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ACTION CONSEQUENT ON CDCC RESOLUTION 11(VI)
"INCREASED ECLA SUPPORT TO EASTERN CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES"

ECLA/CDCC SUPPORT ACTIVITIES TO OECS

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OVERALL ORIENTATION

The views that emerged from the consultations revealed that the OECS Governments have a specific view of the orientation that should apply to ECLA/CDCC support for the OECS. Generally, strongest emphasis was placed on:

- a UN presence in the OECS subregion;
- sensitizing OECS to current UN activities and sensitizing the UN to the particular situation, priorities and orientation of the OECS;
- stimulating co-ordination of and also monitoring of UN activities consequent on General Assembly Resolutions for Special Assistance to OECS Member States;
- acting as a channel to and providing guidance on the workings of the United Nations itself, and its Secretariat;
- supplying information on the scope, competence and procedures of UN System organizations that do not maintain offices in the subregion;
- promoting regional programmes to complement and supplement the projects of the inter-governmental bodies (CDB, CARICOM, etc.) and the operational agencies (UNDP, UNESCO, ILO, etc.);
- assisting individual governments to identify some specific and basic needs in terms of immediate plans of action (including assistance on request with "finding path through the maze of reports");
- the support activities facilitating their participation in and benefiting from the CDCC programmes.

There was strong emphasis on the view that the support activities should be co-ordinational and not project-oriented. Also, that it should be capable of acting on the various UN General Assembly Resolutions (since 1976) on "Assistance to Grenada", and "Assistance to Antigua, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia and St. Vincent", which have stressed the special problems of these island economies, and requested the specialised agencies and other organizations in the UN System to increase and intensify their assistance within their respective spheres of competence.

2. In discussing the orientation and scope of ECLA/CDCC support activities, reactions were sought to the following specific suggestions:

- 1) collaboration with the Economic Affairs Division of OECS in co-ordination with the CDB, the World Bank, the UNDP statistics project and IARM to improve economic information on the Eastern Caribbean countries;
- ii) identification of opportunities for TCDC activities between OECS countries and countries in Central and South America;
- iii) collaboration in the work of the IARM and the Pools of Experts;
- iv) provision of Short-Term Experts drawn from or supplied by the CEPAL system;
- v) training courses organized by ILPES with financing from outside the CEPAL system;
- vi) in-depth research on a particular topic of interest.

The general reaction was that these all had some merit, but required answers to the questions of availability of resources and best utilization of such resources. However, the following observations were offered.

3. Item (i) in practice means annual preparation of country memoranda for CGCED and determining the list of accompanying projects to be submitted for financing. The longer term aspect of establishing permanent statistical capability in the OECS subregion cannot be achieved in the frame of the current annual exercises. There was need for the OECS countries to be more closely involved in those country studies and for improving the basic data in respect of all the seven OECS countries, but this is best achieved by strengthening the data collecting systems. The creation of "Pools of Experts" (Item (ii)) was meant, among other things, to tackle these deficiencies. ECLA/CDCC support should, therefore, not be tied into the IARM, which is CGCED projects oriented; but if the resources are available could work with the "Pools of Experts". Item (iv), provision of Short-term Experts, would best be achieved by use of persons already knowledgeable about the problems and possibilities - the alternative of bringing in short-term people being much more expansive and relatively less effective. Item (v), training courses in planning and in statistics (for middle-level personnel), was seen as necessary not in the context of ad hoc exercises, but instead in terms of an installed capability to meet the continuing need. That is, establishing a permanent system of training programmes, which should be based in the OECS training unit at Antigua. Concerning item (iii), TCDC with countries of Central and South America, the process should build on the specific relationships that already exist^{1/} and priority should be given to intra-Caribbean TCDC exercises, with focus on tested solutions to unique Caribbean problems.

1/ The Mexico/CARICOM Agreement was quoted as also was the membership of Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela in the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). The suggestion was that extra-Caribbean TCDC exercises should start with those countries.

II

CDCC PROGRAMMES

4. The ECLA/CDCC Secretariat administers and executes the programme "Economic Co-operation and Integration in the Caribbean".^{2/} The focus of this programme was defined by the Governments: "... to promote social and economic development; the stimulation of better co-ordination within the Caribbean region; and the promotion of co-operation between CDCC member countries and other members of ECLA - as well as with the integration groupings of Latin America". Within that broad orientation, pride of place was given to the co-operation and mutual assistance activities.

