

Towards the Further Implementation of the
Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of
Small Island Developing States:
Adoption of an Updated Joint Work Programme
7 March 2001
Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

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**REPORT OF
MEETING ON ISSUES RELATED TO
THE FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF
SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES AND RIO +10**



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PART ONE

ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

Place and date of the meeting

A meeting to review issues related to the further implementation of the Small Island Developing States Programme of Action (SIDSPOA) in the Caribbean was held on 7 March 2001 at the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, secretariat of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee.

Attendance¹

The meeting was attended by participants from the following countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Bahamas, Belize, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago. Participating associate members in attendance were: Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, the Netherlands Antilles and Puerto Rico. The following agencies were also represented: The Association of Caribbean States (ACS), the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA), the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI), the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Institute of Marine Affairs (IMA), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST), the Organisation of American States (OAS), the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), the United Nations Environment Programme/Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNEP-ROLAC) and the University of the West Indies/Sustainable Economic Development Unit (UWI-SEDU).

Agenda item 1:

Introductory remarks

The Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean opened the meeting and welcomed participants. She noted that not only the environment, but also economic and social issues were challenges facing SIDS. This was also recognized by the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) 7 and the twenty-second Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly which noted the need for the integration of economic, environmental and social components of action to achieve sustainable development. Eradication of poverty, growing crime, drug trafficking and unfavourable terms of trade were some of the more insidious challenges facing Caribbean SIDS. Within this framework the objectives of the meeting were threefold:

- (a) To review the status to date of the implementation of the Joint Work Programme (JWP);
- (b) To formulate a plan to incorporate new and emerging issues in the JWP; and

¹ The list of participants is annexed to this report.

(c) To assess the status of implementation of the SIDS POA as an input into the preparatory process for Johannesburg 2002.

**Agenda item 2:
Adoption of the agenda**

The agenda for the meeting was as follows:

1. Introductory remarks
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Procedural matters and organization of work
4. Summary review of the status of implementation of the SIDS POA in the Caribbean since 1997
5. Review and update of the Joint Work Programme towards further implementation of the SIDS POA in the Caribbean
6. Update on ECLAC/CDCC projects:
 - 6.1 Development and maintenance of a database on ongoing and planned SIDS-related projects and programmes in the Caribbean;
 - 6.2 Development of a regional marine-based tourism strategy;
 - 6.3 Development of social statistical databases and a methodological approach for a Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) for Small Island Developing States;
 - 6.4 Support to the development of trade in the Caribbean;
 - 6.5 Support to the development of a human development agenda - Belize;
 - 6.6 Strengthening of the Civil Registry System in Haiti;
 - 6.7 Family law and domestic violence in the Eastern Caribbean: Legislative Reform Project.
7. Closure.

**Agenda item 3:
Procedural matters and organization of work**

The participant from Saint Lucia was appointed Chairman.

The chair welcomed the participants to the meeting.

**Agenda item 4:
Summary review of the status of implementation of the SIDS POA in
the Caribbean since 1997**

The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat presented a review of the status of the implementation of the SIDS POA in the Caribbean since 1997. The areas of priority concern as identified by countries were:

- (a) Coastal and marine resources;

- (b) Climate change;
- (c) Natural and environmental disasters;
- (d) Tourism;
- (e) Waste management;
- (f) National institutions and administrative capacity;

The secretariat noted that the positive aspects of the implementation of the POA included an enhanced understanding of sustainable development issues, an improved identification of environmental and social concerns and an appreciation of the importance of institutional strengthening. Another important achievement was the early identification of new issues that impinged on the sustainable development of Caribbean SIDS, which were adopted by the CSD and reflected in the decisions of the United Nations General Assembly. Some of the constraints identified included the limited financial resources and institutional constraints that adversely affected the implementation of programmes, the retreat from the sustainable development commitment and ideals agreed to in Rio de Janeiro, with the result that many critically needed projects lay beyond the resources of Caribbean SIDS. On the institutional front, there persisted a need to integrate the SIDS POA more fully into national planning and decision making and to provide adequately funded mechanisms for regional coordination.

The challenges for Caribbean SIDS for further implementation of the SIDS POA were indicated to include:

- (a) The adoption of a revised Joint Work Programme to include the new elements;
- (b) The creation of appropriate structures at both national and regional levels;
- (c) Seizure of the opportunity presented by Johannesburg 2002; and
- (d) Mobilization of intraregional resources towards coping with financial and other constraints.

