



# ECLAC IN THE CARIBBEAN

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW  
ABOUT THE ECLAC SUBREGIONAL  
HEADQUARTERS.

## COVID-19

ECLAC DOES AN ASSESSMENT OF THE  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT

## UN 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

THE UNITED NATIONS' RELEVANCE  
TODAY: AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE



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## About us

Issued on a monthly basis, The Hummingbird offers strategic insights into the latest projects, publications, technical assistance missions and research carried out by ECLAC Caribbean. In addition to these, sneak previews are provided of the most salient upcoming events, alongside enriching follow-ups to previously covered issues. With a view to featuring a variety of facets of Caribbean life and lifestyle, The Hummingbird also zooms in on cultural activities and landmark occurrences through an eye-opening regional round-up.

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# International Days

## 1 October

International Day of Older Persons

## 10 October

World Mental Health Day

## 11 October

International Day of the Girl Child

## 13 October

International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction

## 24 October

United Nations Day


# Upcoming Meetings

## 10 November


Expert Group Meeting: Statistical Disclosure Control for Caribbean Census Tables - Virtual

## 17 November

Financing and Planning for Disaster Risk Management in Caribbean Small Islands Developing States - Virtual


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 **ECLAC Caribbean**  
Posted Aug 13  
"Justice, equality and freedom for all."  
See everything you need to know about United Nation's Day here:  
<https://www.un.org/en/observances/un-day>



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 **ECLAC Caribbean**  
Posted Oct 23  
During its 38th Session, #ECLAC will present its activities, report on the work carried out in the last two years. Learn more here: <https://bit.ly/31sFOIU>

 **Thirty-eighth session of ECLAC**  
26-28 October 2020

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 **ECLAC Caribbean**  
Posted Oct 9  
#ECLAC collaborated with the ILO, UN-HABITAT and CCRIF SPC to host a Workshop on Leaving No One Behind in the Caribbean. Find out more here: <https://bit.ly/2IgCOgZ>



**THE EFFECTS OF THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) PANDEMIC ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND LOGISTICS**

6 AUGUST 2020  
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## UNITED NATIONS 75th Anniversary Commemoration

This October, the United Nations celebrated 75 years since it was created to promote enduring peace and development; to contain global acts of aggression through collective security; to advance widest respect for human rights; to protect the welfare and wellbeing of all peoples and the planet while facilitating international cooperation in all fields of endeavour. The anniversary of this magnificent,

ambitious undertaking comes as the international community faces the most significant global public health crisis in a century with the Corona Virus (COVID-19) pandemic.

To mark this important milestone, the UN hosted an event titled, 'The Future We Want, the UN We Need'. The event was an opportunity to take stock of

some of the major achievements of this global body over the past seven and a half decades.

This special issue of the Hummingbird takes a look at the history of the UN and highlights some aspects of the organization's presence in the Caribbean. ■

## The United Nations' relevance today: an historical perspective

The UN was formed in the wake of World War II, with the preeminent objective "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime brought untold sorrow to mankind" .

The United Nations Charter was signed in San Francisco, United States, on 26 June 1945. Since then the UN has grown dramatically with multiple agencies working across the globe.

"While the founders of the UN were visionaries who understood that the organization would not just deal with war but also with economic issues and health issues, they would be shocked at the sheer scale of the international

system that has developed over the last 75-years," said Richard Gowan, UN Director, International Crisis Group.

Some critics say the system doesn't always work. For example, gridlock over the war in Syria has been a consistent reminder of the UN's limitations. The issue of Iranian sanctions and the nuclear deal recently brought long-simmering divisions in the Security Council to the surface.

However, there have been many success stories too. "The UN can be described as a midwife for decolonization" said Thomas Weiss, Professor of Political Science, The Graduate Center, CUNY.

Indeed, it was under the watchful care of the Decolonization Committee that the fledgling nation states of the Caribbean achieved their independence, and one by one took their place as sovereign members of the world body. This Committee continues to give oversight to the development concerns and political aspirations to self-determination of the non-sovereign territories of the Caribbean which have Associate Member status in ECLAC.