2/ 360. ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

360.1 Economic co-operation and integration in the Caribbean

1.1 Economic survey of Caribbean countries

1.2 Technical co-operation and integration among Caribbean countries

1.3 Rationalization and increase in food production in CDCC countries

1.4 Industrial development of the Caribbean

1.5 Development/conservation of energy and natural resources in the Caribbean

1.6 Transport and communications problems on a subregional basis

1.7 Formation of Caribbean multinational production and trade enterprises

1.8 Identification of possibilities for closer co-operation and integration between the Caribbean and Latin America

1.9 Development of a social work programme for CDCC countries

1.10 Integration of women in economic development

1.11 Co-operation in demographic analysis

1.12 Caribbean information system

1.13 Secretariat services for the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST)

1.14 International trade.

5. Some levels of co-operation already existed among the Caribbean countries, whether bilateral or within the integration mechanisms of ECCM, WISA and CARICOM. The role of the CDCC therefore was to expand and systemise region-wide co-operation using the elements that the Governments considered desirable, and building on the integration mechanisms.

6. At CDCC level the institutional model for co-operation was approved, which for each specific area of activity, would constitute a mechanism with the characteristic of a high level of decentralisation, with a "nucleus" entrusted the functional co-ordinating responsibility, and the day-to-day activities implemented through the related national institutions. These networking characteristics derive from the criteria set by the Governments that the co-operation activities should accord to and be part of the national priorities and programmes; that they should not result in the creation of a multiplicity of new institutions; that they should not constitute a drain on already scarce financial and personnel resources.

7. The important consideration was that co-operation activities should be so geared that they add to the capabilities of the national bodies through mutual support from the other participating countries and from the international community. The Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST), the Caribbean Information System, the Statistical Data Bank, are examples of different applications of that basic strategy, adopted in the recognition that for any individual country the needs exceed the resources and can only be met through collective actions and pooling of resources.

8. Although CDCC programmes generally apply equally to all its Members and Associate Members, they do not all benefit equally from the programmes; and the OECS participating countries are among the least advantaged. The considerable variations between the countries, not just in terms of size but even more importantly in terms of installed capacity and administrative infrastructure, results in a wide range of capability for participating in ongoing CDCC programmes.

9. Recognition that the OECS Member Governments have not so far benefited as much as they could from CDCC projects and programmes, is itself indicative that: (i) immediate attention should be given to enhancing their participation in ongoing CDCC programmes; (ii) whenever consideration is being given to medium and long-term CDCC activities, it is necessary to determine what additional programme components should be formulated to meet the special needs of the OECS Member States.

10. A further consideration is that the OECS countries may require some particular programme components, which would not apply to the other CDCC countries. Such components would of course be dictated by the unique developmental problems, prospects and policies of those states, to the extent that they are different from those of other Caribbean countries.

OECS Participation in Current CDCC Programmes

11. Because the OECS countries have not benefited as much as they could from CDCC programmes, there is an immediate need to establish the environment to ensure an improvement of that situation.

12. Concerning the CCST, Grenada, Dominica, St. Lucia and St. Vincent ratified the Statutes and participated in the inauguration of the Council and its working groups and also in the adoption of its Work Programme.^{3/} Since then, working groups have been established on: Energy; Transfer of Technology and Patents; Information Systems; Agricultural Research; Marine Affairs (including Fisheries); Health; Universities; Industrial Sector and Public Sector Institutions.

^{3/} With regard to the Work Programme, six projects were agreed upon with the following order of priority:

- Assessment of National Science and Technology Capabilities
- Establishment of a Science and Technology Journal of the CCST
- Development of Agro-Industries and Employment Opportunities, particularly at the Rural Level
- Preparation and Exchange of Audio-Visual Material for Education in Science and Technology
- Conservation and Exchange of Germplasm of Crop Plants
- Study of the Consequences of the Development of Energy Crops on Food Supplies.

13. Antigua/Barbuda, Montserrat and St. Kitts/Nevis have so far not participated in CCST activities. Senior Government officials in Antigua/Barbuda and St. Kitts/Nevis requested that information on the CCST be transmitted to them, as there was interest to initiate some necessary actions. It must however be noted too that there are no national Science and Technology bodies in most OECS countries, lack of which is a distinct constraint.

14. Similarly, except for Grenada, the OECS countries have not so far participated in the Ad Hoc Working Groups on Planning.^{4/} So far their "participation" has been limited to the UNDP Economic Adviser located in the OECS Secretariat. In a situation therefore where OECS needs for planning development are greatest (relative to the other CDCC countries) their participation is least.

15. With the Caribbean Information System and the related documentation services, a somewhat reverse situation obtains. All the OECS Member States have participated in the regional workshops conducted within the IDRC-assisted CARISPLAN project.^{5/} In addition, most have benefited from national training courses for their library and documentation personnel; but only three have some installed basic documentation facility - consequently they are unable to make use of much of the continuing services provided by the Caribbean Documentation Centre in the ECLA/CDCC Secretariat.

