establish a formal cooperation agreement with CARICOM. The meeting, therefore, agreed to request all national Council representatives to ask their ministers to encourage collaboration between CARICOM and the Council.

26. The representative of Cuba requested that a copy of the draft agreement with The Latin American Commission of Science and Technology (COLCYT) be circulated to member countries and the secretariat agreed to do so.

27. In discussing mechanisms for assisting focal points to develop individual work programmes, the meeting discussed the possibility of an examination of science councils in the region in order to identify the problems and achievements of each since inception. It was felt that a historical perspective on the evolution of these councils would provide guidance to those countries without councils on how best to develop more efficient or faster mechanisms for developing science and technology and on how to avoid pitfalls. Accordingly, the meeting suggested that for the next session of the Council member countries should prepare a paper describing their countries' experiences with the organization of science and technology.

Consideration of proposals from the secretariat and members on
the work programme and structure of the Council
(Agenda item 5)

Work programme

28. The secretariat requested that the documents entitled: "Work programme for a five-year period (1994-1998)" and "Proposed new initiatives for the CCST" be considered under this agenda item.

29. Commenting on the Five-Year Work Programme, the secretariat informed the meeting that the project on the Establishment of a Technology Extension Service would be carried over into 1996-

1997. The UNDP was interested in possible funding for this through the Small Islands Developing Countries-Technical Assistance Programme (SIDS-TAP).

30. The secretariat indicated that it had prepared some activities for the programme on assisting CCST focal points in elaborating their own work programmes. It was felt that this would especially benefit small member countries which lacked institutions specifically responsible for science and technology. It was also suggested that bilateral and trilateral efforts for assisting member countries should be adopted, with the CCST secretariat providing coordination.

31. The Council indicated that the proposed meeting on water resources management was an important activity and should be undertaken.

32. The Council supported the concept of a joint meeting of ministries of science and technology, environment, agriculture, planning and tourism, and trade and industry and requested that the secretariat, when developing the background paper ensure that the meeting's objectives be focused. One such objective should be the need for integration between different sectors and for an integrated approach to problem solving. The secretariat indicated that the paper would be presented to the Executive Committee at its next meeting.

33. It was proposed that Saint Lucia should assume responsibility for the Council's work programme in Energy, following from the High Level Workshop on Renewable Energy Technologies held in Saint Lucia in December 1994. It was agreed that given Cuba's significant capacity in the field of energy, particularly renewable energy, that it would collaborate with Saint Lucia in developing the proposed follow-up activities in energy.

34. The secretariat presented their document entitled "Science and Technology Dimensions of the SIDS Programme of Action" which was intended to serve as a reference point in developing the future work programme of CCST. This also sought to bring to the attention of regional institutions

and agencies the science and technology components of their own work programmes and to serve as a guide to some member countries on technologies available.

New initiatives

35. The representative of Trinidad and Tobago introduced the proposed activity under "Science and technology policy and implementation" and suggested that a regional meeting should be convened to set priorities in science and technology. Concern was expressed by some delegations about the cost implications of this meeting and it was agreed that the secretariat would seek ways of reducing the cost of the meeting without affecting the quality of the methodology. Members were asked to submit comments on this to the secretariat by the end of October.

36. The meeting endorsed the proposal of the secretariat for a meeting on natural products and Habitat which was to include the application of raw materials, specifically clays, fibres and woods in the development of human settlements, specifically low-cost housing. Quality control was an important issue area, given the natural disaster hazards faced by the region. It asked the secretariat to take into account regional initiatives in the area and particularly work being done on building code requirements, and to prepare a paper for possible presentation at the Habitat meeting to be held in Nairobi in 1996.

37. Trinidad and Tobago presented a project document on Science Popularization which it had developed at the request of the sixteenth Executive Committee Meeting. It asked member countries to examine the document and indicate which activities they wished to take the lead in. Member countries agreed to forward their comments to Trinidad and Tobago within two weeks, prior to its submission for funding under Lome IV. The meeting was informed that member countries would need to be in constant contact with each other on this matter to ensure funding. The document was supported by all member countries.

38. Trinidad and Tobago also presented a draft version of a science magazine for children which it had prepared for its own country and suggested that member countries attempt to seek funding to produce similar material through the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

39. In discussions on the project for the history of science and technology, the meeting agreed that member countries should begin work on a questionnaire to identify the main personalities and institutions in their countries. At this stage it was agreed that the focus would be placed on agricultural activities prior to 1950.

40. It was also agreed that Cuba would send a set of guidelines on science and technology to member countries for determining those scientists which should be included in the history. Revised questionnaires should also be submitted for their consideration. Member countries would therefore establish national task forces to review the guidelines and select the appropriate personalities.

41. It was agreed that member countries would start work on this activity as soon as the guidelines and questionnaires were received.

42. The secretariat presented the document, entitled: "Approaches to implementation of the plan of action for science and technology for the Caribbean: Information aspects of technology transfer, adaptation and innovation" as an information paper. Following discussions, it was agreed that countries would send recommendations to the secretariat by the end of the year to enable preparation of a more detailed project based on analysis of these recommendations.