The organization hopes to use the 75th anniversary to build on some of its successes, and to take advantage of the opportunity to show the international community why this ambitious global project still deserves its fullest support.

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN's worldwide consultation reveals a strong call for action to address inequality and climate change; to promote solidarity and durable cooperation.

In January 2020, the global consultation to mark the 75th anniversary was launched. Through surveys and dialogues, it asked people about their hopes and fears for the future – representing the UN's most ambitious effort to date to understand expectations of international cooperation and of the UN in particular. It is also the largest survey to date on priorities for recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

More than a million people across the globe from all walks of life have already taken part in the survey. Their answers provided unique insights into what the public wants at this challenging time for the world. The key findings of the global survey include priorities for action. Across regions, age and social groups, people were broadly united in their priorities for the future.

Amid the current COVID-19 crisis, the immediate priority identified was improved access to basic services – healthcare, safe water, sanitation and education, followed by greater international solidarity and increased support for those hardest hit. This should include tackling inequalities and rebuilding a more inclusive economy. Looking to the future, the overwhelming concerns are the climate crisis and the destruction of our natural environment.

Other priorities include ensuring greater respect for human rights, settling conflicts, tackling poverty and reducing corruption. Over 87% of respondents

believe that global cooperation is vital to deal with today's challenges, and that the pandemic has made international cooperation more urgent.

Seventy-five years after its founding, six in 10 respondents believe the UN has made the world a better place. Looking to the future, 74% see the UN as "essential" in tackling the challenges. However, respondents want the UN to change and innovate: to be more inclusive of the diversity of actors in the 21st century, and to become more transparent, accountable and effective.

*As affirmed by UN Secretary-General, António Guterres: "In this 75th anniversary year, we face our own 1945 moment. We must meet that moment. We must show unity like never before to overcome today's emergency, get the world moving and working and prospering again, and uphold the vision of the Charter. Across this anniversary year, we have engaged in a global conversation. And the results are striking. People are thinking big – they are also expressing an intense yearning for international cooperation and global solidarity. Now is the time to respond to these aspirations and realize these aims." ■*





*The  
Hummingbird*



## ECLAC IN THE CARIBBEAN

What you need to know about the  
ECLAC Subregional Headquarters



**T**he United Nations System comprises a network of organs, funds, programmes and specialized agencies dedicated to unique mandates across the spectrum of economic, social, environmental, health, security and humanitarian fields. Membership in the UN family of institutions expands in response to the growing and evolving needs of the global community. For example, the International Organization on Migration joined the system as recently as 2016, as concerns regarding migrants, refugees and displaced persons gained increasing attention on the international agenda.

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# ECLAC IN THE CARIBBEAN

## What you need to know about the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) by contrast is one of those bodies created very early in the establishment of the UN project, as part of the integral infrastructure to foster and facilitate economic and social development across the globe. ECLAC is one of five regional commissions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council established for this purpose. We spotlight ECLAC in this article to exemplify the overarching mission of the United Nations.

The Regional Commission functions as a think tank and facilitates increased collaboration and cooperation among its membership. ECLAC conducts research; provides technical advice to governments, upon request; organizes intergovernmental and expert group meetings; helps to formulate and articulate a regional perspective within global forums; and introduces global concerns at the regional and subregional levels.

Operational activities extend to economic and development planning, demography, economic surveys, assessment of the socioeconomic impacts of natural disasters, data collection and analysis, training, and assistance with the management of national economies.

The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean also functions as the secretariat for coordinating the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Key ECLAC Caribbean milestones are as follows:

- 1948 - The Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) is established to support Latin American governments in the economic and social development of the region.

- 1966 - The subregional headquarters for the Caribbean is established in Port of Spain to serve all countries of the insular Caribbean, as well as Belize, Guyana and Suriname.

- 1975 - ECLA creates the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) as a permanent subsidiary body, to promote development cooperation among Caribbean countries. The CDCC now has membership of 29 Caribbean countries; 16 member states and 13 associate members. Secretariat services to the CDCC are assigned to the subregional headquarters for the Caribbean.

- 1984 - ECLA changes its name to Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), officially acknowledging the widened role of the Commission in this subregion.