16. The Statistical Data Bank provides another example of low OECS participation. In this case, it is the relative absence of time series of the major macro-economic variables relating to the OECS Member States.

^{4/} Ad Hoc Working Group in Manpower Planning, Grenada, 14-15 September 1981. Ad Hoc Working Group in Physical and Regional Planning, Grenada, 16-17 September 1981.

^{5/} International Development Research Centre of Canada; Caribbean Information System (Planning).

Abstracts of the material in the Data Bank are soon to be published and sent to the Governments but will include an insufficient amount of OECS-based data. This situation derives from inadequate public sector infrastructure particularly in the areas of fact finding, with the result that essential basic information are seldom currently available.⁶

Enhancing OECS Participation

17. It is evident that the OECS countries need supports of various kinds not required to the same extent by the larger CDCC countries. From the above examples, it is clear that support to their institution building and training efforts is a prerequisite for the OECS Member States to benefit more fully from the CDCC programmes, especially the functional operations and the continuing services. Two direct requirements derive: (a) on-line consultative and advisory services; and (b) supplementary financing (for example, to cover travel and related expenses). There is, therefore, the need for the allocation of resources to meet these requirements.

18. There are innovations that could be employed to improve the situation, for example, that meetings, Ad Hoc Working Groups and Training Courses should be held in OECS countries to the greatest possible extent - since it is relatively easier for the host government to maximise its participation.

6/ For example, some latest published data are:

| | <u>Trade Reports</u> | <u>Statistical Digest Yearbook</u> |
|------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Antigua/Barbuda | 1975 | 1978 |
| Dominica | 1979 | 1978 |
| Grenada | 1973 | 1979 |
| Montserrat | 1978 | 1979 |
| St. Kitts/Nevis | 1977 | 1978 |
| St. Lucia | 1971 | 1975 |
| St. Vincent/Grenadines | 1977 | 1980 |

III

ADDITIONAL COMPONENTS TO CDCC PROGRAMME ELEMENTS

19. Although the CDCC programmes are predicated on various inputs being made by the Governments themselves, the OECS countries present a clear case of supplementary action to enable those Governments to make inputs. For example, in the conduct of surveys and information gathering, a desirable component is the provision of expert assistance to the OECS countries. Such action could serve not only to offset their acute shortage of personnel, but also would set in place systems and procedures that could be relatively easier for them to apply on subsequent occasions. In some cases, such inputs may derive from TCDC basis and in others from the UN System, depending on the circumstances. The important aspect is that the need be recognised and incorporated from the outset.

20. This kind of ad hoc assistance has been provided on previous occasions for some specific UN Programmes, but it is not a solution to the basic problem. It has to be combined with specific effort to develop in each country the basic capability so as to eliminate need for such ad hoc palliatives. This means dove-tailing short-term assistance with national administrative infrastructural expansion (both budgetary and personnel). Some of the national projects supported by UNDP, UNESCO, ILO are directed to such infrastructure strengthening and there should be close co-ordination of ECLA/CDCC support with such efforts. The projects in Socio-Economic Development Planning,^{7/} Regional Planning and Plan Implementation^{8/} are cases in point, to quote just a few.

21. The appropriate ECLA/CDCC component in the case of each country will depend on the specific need and the related inputs offered by other institutions.

7/ Antigua/Barbuda (ANT/76/001), St. Vincent (STV/78/002)

8/ St. Lucia (STL/78/001)

UNIQUE OECS PROGRAMME ELEMENT

22. Beyond the foregoing, the unique problems of the OECS countries need to be addressed. There have been several efforts to identify the special needs of these countries in the context of CARICOM and the CDB, and more recently within the CGCED. So far, the CDCC has not given attention to this aspect. Responses to General Assembly Resolutions on Special Assistance to OECS countries, and responses to General Assembly and UNCTAD Resolutions in respect of island developing countries also require this further dimension.

23. UNDP's "Third Multi-island Programme of the Governments of the Eastern Caribbean" for the period 1982-1986 which is essentially regional, has particularly to be taken into account, as it addresses itself to many of the special problems of the OECS countries. The Development of Statistics project for example^{9/} which is directed towards improving the reliability of the statistical base, has a direct relationship to CDCC's Statistical Data Bank, and complementary CDCC inputs would be uniquely for the OECS countries.

24. Such elements need to be developed in continuing consultations with the Governments, the OECS Secretariat and the other operational bodies in the Caribbean subregion.