Participants acknowledged that a number of activities had been undertaken towards the further implementation of the SIDS POA, including the incorporation of the socio-economic issues that had been excluded. It was also recognized that at the national level the transformation of organizational behaviour also presented a major challenge. Further, progress in the implementation of the SIDS POA was often measured by individual projects rather than integrated programmes (in which projects find their proper place). The issue of "vulnerability" was also proposed as a platform on which the negotiation of special terms for Caribbean SIDS should be predicated.

The meeting emphasised that consensus-building within the Latin American and Caribbean region and the strengthening of relations with SIDS in other parts of the world were important modalities for galvanizing international opinion in favour of SIDS.

Agenda item 5:

Review and update of the Joint Work Programme towards the further implementation of the SIDS POA in the Caribbean

The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat introduced document MONCOM 10/WP. 13 "Adoption of an Updated Joint Work Programme towards the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island States." The secretariat drew the

attention of the meeting to Annex 1 “Status of Implementation of the 1997 Joint Work Programme JWP” and Annex 2 “Joint Work Programme of Caribbean SIDS 2001.”

The meeting agreed that countries and agencies would submit relevant updates of the activities identified in Annex 1 and that the secretariat would prepare a revised version of that annex.

The meeting also agreed that the secretariat would prepare an updated progress report on the implementation of the SIDS POA on a chapter by chapter basis to reflect the submitted information.

The meeting then reviewed the respective issues set out in Annex 2. Several countries and agencies agreed to submit further supporting documentation to the secretariat to facilitate the process.

The meeting observed that different ministerial meetings might give similar mandates to a number of regional institutions. That resulted in occasional conflicts when “lead agencies” were not aware of the role of other institutions, which had been issued the same mandates. In some instances, that situation could result in duplication of effort.

Participants recommended that the focus on disasters should not be limited to natural disasters, but should be widened to include man-made disasters, such as oil and other chemical pollution of the Caribbean Sea.

On the question of **energy**, the Chairman informed the meeting of:

- (a) The cooperation agreement signed between CARICOM and the United States Government on the development of alternative renewable energy resources; and
- (b) Initiatives undertaken by Saint Lucia regarding the formulation of appropriate energy policies and legislation.

On **fresh water management**, the representative of CEHI informed the meeting of initiatives undertaken in the region. She said that OAS funding was assisting governments to review legislation on water management in the Caribbean as well as develop modes of information exchange on best practices of integrated watersheds and coastal management. She also pointed out that two studies had been conducted in 1999 with funding from the United States Government. One examined water usage in the hotel sector in the Caribbean and the use of appropriate technology with a view to optimizing the use of water in the sector. The other examined water quality improvement in the Caribbean subregion. The representative from CEHI also reported that her organization’s water-quality database was to be linked to the database at the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC). The representative reported on the CEHI study on water use. She made the following recommendations:

- (a) Hotels should purchase appropriate technology for water use;
- (b) CEHI should coordinate water studies in Caribbean;
- (c) Governments should consider how to make laboratory results available to the public.

On **globalization**, concerns were expressed about the narrow focus of the SIDS POA on environmental sustainability. The Chair spoke to the need to incorporate economic and social components of sustainable development. "Globalization" was therefore adopted as a new issue in the JWP following its formal adoption by the twenty-second Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly. On this subject, the representative from OECS reported that the agency had been training regional negotiators to enable them to participate actively in various regional and international forums.

The representative from the ACS also noted that a major task of the organization had been the development of negotiating skills for policy makers and private sector agents for participating in regional, hemispheric and international forums.

The representative from Natural Resource Management Unit (NRMU) noted that the agency had been asked by countries to provide assistance in reviewing Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), drafting legislation and helping countries to participate effectively in meetings. The representative from IMO observed that countries had generally enacted primary legislation but that no secondary legislation had been adopted to give effect to treaties.

The representative from UNDCP noted that crime had become entrenched as a transnational phenomenon. The agency was collaborating with CARICOM in reviewing narcotics legislation and towards the development of a Caribbean maritime treaty. It was also collaborating with the OECS in the preparation of a Mutual Legal Assistance Handbook. It was, in addition, assisting member States to ratify treaties and establish legislation in order to deal with the downside of globalization.