The mission of the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean is to deepen the understanding of the development challenges facing the Caribbean, and to contribute to solutions by conducting research and analysis and providing sound policy advice and technical assistance to Caribbean governments, focused on growth with equity and recognition of the subregion's vulnerability.

Some of ECLAC Caribbean's major achievements in recent years include:

ECLAC Caribbean, in 2018, produced the first issue of its flagship publication on the subregion: The Caribbean Outlook. This publication offers perspective on the threats and challenges faced by the Caribbean and proposes a rich body of innovative solutions to issues which must be confronted resolutely if the subregion is to achieve a sustainable development path. The 2020 edition of the Outlook addresses comprehensively the unprecedented challenges posed by COVID-19 and explores strategic approaches for Caribbean recovery and return to resilient growth.

ECLAC has proposed a debt for climate adaptation swap initiative to address low growth and high debt burdens in the economies of the Caribbean. Recognizing the economic, environmental and social vulnerability of the countries of the subregion, ECLAC has advocated that their capacity to achieve the SDGs will be significantly compromised without support to address the challenges of debt and vulnerability. The central objective of the proposal is to attract resources to reduce the debt from a variety of sources, at a discount with the countries' repayment placed in a Resilience Fund to invest in climate adaptation and green industries. The proposal has been gaining support both regionally and internationally; most recently during the United Nations consultations on Financing for Development in the wake of COVID-19, the proposal to facilitate debt swap arrangements using Resilience funds was well received, including by the Green Climate Fund; a key source of concessional financing still available to the middle and upper income countries of the subregion. ECLAC is advancing the

“

*ECLAC hosts subregional meetings to review the progress and perspectives of the Caribbean member states on issues including population, gender, sustainable development and small island developing states.*

”

proposal with three countries in the first phase: Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

ECLAC Caribbean serves as the subregional convenor of major regional conferences for which the Commission has oversight. On this basis ECLAC hosts subregional meetings to review the progress and perspectives of the Caribbean member states on issues including population, gender, sustainable development and small island developing states.

At a time when the Caribbean has been increasingly exposed to category five storms, ECLAC has supported member states post disaster with the conduct of damage and loss assessments (DaLAs) to measure the extent of physical damage, losses of income and social services, and additional costs incurred during these extreme climatic events. The DaLAs also include recommendations towards promoting risk reduction and resilient response in support of country efforts to build back better during recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction. ECLAC undertook DaLAs in five countries during the very active 2017 hurricane season, and most recently conducted the DaLA in the Bahamas following the passage of Hurricane Dorian during 2019.

ECLAC undertook comprehensive analysis on the Economics of Climate Change, which projected impacts of climate change up to 2050 across several sectors, and several countries. This work continues to be cited by countries and partners in referencing the economic consequences of climate change on Caribbean SIDS.

ECLAC Caribbean and the CARICOM Secretariat convened a high-level regional meeting on Persons with Disabilities in December 2013 in Pétiön-Ville, Haiti. The Declaration of Pétiön-Ville adopted at that meeting exhorts a greater adherence to legislative frameworks such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). ECLAC has continued to support the regional disability agenda by collecting data and providing technical assistance in the development of policies and programmes aimed at persons with disabilities.

—ECLAC has routinely offered technical assistance and training to member States to support them in the analysis and dissemination of population and housing census data using ECLAC’s REDATAM software. As a result of this technical support, there are now at least 10 Caribbean countries that provide public access to their most recent census data through an online query system.

ECLAC has been actively providing technical assistance to the government of Trinidad and Tobago towards the legislative and institutional restructuring of the Central Statistical Office (CSO), which should result in the establishment of a National Statistical Institute of Trinidad and Tobago (NSITT). This ongoing support is critical in ensuring that the NSITT, when established by law, will be a model statistical institute for other Caribbean countries.

As part of the effort to strengthen institutional frameworks to enhance oversight of implementation of the SDGs in the Caribbean, ECLAC has supported countries in the design

or retrofitting of their national development plans. In the case of Dominica in particular, ECLAC assisted with the alignment of the country’s National Resilience Development Strategy 2030 (NRDS) and the sector plans with the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda to ensure policy coherence and implementation efficiency across the government.

