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FOURTH INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

**Caribbean regional seminar on the implementation of the Fourth
International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism:
pursuing goals and addressing needs of
the Non-Self-Governing Territories**

Caracas, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

14 to 16 May 2024

**STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND
THE CARIBBEAN**



UNITED NATIONS



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Fourth International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism:
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**STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

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Focal Point for the Associate Member Territories

Involvement of the Non-Self-Governing Territories of the Caribbean in the activities of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Reporting period: 2023-2024

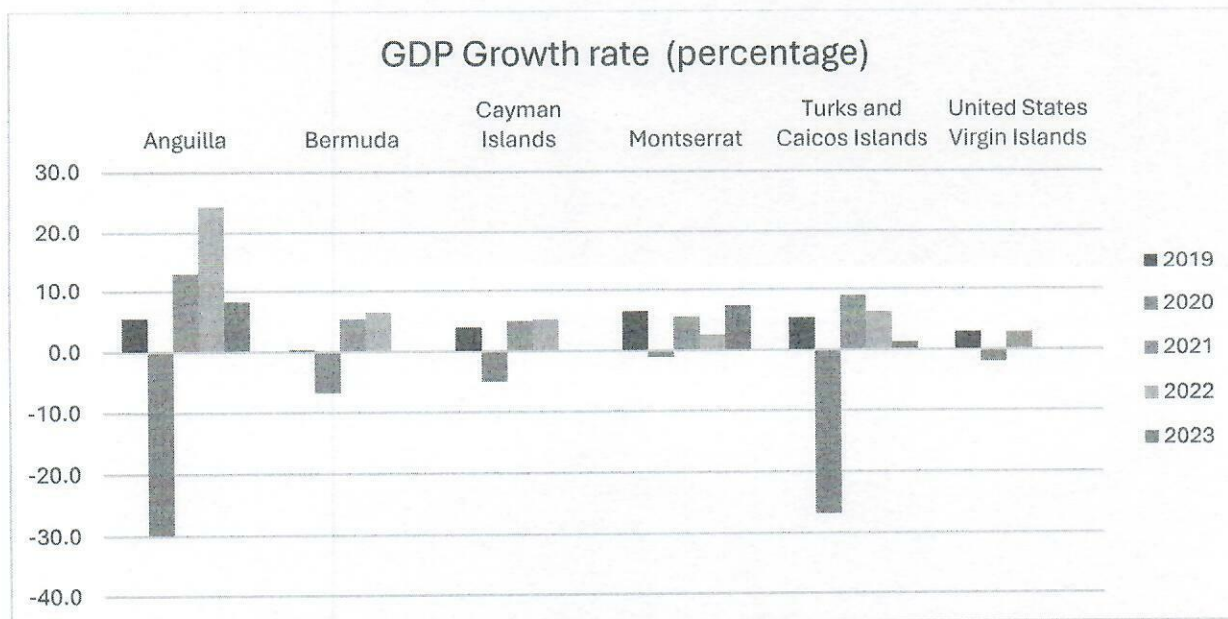
Madam Chair,

On behalf of the Executive Secretary, Mr. José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, I thank the Committee for once again inviting ECLAC to participate in this Regional Seminar.

The Non-Self-Governing Territories (NSGTs) of the Caribbean¹ continue to experience serious sustainable development challenges, as well as barriers to access funds to address those challenges.

With your permission, I will briefly elaborate on these challenges, and provide insight into the work of the Commission in support of the Territories.

Limited information is available to ascertain what the current economic situation is for most NSGTs. For Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, and the United States Virgin Islands, no 2023 data is available on GDP growth rate. Since 2020, the economy of Anguilla has rebounded well, with 24.2% growth in 2022, and 8.1% in 2023, while the economy of the Turks and Caicos Islands remains challenged, with only 6.2% and 1.2% growth in 2022 and 2023, respectively. The economy of Montserrat, which experienced only a very small loss of 1.1% in 2020, has nevertheless been slow to recover, with growth rates only exceeding 2019-levels in 2023.



¹ Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands and United States Virgin Islands.

The global increase in prices has had a significant impact on the Territories. Inflation rates, which exceeded 5% in most Territories in 2022, fell to more normal levels of 3-4% in 2023. However, analyses conducted in the Territories have highlighted ongoing challenges across various segments of the population, with the territory Governments implementing several poverty-reduction measures that are expected to have a positive impact on SDGs 1, 2, and 10, at a minimum. Nevertheless, given the limited resources many Territories are working with, and the already high debt burden being carried by some, the additional cost associated with these measures may result in delayed progress towards other Goals.