The representative from CARICOM reported that the Secretariat was undertaking a project in collaboration with the United Nations Statistical Division to develop the capacity of member States to use environmental statistics to implement the SIDS programme. Review of the data showed that the task facing countries was onerous on account of the lack of human resources and the paucity of social and environmental statistics in the region. She noted the difficulty in measuring progress in implementing SIDS programmes derived in large part from the paucity of relevant data.

The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat informed the meeting of the databases that ECLAC was in the process of constructing, in particular the social statistical database and development of a social vulnerability index. It informed the meeting of a number of initiatives aimed at preparing countries to meet the challenges of globalization, such as the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) training workshop that addressed globalization, competitiveness and standards. ECLAC had also undertaken a number of studies on: economic diversification aimed at minimising the impact of external shocks on regional economies; and on the economic, social and ecological vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States. The secretariat had also been requested to be part of a tripartite group providing assistance to the FTAA Consultative Group on Smaller Economies.

The representative from ILO informed that the agency had developed an online policy guide to assist countries in the area of labour legislation. The agency had also been assisting the ministries of labour regarding the integration of labour in the region as well as in dealing with the implementation and application of ILO labour standards and the fundamental rights of workers. The Chairperson asked whether the secretariat was looking at the relationship between standards and trade. The response from the secretariat was in the affirmative.

The ILO representative informed the meeting that the ILO was working on a Regional Strategic Plan, coordinated by the Caribbean Forum (CARIFORUM) to address the issue of Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS). Furthermore, the delegate indicated that with funding from the United States Government, the ILO was working on a project dealing with the issue of HIV/AIDS at work. On the same issue, the UNDCP delegate indicated that his organization had produced a Drug Abuse Survey in collaboration with CAREC. UNDCP also produced a crime survey.

On the question of **health**, the representative from Barbados said that that country had been host to a regional meeting on HIV/AIDS in September 2000. The Government had begun collaboration in February 2001 with the Pan America Health Organization (PAHO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) on a National Draft Action Program to deal with the issue of HIV/AIDS, which was being treated as an economic issue because of the implications for the workforce. The Government was also working with PAHO on a Plan of Action for the upcoming Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on HIV/AIDS. The possibility of acquiring more affordable drugs to deal with HIV/AIDS was the focus of discussions between the Government and the pharmaceutical industry.

On the issue of **education**, the representative from UNEP reported that his organization had produced the Caribbean Environmental Outlook. The agency was involved in a joint project with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to help the region prepare a website. It was also meeting with judges in the region to assist them in dealing with environmental law. Antigua and Barbuda was the first country to be targeted for assistance.

The representative from ECCB recommended the development of practical indicators of sustainable development in order to educate the public about sustainable development.

On the issue of **institutional strengthening**, the representative from the OECS indicated that the organization was working on the issue of land use and the sustainability of various crops.

On the issue of **labour and employment**, the representative from ILO informed the meeting that the ILO was undertaking a study on increasing enterprise competitiveness and work standards. The agency was also working on the preparation of Competency Based Standards to help training institutions in the subregion. The meeting noted that a tourism conference was being held in Tobago (14-16 March 2001) and that it would focus on the employment aspect of tourism, which was an area of interest for ILO.

On the issue of **poverty**, the representative from Saint Lucia reported that the Government, in collaboration with the World Bank, was undertaking a pilot project on poverty alleviation and social equity. The exercise was being monitored with a view to its replication throughout the region.

The secretariat reported on resource mobilization, pointing out the difficulty in convening meetings on donor coordination to effectively utilize resources. This was because donors did not wish to commit extra resources. The secretariat recommended that resources at agencies' disposal should be marshalled more carefully. Appropriate modalities should be put in place to do this, recognizing the fundamental constraints.

The secretariat observed "vulnerability" to be at the core of the plan of action of SIDS and constituted the justification for the POA.

The discussion moved towards three outstanding areas: youth; drugs and crime; and transportation and communication.

The representative from UNDCP noted that drug trafficking and crime were serious issues in the Caribbean that had profound impact on society and governance. He recommended that these issues be incorporated into the SIDS POA. He also observed that it was important to deal with youth at risk and the idle youth in the subregion, who had no employment or after-school activities.

The representative from UNDP informed the meeting that the upcoming Human Development Report for Trinidad and Tobago addressed the issue of young males.

The representative from Belize observed that more adult males were being marginalized in the region. There was need to examine the situation of men, especially in the area of education that was critical for addressing the question of poverty.

