

**OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE V SUMMIT OF THE HEADS OF STATE AND/OR GOVERNMENT
OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES IN HAITI**

**V SOMMET DES CHEFS D'ETAT
ET DE GOUVERNEMENT DE
L'ASSOCIATION DES ETATS DE LA CARAIBE**



Port au Prince, Haiti (April 5th, 2013) - The Ministry of Foreign and Affairs and Worship of Haiti in conjunction with the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), officially launched the V Summit of Heads of State and/or Government of the Association of Caribbean States on Wednesday, April 3rd. The Summit will take place from April 23rd to 26th in Haiti. Present were the Honourable Minister Pierre Richard Casimir, Minister of Foreign and Affairs of Haiti; Ambassador Alfonso Múnera, Secretary General of the ACS and Mr. Watson Denis, National Coordinator of the 5th Summit of the ACS.

This year's summit, themed: "Revitalizing the Vision of the Association of Caribbean States for a Stronger and More United Greater Caribbean," will host twenty-nine (29) Heads of Government and is, notably, the first Summit to be held in the Republic of Haiti.

Minister Casimir expressed his support of the Martelly-Lamothe government's decision to host this auspicious event, citing it as 'justified by the desire to consolidate the regional strategic positioning that the country has acquired during the past two years.' He further added that the hosting of the Summit is an achievement that the Republic of Haiti can be proud of.

Ambassador Múnera echoed the sentiments of Minister Casimir. He mentioned that he was aware of the role Haiti played in the Caribbean countries and in the international arena. "I am deeply convinced that there is not a better place to host such an event. It is impossible to speak of the Caribbean and not mention the spiritual and political leadership of Haiti. All the countries of the Caribbean and Latin America are grateful to this Nation, which opened the way to freedom for many people of the region," disclosed Ambassador Múnera.

Secretary General Múnera also met with the President of Haiti, His Excellency Michel Martelly on April 4th, who also mirrored the sentiments of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship, stating that it is an honour to host the event.

This year's Summit will focus on issues relating to sustainable tourism, air and maritime transport, trade, and disaster risk reduction and its results will be mutually positive for both Haiti and the wider Caribbean, as affirmed by the Secretary General.

It is expected that the Summit will not only facilitate discussion, but approve the Declaration of Haiti, a document on institutional transformation of the future of the ACS, as well as the Plan of Action, which seeks to strengthen the concerted and collaborative strategy for cooperation in the thrust for development of the Member and Associate Member States of the region.

Since its establishment, the ACS has organised four (4) Summits of Heads of State and Government, which took place in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, in August 1995; Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, in April 1999; Margarita Island, Venezuela, in December 2001; and Panama City, Republic of Panama, in July 2005.