Climate change remains a serious threat to the survival and well-being of people in the Territories. As highlighted by the IPCC, “small islands are increasingly affected by increases in temperature, the growing impacts of tropical cyclones, storm surges, droughts, changing precipitation patterns, sea level rise, coral bleaching and invasive species, all of which are already detectable across both natural and human systems”.² This critical situation also applies to the Territories, where, for example, sea levels are projected to be above the world average, and in particular, is expected to be between 17.1cm and 25.1cm by the middle of the century, thus inundating up to 2.21% of land in the Cayman Islands, and affecting up to 6.39% of the population of the Turks and Caicos Islands³.

Territory	Sea-level rise (cm)	Percentage of land inundated	Percentage of population affected
Anguilla	20.2	1.14%	2.85%
Bermuda	21	1.05%	0.47%
British Virgin Islands	22.8	1.80%	2.23%
Cayman Islands	25.1	2.21%	1.48%
Montserrat	17.1	0.35%	0.29%
Turks and Caicos Islands	24.8	2%	6.39%
United States Virgin Islands	22.85	0.50%	0.70%

In addition to sea-level rise, continued increases in temperature are projected for the Leeward Islands,⁴ with further intensification during the hot seasons, with high to extremely high heat impact potential by 2030, along with more frequent and more intense heatwaves.⁵ In the Cayman Islands, periods of high temperatures have already led to incidences of heat stress in livestock, affecting both the animals’ health and productivity. Further temperature increases are expected to lead to more frequent heat stress events, affecting livestock and humans.⁶ Bermuda, which is located further north in the Atlantic Ocean, is also expecting heat stress events to increase, with an impact in

² IPCC, Sixth Assessment Report: Fact sheet – small islands

https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/outreach/IPCC_AR6_WGII_FactSheet_SmallIslands.pdf

³ UNDP, Human Climate Horizons, Intermediate Emissions, by mid-century (2024-2059), <https://horizons.hdr.undp.org/#/>

⁴ Which includes Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat and the United States Virgin Islands.

⁵ Van Meerbeeck CJ, Zermoglio F, & Bonnin Roncerel A. (2020). “OECS CCASAP Country/Territorial Analysis: Resilience to climate change at a glance” (Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, and Montserrat). <https://rcc.cimh.edu.bb/ccasap/>

⁶ Cefas (2022), Cayman Islands Climate Change Evidence Report, UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology

particular on those who work outdoors. These workers may also have lower coping capacity for heat-induced illnesses,⁷ as a result of inequality in access to income and welfare, including health insurance.

Finally, the SIDS Agenda is highly relevant for the Territories, considering, in particular, their limited voice on the global stage. At ECLAC's recently convened Seventh meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development (LAC Forum), the Special Envoy of the Premier of the British Virgin Islands in underscoring the vital importance of a new agenda for SIDS, noted with concern, that the Zero Draft Outcome Document of the Fourth International Conference of Small Island Developing States⁸ made no mention of the associate members of the regional commissions. He further noted that there were gaps in support, including in access to climate finance and development finance, and drew attention to the fact that to advance their development, the Territories were being pushed to borrow at commercial rates they could ill-afford. He entreated recall of the compelling petition of Agenda 2030, to "leave no one behind".

Madam Chair,

ECLAC is proud to count all the NSGTs of the Caribbean among its Associate Members. We strive to include the Territories in all our activities, and in this regard, they have remained engaged participants in the wide variety of intergovernmental and technical meetings, capacity-building efforts, and studies conducted by the Commission over the past year (see Annex).

Our mission to deepen the understanding of the development challenges facing the Caribbean, including the NSGTs, and to contribute to solutions, remains resolute. To that end, paragraph 120 of the outcome document of the recent LAC Forum recognized the specific political and economic constraints of the associate members, and their vulnerabilities in their pursuit of sustainable development, and encouraged their continued inclusion, where appropriate, in the work of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies.⁹

However, the lack of access to funding, including from United Nations sources, remains a challenge for our conducting activities with the NSGTs. This is unfortunate, given the increasing severity of the challenges experienced by the Territories, and the numerous requests we have received from them for support. This remains of great concern to the member States of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee¹⁰, who at its twenty-ninth session in 2022, adopted resolution 111 on support for the NSGTs and the other Associate Members of ECLAC. The resolution requested the full implementation of General Assembly resolutions in support of the NSGTs and other AMCs, and requested ECLAC to consider the annual deployment of resources for technical assistance in the