The representative from ITU pointed to the reform of telecommunications presently being considered in the region. He stated that emphasis should be placed on the regulatory aspect as well as on competition in the subregion. The agency was seeking to build capacity in the OECS countries through the internet. It was also focusing on e-commerce and the infrastructure for this through the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The agency was also examining the possibility of introducing telemedicine in the OECS. It was also concerned with the usage and monitoring of radio frequency in the subregion as well as with the provision of broadcasting information.

The representative from Belize noted that utilities, such as electricity and water, were being privatised. He pointed to the need for regulation of rates charged by these utilities. He was of the opinion that telecommunication rates were alarmingly high in a situation in which telecommunications services were essential to national development.

In order to follow up the several presentations made by delegations, through their consolidation into an appropriate tabular format for reporting purposes, member States and regional agencies agreed to provide the secretariat with such additional information that they might be able to provide in relation to the status of implementation of the several elements of the 1997 Joint Work Programme. Member States and agencies also agreed to provide information on any activities that they might have undertaken in relation to the new elements that were being incorporated into the updated version of the Joint Work Programme. Proposals for the insertion of additional programme elements relating to the "new issues" were also invited. In this connection, the secretariat undertook to provide member States and agencies with a format for the transmission of the submissions requested. The secretariat urged prompt responses to these requests and noted that the preparation of an updated Joint Work Programme, in so far as it pointed the way towards the further evolution of the SIDS Programme of Action, would constitute a significant input into "the Johannesburg 2002 process". That, as indicated, would be in addition to the initial functional status of the document within the region, as an agenda for action to be pursued by Caribbean SIDS.

**Agenda item 6:
Update on ECLAC/CDCC projects**

6.1. Development and maintenance of a database on ongoing and planned SIDS-related projects and programmes in the Caribbean

The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat presented a progress report on the status of the SIDS database project that was approved in 1996 and funded by UNDP. The reference document was MONCOM 10/WP.6. The number of the projects in the database had increased from 350 in October 1996 to 1426 in December 2000. Projects are listed by country and funding organization. The secretariat stated that the database had developed into a searchable database thus fulfilling one of the objectives of the project.

The representative from Cuba recommended that the project be extended to other small countries in the Caribbean and Central American regions.

6.2 Development of a regional marine-based tourism (MBT) strategy

The secretariat presented an overview of the marine-based tourism project, which would be implemented from March 2001 to September 2002. The reference document was MONCOM 10/WP.7. Marine-based tourism had been growing steadily in the Eastern Caribbean. However, little progress had been made on the environmental sustainability of that type of tourism. That was due to a lack of understanding of the sector especially in terms of economic and environmental impacts. The MBT project was characterized by three major integrated components:

- (a) National case studies on the development of MBT and its economic and environmental impacts;
- (b) Subregional aspects through integration of national components; and
- (c) Proposed draft subregional strategy and action plan and the derivation of "best practices" from national and regional components.

The representative from IMO noted that the strategy envisaged diving, fishing and other activities using small vessels for which there were no standards in the subregion to date. He recommended that:

- (a) Safety standards be employed in respect of small vessels;
- (b) A code of conduct to prevent pollution by small vessels be applied throughout the subregion;
- (c) A diplomatic conference be convened for the purpose of endorsing and facilitating adoption of such a code.

6.2.1. Development of social statistical databases and a methodological approach for a Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) for Small Island Developing States.

The secretariat presented a brief overview of the social statistical database project, which was expected to run for a period of two years from March 2001. The project aimed to:

(a) Develop a fully searchable social database within the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean;

(b) Build capacity at the national and regional levels through linkages to databases and training social planners to use social statistics to monitor and evaluate social vulnerability among small Caribbean economies; and

(c) Adopt the most appropriate methodology for constructing a social vulnerability index within the SIDS framework.

The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines sought clarification of the relationship of the ECLAC project to the one being undertaken by UNDP and the OECS. She wished to know whether the project was being done only at the macro level; what was the envisaged level of disaggregation that the database would address and whether there would be continuity of activity at the end of the life of the project.

The secretariat pointed to four projects being executed on the same broad subject in the subregion. The OECS project was targeted at strengthening national statistical offices whereas the ECLAC project targeted policy makers. The CARICOM project also targeted the strengthening of statistical offices in the subregion through the provision of computers. The ECLAC project was concerned with housing data in a central and safe place. Data would be collected at the micro level from surveys, etc. The collection of data would facilitate the construction of social variables. The secretariat expressed the hope that funding would be extended on the strength of a well-executed project.