ECLAC Caribbean, in partnership with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, the local diplomatic community and other UN agencies in Trinidad and Tobago, sponsored a campaign against street harassment in observance of the 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence (GBV). Called “It’s all about Respect!”, the campaign succeeded in initiating a national conversation on the harmful effects of street harassment, and contributed to breaking the silence around GBV as a safety, gender equality and human rights issue. .

ECLAC supported the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in the development of its trade policy for 2019-2023, aimed at diversifying the country’s economy and exploring expansion into non-traditional markets. ■



## COVID-19 in the Caribbean

The Caribbean subregion, like the rest of the world, was forced this year to implement effective responses to deal with the impact of COVID-19. The pandemic brought significant challenges to contain, mitigate and manage the spread of the virus, while minimizing the economic and social fallout associated with this effort.

In keeping with a targeted, timely response, ECLAC Caribbean, together with the United Nations system and key regional organizations, undertook comprehensive assessment of the economic and social impact of the virus on the economies of the subregion. The study will serve as a resource to inform governments' decision-making with respect to policy options for recovery and building back better.

COVID-19 has affected the way of life of all Caribbean people and has had a major impact on the economies of the subregion. Many Caribbean countries were already shouldering an unsustainable public debt, and the impact of the fallout in government revenue and the increased social expenditure had to be carefully documented and analysed.

ECLAC Executive Secretary, Alicia Bárcena, has stated that the post-

pandemic recovery must be with resilient, inclusive and sustainable economies, bolstering the energy transition, digital connectivity and public electric mobility, regional integration, the strengthening of the care economy, and the revival of agro-ecology and agroforestry.

For Caribbean countries, the pandemic has intensified structural problems, along with the urgency of changing the development model. Bárcena has warned that the -9.1% drop in the region's GDP will result in the worst contraction in the last 100 years, adding that the crisis has been more intense than expected, it will last longer than envisioned, and it will require active fiscal and monetary policies for more time.

"The recovery must be understood as something that will lead us to a different future, to build from here onward with a distinct model, with more equality and environmental sustainability, changing our productive and social model. The new paradigm for cooperation in the future must take into account these elements and the fact that inequality defines our region," Bárcena said.

She underscored that, at a time of pandemic, triangular cooperation

must ensure access to COVID-19 vaccines, while also working to strengthen less asymmetrical forms of cooperation, strengthening South-South cooperation and challenging the governance of the international system, and opening discussion on forms of aid to define new consensus and actors.

Bárcena also said that fueling the reactivation with financial stability requires mechanisms for triangular financial cooperation aimed at middle-income countries, which represent 96% of public external debt. "If these countries slide into insolvency, there will be a systemic crisis. The initiative to suspend debt servicing must be extended to vulnerable middle-income countries, above all in Central America and the Caribbean, and an international mechanism for sovereign debt restructuring must be created to lessen the uncertainty and the risks of debt renegotiation processes," she stated.

The ECLAC Caribbean analysis entitled 'Economic Impact of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus in the Caribbean', provides estimates of the economic cost of policy actions that had to be taken in response to COVID-19.



The analysis focused on select sectors, namely: health; tourism; agriculture, including fisheries and livestock; education; transportation, with a focus on aviation and shipping; and energy and oil and gas. For each sector, the impact assessment presented the socioeconomic costs related to loss of revenue, additional expenditures, temporary unemployment and the general welfare of households as a result of COVID-19.

The study also provides projected costs of implementing additional responses that have been recommended by global and regional organizations as effective measures against the disease, thereby providing Caribbean decision-makers with a priority list of additional cost-effective socioeconomic responses that the subregion could implement to deal with COVID-19. ■



## 25 Caribbean countries reopen borders to commercial travel

The region is presently celebrating Caribbean Tourism Month even while grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic. In a release on its website, the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO) said the pandemic's impact on the sector has been immense.

It reported that there was a 57% decline in arrivals during the first six months of 2020, an estimated 50 to 60% fall in visitor spend and tens of thousands of jobs lost.

"Those still employed have, in several cases, accepted reductions in working hours and wage cuts."

