

The Hummingbird



Volume 2 Issue 5 May 2015

The ECLAC Port of Spain Newsletter

ECLAC in the Caribbean

ECLAC Deputy Executive Secretary

to participate in Forum on the Future of the Caribbean May 5 – 7, 2015

THE Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Antonio Prado, will participate in the Forum on the Future of the Caribbean from 5 – 7 May 2015 in Trinidad and Tobago.

The Forum is co-hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago, the University of the West Indies (UWI) and the United Nations system in Trinidad and Tobago. Sessions will be held at the UWI St Augustine campus and the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Port of Spain.

During his first visit to the Caribbean and Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Prado will deliver opening remarks on the first day of the Forum on the topic “Disruptive thinking for development: the role of the academy and development



Deputy Executive Secretary
Antonio Prado.

organizations”, at the UWI St. Augustine campus.

He will also serve as Chairperson and Moderator for a plenary session organized by the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean on the final day of the Forum, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. This session will focus on identifying and advocating innovative financing solutions for the Caribbean amid the challenges

of high debt, reduced aid and stricter loan concessionality.

The ECLAC plenary session will also build on the ongoing discussions on financing for development, in light of what is anticipated to be the forging of a new financing for development architecture, that will culminate in the third United Nations conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa, in July 2015.

The emphasis will be on new and innovative approaches for development financing for Caribbean small island developing states. The session’s focus on stimulating original and inventive thought will respond to the Forum’s call for “disruptive thinking, bold action and practical outcomes.”

Caribbean Forum to challenge conventional wisdom

REGIONAL and international leaders will gather in Port of Spain from 5 to 7 May 2015 to tackle challenges to Caribbean development and identify strategies for securing a sustainable future, at the Forum on the Future of the Caribbean.

Forum participants - including Caribbean heads of government and policy-makers, civil society and business leaders, and academic experts - will confront existing development paradigms through innovative, disruptive thought.

This is aimed at producing

models for research, policy development and transformative action to support an equitable, sustainable Caribbean society in the post-2015 period and for generations beyond.

They will challenge each other to consider persistent development problems in new ways and identify approaches directed at widening opportunities and improving living conditions for all Caribbean citizens. Agenda areas of focus include all dimensions of poverty, inequality, and resource mobilization, as well as the specific vulnerabilities of

small - often high and middle income - Caribbean States.

UNDP Resident Representative in Trinidad and Tobago, Richard Blewitt, expressed enthusiastic support for the Forum, which he is optimistic “will trigger transformative academic research and public policy.”

Amina Mohammed, Special Advisor of the United Nations Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning, is among the prominent speakers to be featured at the Forum.

ECLAC in the Caribbean

Samoa Pathway implementation discussed in Saint Lucia

A GROUP of Caribbean experts met in Saint Lucia on 15 March 2015, to discuss strategies for implementing the SIDS Accelerated Modalities for Action (SAMOA) Pathway in the region. Discussions included consideration of a strategic alignment of the Pathway with the Sustainable Development goals being considered within the framework of the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

Known as the “SIDS Accelerated Modalities for Action”, the SAMOA Pathway is the outcome

document of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), which was held in Apia, Samoa from 1-4 September 2014.

Approved by the United Nations, this intergovernmental agreement serves as the blueprint for the SIDS’ approach to addressing their continuing sustainable development challenges.

The Saint Lucia meeting focussed on two main areas. One was “Consideration of priority elements in the SAMOA Pathway for

the Caribbean”, where the main action points proposed in the Pathway were highlighted.

The second was “Consideration of a strategic alignment of the SAMOA Pathway with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Post 2015 Development Agenda, where participants engaged in identifying common strategies and approaches towards meeting the targets of the priority actions in the Pathway, and linking them to the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

Sneak preview ECLAC FDI Study puts focus on the Caribbean

THE Caribbean receives relatively higher amounts of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), when compared to other developing economies, according to a newly published report from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

This report, a flagship publication of ECLAC, entitled “Foreign Direct Investment in Latin America and the Caribbean”, will be launched by Executive Secretary, Alicia Bárcena, on 27 May 2015 via a press conference at the organization’s headquarters in Santiago, Chile.

This year, the annual report places increased emphasis on the importance of foreign direct investment (FDI) for the Caribbean. FDI inflows into the Caribbean amounted to approximately five per cent of GDP in 2014, compared to three per cent for Latin America, and less in other developing regions.

In addition, FDI is important in the Caribbean both as a source of funds for development and as a source of foreign exchange. Nevertheless, questions remain about the extent to which these flows contribute to growth and development in the Caribbean.

The publication discusses recent developments in key sectors, which either attract the most FDI inflows or possess potential for increased FDI.

Given the increasing propensity of many large Caribbean transnationals to make significant cross-border investments, the report also looks at outward FDI from Caribbean countries to regional and extra-regional economies.

17th meeting of ECLAC Regional Coordinating Mechanism

THE Caribbean’s perspective on integrating the SIDS Accelerated Modalities for Action (SAMOA) Pathway into the Sustainable Development Goals and the Post 2015 Development Agenda was discussed at a recent meeting in Castries, Saint Lucia, hosted jointly by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) subregional headquarters for the Caribbean and the Government of Saint Lucia.

This was the Seventh Meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee of the Regional Coordinating Mechanism (RCM) for the implementation of the SIDS Agenda.

The RCM was established through a decision taken by governments and United Nations’ agencies in the Caribbean, with a mandate to co-ordinate activities to support implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA), the Mauritius Strategy for the further implementation of the Programme of Action for Small Island Developing States, and the SAMOA Pathway.