The Chairperson recommended that consideration be given to the possibility of replicating the methodology used for constructing the social vulnerability index within the area of environment in order to develop an environmental index to guide the policy process.

6.2.2. Support to the development of trade in the Caribbean

The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat presented an overview of the project and referred to document MONCOM 10/WP.9. The project, which would run for 18 months in the first instance, was intended to increase the comparability of trade data in the subregion. It would inform the business community and provide a wider information base to trade negotiators. The project would create a fully searchable database and output data at various levels of aggregation. Questionnaires had been distributed to ascertain the level of human resources and equipment employed in gathering data. The project envisaged the production of three studies. A training component of the project would build skills at the national level. The project would correct deficiencies in skill through the provision of training and equipment. The secretariat expressed the hope that the results of the project would make the case for the continuation of the project.

6.2.3 Support to the development of a human development agenda – Belize

The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat presented an overview and update on the project which commenced in January 2000. The reference document was MONCOM 10/WP.10. The objective of the project was to produce an agenda for human development with a 20-year horizon. The people of Belize, through national consultations, would develop the ideas and goals. Indicators would be used to measure the level of development. A pilot project that other governments in the subregion might wish to replicate had been launched. The project should be completed in a year's time.

6.2.4. Strengthening of the Civil Registry System in Haiti.

The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat presented an overview of the project that resulted from a study undertaken by UNDP in 1999. The reference document was MONCOM 10/WP.11. The objective of the project was to address the lack of civil status of a large proportion of the population in Haiti and to strengthen democratic institutions in the country. The project would be implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice in Haiti. Strengthening would be done through a consultative process.

6.2.5. Family law and domestic violence in the Eastern Caribbean: Legislative Reform Project

The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat presented an overview of the project. The reference document was MONCOM 10/WP.12. The objectives were:

(a) To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the judicial system in the OECS ;
and

(b) To implement gender mainstreaming in legislation in order to eradicate gender-based inequality. Technical assistance was to be provided by coordinating the legal research and undertaking evaluation of the implementation of domestic violence legislation.

Agenda item 7: Closure

The Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean thanked participants for their attendance and contributions to a successful meeting. She reiterated that it was not envisaged that the meeting would have adopted definitive conclusions on the many important issues raised in the course of the deliberations. In that regard, she expressed the intention to maintain contact with the several agencies represented, with a view to enhancing collaboration as they delivered their respective work programmes across the Caribbean subregion.

PART TWO

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Agenda item 4:

Summary review of the status of implementation of the SIDS POA in the Caribbean since 1997

Participants recommended that the socio-economic issues identified as relevant to the SIDS should be placed on the calendar of activities.

The meeting recommended consensus building within the Latin American and Caribbean region as a means of strengthening relations with SIDS in other parts of the world as well as a means of attracting support from G77 countries and China.

Agenda item 5:

Review and update of the Joint Work Programme towards the further implementation of the SIDS POA in the Caribbean

Participants recommended that the focus on disasters should not be limited to natural disasters, but should be widened to include man-made disasters, such as oil and other chemical pollution of the Caribbean Sea.

Agenda item 6:

Update on ECLAC/CDCC projects

6.1 Development and maintenance of a database on ongoing and Planned SIDS-related projects and programmes in the Caribbean

The representative from Cuba recommended that the project should be extended to other small countries in the Caribbean and Central American regions.

6.2.1 Development of social statistical databases and a methodological approach for a Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) for Small Island Developing States

The Chairperson recommended that consideration be given to the possibility of replicating the methodology used for constructing the social vulnerability index within the area of environment in order to develop an environmental index to guide the policy process.

Annex I**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS****A. Member States****ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA**Representative

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International Telecommunications Union (ITU)Representative

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D. Other intergovernmental organizations

Association of Caribbean States (ACS)

Representative

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Delegation member

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Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD)

Representative

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Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM)

Representative

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Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA)

Representative

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Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI)

Representative

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Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB)

Representative

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Institute of Marine Affairs (IMA)

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C. ECLAC system

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Mr. Daniel Blanchard, Secretary of the Commission and Head of CELADE