43. The meeting agreed that the activities under "National efforts" in CCST/WP/3 would be undertaken at the national level.

44. With respect to the other aspects of the Five Year Programme as contained in document LC/CAR/G.399 the Council indicated that these should be implemented within the time-frame outlined. Accordingly, the secretariat was asked to seek funding to implement this programme.

Structure of the Council

45. For the benefit of new representatives on the Council, the Secretary gave a synopsis of the background to the structure of the Council.

46. In the discussions which followed the member countries felt that the present operating structure of the secretariat did not allow for the best possible functioning of the Council. In this regard, they sought to find a solution whereby the posts currently allocated for science and technology at the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean could be transferred to the CCST in a more formalized manner and to give effect to the statutes, especially the part relating to the appointment of the Executive Secretary of the Council.

47. The Director of ECLAC informed the meeting that the programme budget for science and technology of ECLAC Port-of-Spain was devoted almost exclusively to the CCST. ECLAC currently provided financial support to CCST activities. Any changes regarding staffing and budgeting would need to be pursued through the General Assembly of the United Nations. At this time, the financial situation of the United Nations was constrained and it might be difficult to obtain the necessary approval for out posting of staff, as was being requested by the Council. A recommendation, nevertheless, could be presented through the CDCC to initiate the appropriate mechanism. If approval for the change was made, however, it could not be introduced until the 1998-1999 biennium.

48. Cuba wished it to be noted that while it was in agreement that a permanent secretariat for the CCST be established, any change in the current arrangements must be accompanied by an analysis of the consequences of such a change. This would determine whether the current problems facing the Council's functioning would be resolved by such changes.

49. The meeting agreed that the Council would present a proposal to the next session of the CDCC on the structure for the secretariat. Saint Lucia would prepare a draft proposal on the structure for the secretariat by end-October 1995. This draft proposal would be circulated, through the secretariat, to all member countries for their review. It would be accompanied by a background paper giving the history and rationale for the proposal. Following review and agreement by member countries on the text of the proposal, it would then be presented to the next session of the CDCC. Country representatives to the Council would undertake to brief their representatives to the CDCC on their support to the proposal.

Report on the finances of the Council
(Agenda item 6)

50. The secretariat apologized to the meeting for the absence of a financial statement for the Council in the Twelfth Annual Report, where it was recorded as being presented at Appendix 2. This was due to an oversight and would be transmitted by facsimile to members upon the Secretary's return to office. A verbal presentation on the state of the Council's finances and its expenditures was provided by the Secretary who indicated that the major portion of expenditure had been with respect to the High-level workshop on Renewable Energy Technologies, the seminar on Training of Scientists and Technologists in project writing; travel by the Secretary for technical assistance to member countries; and attendance at meetings on behalf of the Council. The Secretary concluded with a request to member countries to ensure payment of their countries' contribution to the Council.

Election of the Executive Committee of the Council
(Agenda item 7)

51. The secretariat informed the meeting that on the basis of informal negotiations between member countries, it was being proposed that Guyana be elected to the post of Chairman. Saint Lucia would assume the post of Vice-Chairman and the other four current members of the Executive Committee (Cuba, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States Virgin Islands) would remain as members-at-large on the Committee. This proposal was endorsed by Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and accepted unanimously by the meeting. In keeping with the decision taken at a previous Plenary Session, the Executive Committee would serve a three year term.

The Executive Committee would now comprise:

Chairman:	Guyana
Vice-Chairman:	Saint Lucia
Members-at-large:	Cuba, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and United States Virgin Islands

Any other business

52. The Council was informed that as part of the Cuba-CARICOM Joint Commission, the first meeting of the Working Group on Technological Cooperation would be held on 5 and 6 October 1995 at the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies in Jamaica. The objective of the meeting would be to assess bilateral actions undertaken on projects approved at the Second meeting of the Joint Commission in the following areas: biotechnology, agriculture, fisheries; sugar and derivatives industry, human resource development and science and technology. Information on the meeting was being circulated by the CARICOM Secretariat. The Council agreed that its member countries would inform their relevant organizations in order to achieve full representation at the meeting.

53. The representative of Jamaica informed the meeting that the Scientific Research Council of Jamaica would convene the Ninth Annual Conference on Science and Technology from 21 to 23 November 1995 at the Jamaica Conference Center and all member countries were invited to participate. This year's theme would be "Science and Technology for All" and persons wishing to submit papers to the conference were urged to do so as soon as possible.

54. The representative of Guyana thanked the Council, on behalf of the Government of Guyana, for the leadership role to which it had been appointed for the next three years. He stated that Guyana would undertake to move CCST forward so that it could make an impact on the region. He thanked Jamaica for the leadership which it had provided and the secretariat for its hard work, not only in carrying out the Council's work programme, but in organizing and conducting the plenary session. He also commended the host country, Cuba.

ANNEX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1. CCST Member Countries**CUBA**

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Joyce Farley
Secretary