The organisation said the Caribbean had shown resilience by the progress made towards resuming tourism activity with 25 Caribbean countries having reopened their borders to commercial travel, fully or partially.

Other countries are also putting measures in place to welcome visitors. The theme for this year's observance is "The Caribbean awaits."

The organization said the theme "complements the region's success in generally containing the spread of covid19 which has taken a major toll on tourism along with other sectors of our economies.

"Caribbean countries have taken the required steps to protect our citizens and residents, conducted the required training to prepare our tourism and related frontline workers for the return of visitors and put the health protocols in place to reassure our potential visitors and residents that we take their health seriously. This has been the groundwork and now we seek to rebuild the sector."

In observing the month, the CTO and its members have planned a week of social media activities. "We cannot rest on our laurels, and we remain cognizant of the toll that covid19 has taken, and continues to take on our economies, and importantly, our people. In all of our destinations, we must remain vigilant and constantly adjust to what is probably one of the most dynamic situations any of us will ever face. We hope and pray for recovery; it will be slow, but every step forward is a welcome one," the release said. ■



## Nobel Peace Prize 2020: World Food Programme wins for efforts to combat hunger

Even as it commemorated its 75th Anniversary serving the global community, the UN also celebrated the signal honour recently conferred by the Norwegian Nobel Committee on a member of the UN family; the World Food Programme. The WFP was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize "for its contribution to bettering conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas". The Programme's objective to achieve 'zero hunger' in the global community has never been more difficult to achieve than in 2020, in the face of unprecedented challenge. Inasmuch as WFP's work epitomizes the fundamental mission of the UN system; to promote the welfare and wellbeing of the world's citizens, the honour was very well deserved. This uniquely challenging year has brought new perspective on the essential role that food security must play in securing the UN mission.

Amir Abdulla, WFP Deputy Executive Director said, "When the COVID impact hit and supply lines started, borders started closing, the WFP has a role of being a logistics arm of the humanitarian and development system. When many airlines were not flying, we were actually operating as a reasonably middle size airline. We were flying cargo and flying people."

In awarding the prize, committee chair Berit Reiss-Andersen noted the impact of the coronavirus pandemic

on global food supplies and criticized the politics of populism.

The WFP was created in 1961 and today provides food to over 100 million people a year. The organization tweeted its "deepest thanks" for the honor, adding: "This is a powerful reminder to the world that peace and #ZeroHunger go hand-in-hand." It praised its staff who it said: "put their lives on the line every day." The Nobel Committee said the need for international solidarity and multilateral cooperation was more conspicuous than ever. It said it wanted to turn the eyes of the world towards the millions of people who suffer from or face the threat of hunger.

"The coronavirus pandemic has contributed to a strong upsurge in the number of victims of hunger in the world," said Reiss-Andersen.

The WFP has also made significant achievements in the Caribbean. The subregion comprises many small island developing states (SIDS) that share common constraints and challenges in their pursuit of sustainable development. The region is especially susceptible to a wide range of natural hazards – including droughts, earthquakes, floods, hurricanes and landslides – which cause an estimated US \$3 billion in annual losses.

The 2017 Atlantic Hurricane Season, for example, caused unprecedented levels of destruction, affecting millions of people and outstripping short-term response capacities, which created unique challenges for the rapid, appropriate and effective mobilization and coordination of humanitarian assistance.

In response to the needs of affected countries, the WFP launched a range of food security, logistical and emergency telecommunication operations throughout the Caribbean. This included strengthening coordination and information management of local, national and regional responders; restoring communications networks; establishing temporary logistics hubs; supporting relief management and port operations and the transportation of goods and personnel to affected areas.

In Dominica, in support of Government-led relief efforts, WFP also implemented a cash assistance programme in collaboration with UNICEF, which benefitted some 25,000 vulnerable people who were assisted by adapting and expanding the national social protection programme.

With climate change expected to increase the intensity of extreme weather events, Caribbean countries



are faced with formidable challenges in protecting people, livelihoods and infrastructure and in maintaining their economic, social and environmental gains.

