

Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) and the University of the West Indies (UWI)



Port of Spain (April 13th, 2011) - The Secretary General Ambassador Luis Fernando Andrade Falla and Vice Chancellor of UWI Mona Professor E. Nigel Harris signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), and the University of the West Indies with Centre Headquarters located in Mona Jamaica, which represents the Cave Hill Campus in Barbados, St. Augustine Campus in Trinidad & Tobago as well as the Open Campus (hereinafter all referred to as UWI).

Secretary General Ambassador Luis Fernando Andrade Falla stated that, "It is the development of the agenda of the Caribbean Sea that has allowed to assess the importance, scope and dimension of the strategic relationship between the University of West Indies and the Association of Caribbean States " .

"The results of this effort is largely recognized in the UN resolution which was adopted last year by the 65th General Assembly entitled, " Towards the Sustainable Development of the Caribbean Sea for present and future Generations "

" The relationship between UWI and the AEC in light of the success of this dynamic work where the involvement of St Augustine campus here in Trinidad and Tobago, Cave Hill Campus in Barbados, Mona Campus in Jamaica opened our cooperation to other focal areas in which both entities could further strengthen their synergies as it has developed the agenda of the Caribbean Sea. "

“ The Memorandum of Understanding is an instrument that comes to give an overview of this relationship and a broader perspective in which both parties may coordinate and implement projects and activities effectively and efficiently complying with mandates.”

“ The Wider Caribbean region facing enormous challenges and growing threats to sustainable development among which are the effects of climate change and the deterioration of the marine ecosystem, requires this kind of partnership which clearly shows that the combined and complementary efforts of our institutions contribute to the region in the best manner than if each of the parties were to act separately and independently to achieve our goals.”

During this historic ceremony, H.E.Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in his capacity as Chairman of ACS Ministerial Council, stated that this MOU with ACS and UWI should assist in creating an innovative human resource pool through capacity building. The congruence between the objectives of the ACS and UWI are therefore vividly apparent. Hence, the conclusion of the MOU established a model for collaboration among regional institutions. Moreover, H.E. Rambachan defined the envisaged cooperation between the ACS and the University of the West Indies as multifaceted and stated that it will provide a platform for regional scholars to contribute to the sustainable development of the Greater Caribbean; providing an opportunity for practical learning and development while promoting the aims and objectives of the ACS and which is mutually beneficial to both parties.

In addition Professor E. Nigel Harris Vice Chancellor of the UWI Mona expressed his gratitude to represent the University of the West Indies at this significant event. An MOU for cooperation in research, particularly as it pertains to the work of the Caribbean Sea Commission, and broadly in the area of sustainable development.

Professor E. Nigel Harris made mention of the Caribbean Sea Ecosystems Assessment Report (CARSEA) as one of the collaborative efforts which set out in very clear terms the important relationship between the Caribbean marine ecosystems and the daily life of the people in the region. Since the submission of the CARSEA Report, UWI has entered into several collaborative arrangements with international and regional organizations in order to develop and deliver on projects that will be beneficial to the marine ecosystems. Professor Harris stated that he himself committed UWI as a keen participant in delivering on the recommendations and the promise of that Report, and this MOU takes that one step forward by deepening the relationship between UWI and ACS.

During this historic event, also present were distinguished invitees such as Professor Clement Sankat, Principal of UWI St. Augustine, Dr. David Rampersad, Director Business Development UWI, Mr. Sharan Singh, Director International Office UWI, Professor John Agard, Expert, Caribbean Sea Commission, UWI St. Augustine, Dr. Michelle Scobie, Lecturer, IIR - UWI St. Augustine, Mr. Richard Robertson, Seismic Research Centre, UWI, Dr. Riyadh Insanally, OAS Representative, Office of the OAS General Secretariat in TT and I ACS Political Adviser, Mr. Anthony David Edghill, Director of CARICOM and Caribbean Affairs, TT MFA, Mr. Gideon Hanomansingh, Director Communications TT MFA, Ms. Avita Bridgelal, Personal Assistance to the Minister, TT MFA, Mr. Victor Ramírez,

Embassy of Guatemala, P.O.S, Mr. Anil Gupta, High Commission of India, POS., and Ms. Shelly Harper, Communications Unit UWI.