

PM Mottley Congratulates ACS on Silver Anniversary



Congratulatory Remarks by The Honourable Mia Amor Mottley, Q.C., M.P.

Prime Minister of Barbados, on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS)

It is with great honour and pride that Barbados, as the current Chair of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), joins with fellow Member States to celebrate the silver Anniversary of the ACS on July 24, 2019.

As the ACS celebrates its twenty-fifth year of existence, Barbados is pleased with the considerable work and accomplishments the ACS has been able to achieve within the Greater Caribbean, as it seeks to solidify the region not only as a significant economic force but also as a peace-promoting geopolitical entity, despite considerable differences in geographical size, language, economy and

culture.

Historically, the Caribbean region has endured a myriad of challenges. It is therefore highly praiseworthy that the ACS, throughout its twenty-five years of existence, and buttressed by effective and focused leadership, has sought to ensure that the work programme and budget of the Association has always remained targeted on objectives that are truly critical to the survival and sustainable development of our region and its people.

For those of us who lead countries, our mission and purpose is to maintain the fundamental character of our states and to ensure the survival and longevity of our people. The Caribbean Sea is one of the great bases and instruments of regional integration due to its multifaceted purpose, for not only does it sustain us economically, but it also unifies our Greater Caribbean region. It is therefore important that the ACS, through the Caribbean Sea Commission, has sought to accomplish not only the fundamental objectives of the Association, but to develop ways in which this critical resource must be preserved and conserved.

The recognition by the Government of Barbados of the value of the Caribbean Sea has been demonstrated by the establishment of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy.

Barbados' maritime space is several hundred times greater than our land mass. We are therefore determined to ensure that our government is adequately equipped to manage this resource effectively, and we look forward to working hand in hand with the ACS on this great mission.

The countries of the Greater Caribbean region have for many years worked hard within the Association of Caribbean States as well as in the international arena, particularly at the United Nations, to advance the proposal to have the Caribbean Sea recognised internationally as a Special Area within the context of Sustainable Development.

These commendable efforts have also led to the designation of the Greater Caribbean Region as a Zone of Sustainable Tourism, where Member States pursue common sustainable tourism development policies, exchange best practices and establish joint tourism destinations. Through these mechanisms and practices of development, the ACS is gradually steering the Greater Caribbean Region to its rightful destiny as a zone of environmental best practices and sustainable development.

Barbados shoulders Chairmanship of the ACS at a time when hemispheric geo-politics demand that the Region maintains its identity as a Zone of Peace, thereby creating an enabling environment for attaining shared sustainable development goals in our Greater Caribbean region.

In closing, the Government of Barbados wishes to commend all ACS Member States for contributing to the Association over the past twenty-five years. As we pursue the survival and prosperity of the Greater Caribbean and its people, the continued commitment and support of all of us is critical in attaining the all-important mandates of our Association of Caribbean States.

I thank you.