Between 1970 and 2016, the Caribbean suffered over US \$22 billion in damages as a direct result of disasters. The human impact of disasters is correspondingly higher in SIDS, affecting 10% of the population on average, compared to just 1% in large states. In recent decades, small Caribbean countries ranked highest countries in terms of losses – calculated as a percentage of GDP – caused by natural hazards.

To continue to help address these challenges in the future, WFP is supporting the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and its participating states to strengthen systems and technical capacities for a more effective, cost-efficient and predictable response to emergencies. Capacity strengthening activities are being implemented under a multi-year Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) programme spanning across four strategic pillars: vulnerability analysis, end-to-end supply chain management, shock-responsive social protection and climate change adaptation.

A multi-country EPR office has also been established in Barbados, responsible for strategic oversight, technical assistance and implementation of activities in coordination with CDEMA, national disaster management entities and social protection actors at the national level.

ECLAC Caribbean is pleased to use this opportunity to congratulate the World Food Programme on its receipt of this most distinguished honor. ■



## Population growth has transformed Cayman's economy and environment

A bird's eye view of Grand Cayman reveals the staggering impact of population growth on the island. Two sets of aerial photographs, taken 60 years apart, starkly demonstrate the extent of the transformation that has taken place within a single generation.

Anyone with a passing familiarity with Cayman would already be aware of how rapidly the island has developed since the 1950s. Yet the images, perhaps, communicate the scale of this change in a way that is less obvious at ground level.

Wetlands, mangroves and dry forest have been replaced with canals, sub-divisions, hotels and condominiums. There is little doubt that this development has been a huge part of Cayman's metamorphosis from 'the islands that time forgot' to the powerhouse economy of the Caribbean that it is today. Those same images, however, also illustrate the cost of that development and raise questions about if, how and from where Cayman's future growth should come.

For Lisa Hurlston of the National Conservation Council, the answers to those questions must come from a national discussion about priorities.

Too much of Cayman's past development, she believes, has been unplanned and ill-thought-out, without the context of a social, environmental or national development plan to add shape to the sprawl.

Looking at a set of aerial photographs, it is easy to see how and where things could have been done differently. But at street level, development decisions have largely been driven, she believes, by the personal economic motives of thousands of different landowners.

"Land was king in the Cayman Islands and, to a certain extent, it still is," she said.

People without a multitude of economic options can hardly be blamed for cashing in on their land. But, with growing awareness of the extent and the consequences of biodiversity and habitat loss, she believes the community must collectively exert more control.

Any future growth, she believes, must balance economic priorities with environmental protection. "Population dynamics are not necessarily bad, but they should serve more than simply the narrow purpose of pumping money into the economy without ensuring that the benefits are shared by the majority of people," she said. ■



# UNHCR

The UN Refugee Agency

## UNHCR Trinidad and Tobago: Through the Eyes of its First Employee

Mr. Ruben Barbado, Senior Protection Officer. Former Protection Officer and Head of the Protection Team in UNHCR Trinidad and Tobago

When Ruben Barbado first embarked on his 11-year career with UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, he had no idea it would lead him to the land of the hummingbird, steel pan, and carnival.

Yet, in 2016, after joining UNHCR in 2009, he found himself establishing UNHCR's first Trinidad and Tobago office — pivotally initiating dialogue with the Ministry of National Security, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Office of the Attorney General and the Division of Immigration, along with partners like the Living Water Community.

At that time, most refugees and asylum-seekers were from Cuba and Syria, with only five Venezuelan nationals as new arrivals in the country. Then, in 2017, Barbado explained, there was a slow but continuous inflow of Venezuelan nationals. As more fled the deteriorating socio-economic situation and insecurity in their homeland, UNHCR's focus shifted from advocacy to assistance.

"When the numbers grew, we had to consider how to accommodate asylum-seekers and refugees, and help them integrate in a context where they were unable to enjoy full

access to such services as education — while exposed to xenophobia, discrimination, exploitation and abuse," Barbado explained.

"We also had to consider how the increasing numbers of refugees might have a disproportionate impact on the country and how, as part of the UN family, we could support the Government. It was a challenge, as we had to move from advocacy to being more present in the field, engaging with local communities and refugees themselves, offering assistance and also supporting and expanding the protection networks with our partners — because the people coming in were in dire need and desperate for help." UNHCR, like the IOM, has found increased demand for the services provided by the organization in recent years, as attention to the needs of displaced persons increased globally, and in the Caribbean.