The meeting followed on last year’s consideration of the sustainable development of SIDS, with focus on the SAMOA Pathway, which is the outcome document of the Apia, Samoa 3rd International Conference on SIDS, held in September 2014.

The One To Watch

The Regional Roundup

Jamaica plants first legal marijuana plant

HISTORY was created at the University of the West Indies' (UWI) Mona campus on April 20, with the planting of Jamaica's first legal cannabis plant on the grounds of the institution.

Minister of science, technology, energy and mining, Phillip Paulwell; justice minister, Senator Mark Golding; university officials, as well as other stakeholders, took part in the symbolic planting ceremony held at the Faculty of Medical Sciences' Teaching and Research Complex.

The government has accorded the UWI an order to cultivate marijuana for medical research, and to also set the pace for the development of a legal cannabis industry.

This is in keeping with the Dangerous Drugs (Amendment) Act 2015, which became effective on April 15, and makes provision for development of a medical marijuana industry. A similar licence is to be granted to the University of Technology (UTech).

Paulwell, in his remarks,

urged the UWI researchers to look into value-added products from marijuana. He said the licence allows for contract farming, and called on the university to engage small farmers in the process.

Golding meanwhile, commended UWI for its interest in developing the medical marijuana industry. He noted that the institution has a "fine team of scientists across different scientific disciplines," and had long ago started, in a limited way, research on ganja.

The Most Tech-Savvy Country in the Caribbean

BARBADOS is the most tech-savvy country in the Caribbean, according to a new report. The World Economic Forum has released its latest "Network Readiness Index," which tracks the "factors, policies and institutions that enable a country to fully leverage information and communication technologies (ICTs) for increased competitiveness and well-being."

Put another way, the report ranks countries based on how they leverage information and communication technology for social and economic impact. Barbados is ranked 39th in the world on the index, just ahead of Kazakhstan and just behind Chile.

The island ranked particularly highly in areas including tech skills, individual usage and infrastructure and digital content.

The next-highest-ranked Caribbean place is Puerto Rico, ranked 44, followed by Trinidad and Tobago at 70. Jamaica is ranked next at 82nd in the world.

The World Economic Forum has been releasing the index since 2001; indicators are compiled using a combination of data from publicly available sources and the results of a



A view of Bridgetown, Barbados.

survey of 13,000 business executives.

The report did not index a number of Caribbean countries, including the Eastern Caribbean.

Global Entry coming to Nassau Airport

UNITED STATES Customs and Border Protection is making re-entering the country easier for travelers from Nassau by adding Global Entry kiosks to the Pre-Clearance Facility at the Bahamian capital's Lynden Pindling International Airport.

Global Entry members bypass inspection lines and use an automated kiosk to enter the United States. Travelers scan their passport and fingerprints, answer customs declaration



Lynden Pindling International Airport in Nassau, Bahamas.

questions using the kiosk's touch screen, and proceed with a receipt to the exit. The whole process takes only about a minute.

Whether or not they're enrolled in Global Entry, all US-based visitors leaving Nassau can take advantage of the airport's pre-clearance privileges, which allow Immigration, Customs, and Agriculture screenings to be performed in advance of arrival in the United States.

Focus on the ECLAC Family

ECLAC's Brown Bag sessions

OUR in house Brown Bag sessions have become quite popular amongst staff and fellow UN system colleagues, who have been diligently attending the sessions.

Coordinator Lindy Ann Edwards Alleyne leaves no stone unturned as she carefully and successfully selects the themes for the Brown Bag.

Here are some highlights from the sessions held in March and April.

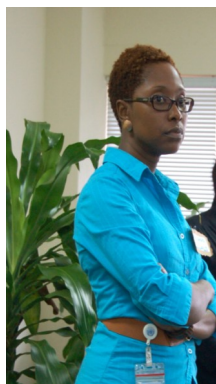


Representatives from the Volunteer Center of Trinidad and Tobago at the ECLAC Brown Bag session in April.

Volunteer Center of Trinidad and Tobago

Representatives from the Volunteer Center of Trinidad and Tobago (VCTT) visited ECLAC in April to share some of their experiences with staff, some of whom were familiar with them for facilitating the very successful ECLAC Christmas Charity Drive last year.

The VCTT is a youth-led NGO which aims to promote a culture of active citizenship, social responsibility and volunteerism in Trinidad and Tobago



The coordinator of the Brown Bag sessions, Ms. Lindy Ann Edwards-Alleyne.

and throughout the Caribbean.

The VCTT was joined by members of the United Nations Volunteer Programme, who captured the attention of staff members with their vivid accounts of voluntary experiences.

They also shared information and reading material for staff to get involved in the volunteering experience.

The Cuba/United States situation

A topic that has been on the lips of many people in the region and around the world since December 2014 has been the announcement by United States President Barack Obama that there will be changes in US policy towards Cuba. Jacqueline Laguardia-Martinez of the



The session on the US/Cuba situation was well-attended by ECLAC staff and others from the local United Nations system.

Institute of International Relations at UWI St Augustine campus participated in the Brown Bag session in March 2015, to share information and views on the "Normalization of diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba".

What's Up ... upcoming events in the Caribbean

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE
2 May	Carnival— Batabano	Cayman Islands
5-7 May	Forum on the Future of the Caribbean	Trinidad and Tobago
8-17 May	Chocolate Festival	Grenada
13-15 May	Annual Regional Tradeshow	Sint Maarten/Saint Martin
13-16 May	International Tourism Expo	Puerto Rico
19-25 May	Cayon Green Valley Community Festival	Saint Kitts and Nevis
21 May	Meeting on an integrated approach to resource management in the Caribbean	Trinidad and Tobago
27 May	Launch of the annual report on Foreign Direct Investment in Latin America and the Caribbean	Trinidad and Tobago