Ms. Miriam Krawczyk, Chief, Department of Programme Planning and Operations

Subregional Headquarters, Port-of-Spain

Ms. Len Ishmael, Director

Mr. Erik Blommestein, Economic Affairs Officer

Mr. Lancelot Busby, Economic Affairs Officer

Ms. Roberta Clarke, Social Affairs Officer

Ms. Sonia Cuares, Social Affairs Officer

Mr. Radcliffe Dookie, Associate Programme Officer

Mr. Arthur Gray, Regional Economic Adviser

Mr. Michael Hendrickson, Economic Affairs Officer

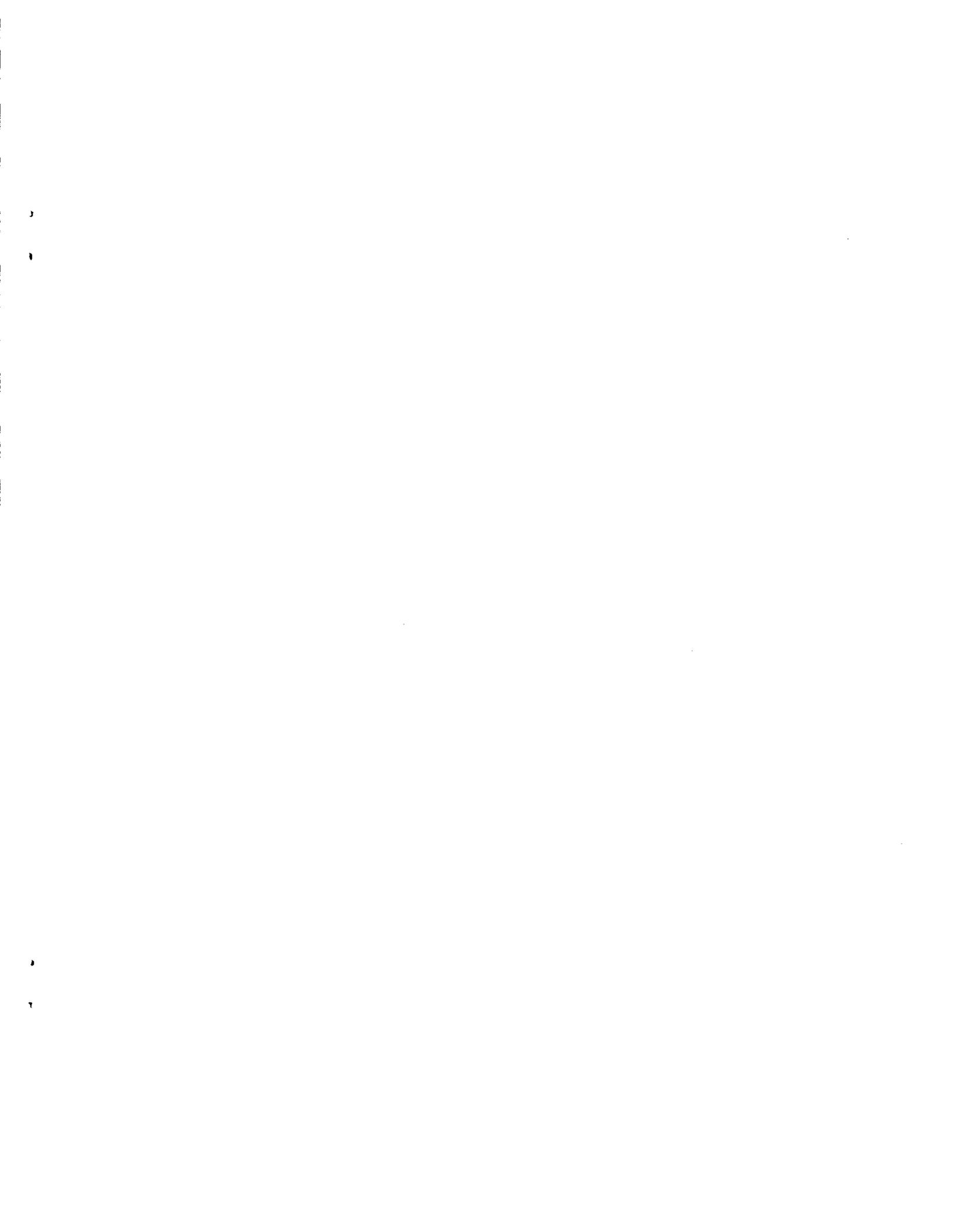
Ms. Sandra John, Chief, Caribbean Documentation Centre

Mr. Kavazeua Katjomuise, Associate Economic Affairs Officer

Ms. Asha Kambon, Social Affairs Officer

Ms. Helen McBain, Economic Affairs Officer

Mr. Noel Watson, Economic Affairs Officer



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