As Head of Protection, Barbado's arrival signalled an effort to establish a presence to support the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to develop its own refugee legislation and national capacity for determining refugee status.

Barbado, who will shortly move on from Trinidad and Tobago to take up another post, reflected on his assignment in the land of steelpan. "I feel privileged to have spent my career in service to others and learning that even in the most difficult circumstances there is always hope," he said.

Barbado's career at UNHCR began, in fact, in Venezuela. In 2009, he first took up a post as an Associate Protection Officer in Guasdalito, a remote city in the southwest of the country. He recalls sailing on a pirogue on the Arauca River, which borders Venezuela and Colombia, filled with passion. "I remember being in the middle of the river one day, commuting from one side of the border to the other to visit communities and assess their needs. It was raining cats and dogs; there were four of us on a little boat. And I remember being amazed that life goes on despite the most complicated situations, pinching myself just thinking I am being paid to do this."

That was just the beginning of an adventure that would take Barbado to many places: Mexico City, UNHCR Headquarters in Geneva, then

to Kabul before landing in Trinidad and Tobago. During these “adventurous years”, his prior years training as a lawyer, working with the Spanish Refugee Commission for Aid to Refugees (CEAR) in Madrid and with Amnesty International in London, served him well.

On the cusp of his next adventure, Barbado remains energized, first and foremost, by the displaced populations he serves. “After experiencing things you and I would never want to face in our lifetime, you see how people continue to have hope, to create and do marvellous things,” he concluded. The Hummingbird wishes him well as he continues his journey. ■



Photo of St. George's Grenada (courtesy Pixabay)

## Citizenship investors make Grenada number one choice in Caribbean

The government of Grenada has announced a 25% increase in successful citizenship applications in the first half of 2020, with more than 500 granted between January to June.

Experts say that Grenada’s success validates its strategy of maintaining its pricing in the face of drastic reductions from its competitors. It can afford to do this because it is the only country offering visa-free travel to China and the opportunity of living in the United States through its E2 visa programme.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has seen the demand for Grenadian second citizenship increase significantly,” said Mohammed Asaria, managing director of Range Developments, a property developer on the island. “Grenada has maintained its price point cementing its position as a quality and unique product.”

Investors say that they welcome the degree of scrutiny from the government of Grenada, which roots out rogue developers who try to play with the laws and discount CBI offerings. In July, the CBI office issued a circular with a stern warning that it would not tolerate such activity. Because the application process is fully digitized, there were no delays to applications.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has shown glaring differences between both the countries offering a quality product as well as the developers,” said Asaria.

“There has been a flight to quality. Notwithstanding global challenges, we have shown our commitment in these turbulent times to the strategic development of properties on the island.”

Range Developments is the leading citizenship-by-investment developer in the region, having successfully built the Park Hyatt St Kitts and the Cabrits Resort Kempinski Dominica. ■



## Government of Jamaica to invest in textbooks, ebooks and apps

The government will be spending JMD \$826 million on the acquisition of textbooks in this academic year, including electronic books (ebooks) and learning apps.

This was disclosed by minister of education, youth, and information, Fayval Williams, who noted that the ministry has provided the full complement of textbooks needed by schools for this term. She said that approximately JMD \$626 million will be spent on material for the primary level and JMD \$200 million for secondary schools under the national textbook loan scheme and the primary textbook programme.

The Minister made these announcements at a recent virtual press conference. She noted also that at the lower primary level (grades one to three), the usual workbooks are being provided for integrated studies and mathematics, and for the first time, the ministry will provide workbooks for the upper primary level (grades five and six) for the new academic year.

"So, parents do not have to buy these workbooks this year. This initiative, we believe, will assist in alleviating the financial challenges being faced by parents during this coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic," the education minister said.

In terms of the secondary level, Minister Williams noted that a blended and or a phased approach is being used, where students will have access to hard copy workbooks and textbooks.

"Additionally, we will be piloting ebooks and other e-content for the various subject areas at a cost of approximately JMD \$200 million," she said.

The Minister informed that 38,000 ebooks are being procured for the new school year for the specified subject areas.

For grade nine, ebooks will be available on separate science; grades seven to 11, English language; and grades 10 and 11 will have access to principles of business and principles of accounts.

"It must be noted that most of the ebooks this year are flat books, meaning PDF (Portable Document Format) and thus are not interactive. Research shows however, that full interactivity is most impactful at the primary level rather than at the secondary level," she said.

Minister Williams further noted that at the secondary level, only one approved title per subject is procured for each school.

"This means that students will receive access codes for either English For All or English Matters Book 1. The title of the books given to each school is based on the orders previously submitted by the schools." ■



## Greater focus on regional agriculture

The CARICOM Development Fund (CDF) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), signed a General Agreement for Technical Cooperation, which will establish a broad framework for collaboration on initiatives geared towards the advancement of agriculture development in the Caribbean region.

While the vital importance of the agricultural sector as a pillar of growth and stability for Caribbean economies has been dramatized by the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on food and nutrition security, most countries in the Caribbean face several systemic constraints on their capacity for sustainable food production.

Many farmers, agro-processors, and other small and medium-sized enterprises in the sector continue to be confronted with challenges to their attempts to scale up production including access to financing, vulnerability to the effects of natural hazards and climate change, limited land space, the satisfaction of

international market standards, competition from imports and limited capacity to innovate and adopt best practices.

In addition, the region's high food import bill puts additional strain on foreign exchange reserves. Solutions call for greater efforts at not only increasing levels of production and enhancing productivity among farmers and processors, but also ensuring improved linkages between producers, processors, and buyers of food, including in the tourism sector.

Over the past decade, the CDF has provided in excess of US \$23 million in direct financing and technical assistance to the less developed and disadvantaged countries of CARICOM to enhance agricultural production capability, infrastructure, and competitiveness, while IICA has, for almost 78 years, focused on providing technical cooperation of excellence with a view to strengthening institutional capacities of public, private and civil society and supporting the integration mechanism

required to achieve sustainable and equitable agriculture development.

"This agreement strengthens our initiatives in the Caribbean countries to increase productivity, add value and link between producers and local markets, in order to reduce imports and guarantee the food security of their inhabitants, together with a partner, such as CDF, who knows the region very well", stated the Director-General of IICA, Manuel Otero.

The Chief Executive Officer of the CDF, Rodinald Soomer, highlighted the importance of the partnership with IICA "to the consolidation of CDF's efforts at strengthening the productive base of agriculture in the Caribbean region, as the foundation for increasing the contribution of agriculture to intra-regional trade and economic growth, especially in the disadvantaged countries and regions in the Community." ■

# Grilled Spicy Shrimp Tacos

Prep time: 15 mins

Cook time: 25 mins

Additional: 1 hr

Servings: 20 tacos

## What you will need:

### Shrimp Marinade:

- 1 ½ cups lime juice
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon mayonnaise
- 3 pounds uncooked medium shrimp, peeled and deveined

### Chipotle Sauce:

- ½ cup enchilada sauce
- ½ (4 ounce) jar diced jalapeno peppers
- 5 teaspoons honey
- 3 teaspoons lime juice
- salt to taste

### Red Slaw:

- ½ head red cabbage, shredded, or more to taste
- 2 bunches scallions, chopped
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons white vinegar
- 1 small bunch cilantro, chopped
- 20 (8 inch) corn tortillas

## How to Make it:

Step 1: Mix lime juice, olive oil, chili powder, and mayonnaise together in a bowl. Add shrimp and marinade for at least 1 hour.

Step 2: Mix enchilada sauce, jalapenos, honey, lime juice, and salt together in a separate bowl for the sauce.

Step 3: Toss cabbage with scallions, olive oil, vinegar, and cilantro in a large bowl for the slaw.

Step 4: Heat tortillas in a frying pan over medium-high heat, about 30 seconds per side. Keep warm.

Step 5: Preheat an outdoor grill for medium heat and lightly oil the grate.

Step 6: Remove shrimp from marinade. Grill until opaque, about 5 minutes. Add shrimp to each tortilla; top with the sauce and slaw.



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