⁷ Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences, "Climate Change and Bermuda: Part II: Impacts and societal risks"

⁸ Zero Draft Outcome Document: Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States, https://sdgs.un.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/Clean%20version%20SIDS4_Zero_draft_Outcome_Document_0.pdf

⁹ "Intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations of the Seventh meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development", LC/FDS.7/5, 18 April 2024

¹⁰ A permanent intergovernmental body of ECLAC, the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee was established in 1975, pursuant to ECLAC resolution 358(XVI), to promote and strengthen economic and social cooperation and integration among the countries of the Caribbean and to promote cooperation between them and the countries and integration processes of Latin America and the Caribbean. <https://www.cepal.org/en/about-eclac/subsidiary-bodies>

design and implementation of policies. We continue to pursue this issue, and we appeal to this Committee to assist us in addressing the barriers preventing the establishment of a predictable and durable programme of support for these Territories, in line with the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

Altogether, ECLAC looks forward to continuing our support of, and engagement with the Territories, to address these challenges and promote their sustainable development aspirations.

Madam Chair,

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you.

Annex

Strategic engagement with the Non-Self-Governing Territories by ECLAC

(2023-2024)

Date	Title/Event	Data on NSGT/NSGT participated						
		AIA	BMU	VGB	CYM	MSR	TCA	VIR
Intergovernmental meetings								
3 and 4 May 2023	Twenty-second meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC	X		X			X	
4 and 5 September 2023	Caribbean Forum on Population and Development					X		
11 and 12 October 2023	Sixty-fifth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean	X						
3 November 2023	Twenty-first meeting of the Monitoring Committee			X		X		
15–18 April 2024	Seventh meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development			X				
Publications								
April 22, 2024	<u>An assessment of urban expansion in Caribbean small island developing State: the cases of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago</u>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
March 2024	<u>The Hummingbird Vol. 11 No. 3</u>			X				
March 18, 2024	<u>Preliminary overview of the economies of the Caribbean 2022–2023</u>	X				X		
March 11, 2024	<u>Exploring the notion of a Caribbean emissions trading scheme: financing the greening of Caribbean economies</u>					X		
February, 2024	<u>The Hummingbird Vol. 11 No. 2</u>	X		X	X	X	X	

Date	Title/Event	Data on NSGT/NSGT participated						
		AIA	BMU	VGB	CYM	MSR	TCA	VIR
February 16, 2024	Population and development in the Caribbean (2018–2023): accelerating implementation of the Montevideo Consensus	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
January, 2024	The Hummingbird Vol. 11 No. 1	X				X	X	
January 22, 2024	International migration and sustainable development in the Caribbean: an analysis of data trends from 2000 to 2020	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
December 29, 2023	Progress in implementation of the Samoa Pathway: Caribbean regional synthesis report	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
November 2023	The Hummingbird Vol. 10 No. 11	X			X			
October 2023	The Hummingbird Vol. 10 No. 10					X		
September 2023	The Hummingbird Vol. 10 No. 9			X		X	X	
September 2023	FOCUS magazine, Issue 3, 2023: Addressing water security in the Caribbean	X		X	X	X	X	X
August 2023	The Hummingbird Vol. 10 No. 8	X						
June 29, 2023	Advancing geospatial information management for disaster risk management in the Caribbean	X	X	X	X	X	X	
June 2023	FOCUS magazine, Issue 2, 2023: Addressing key challenges to sustainable growth and development in the Caribbean	X				X		
April 2023	The Hummingbird Vol. 10 No. 4				X			
March 2023	The Hummingbird Vol. 10 No. 3	X		X	X	X		X
March 24, 2023	The importance of time-use surveys in guiding social	X		X	X		X	

Date	Title/Event	Data on NSGT/NSGT participated						
		AIA	BMU	VGB	CYM	MSR	TCA	VIR
	<u>policies: the gendered impact of COVID-19 on paid and unpaid work in the Caribbean</u>							
February 2023	<u>The Hummingbird Vol. 10 No. 2</u>	X		X				
February 27, 2023	<u>Policy considerations for sustainable transportation in three Caribbean small island developing States: options for improving land transportation efficiency. Barbados, the British Virgin Islands and Jamaica</u>			X				
February 6, 2023	<u>The ageing Caribbean: 20 years of the Madrid Plan of Action</u>	X	X	X	X	X		X
January 2023	<u>The Hummingbird Vol. 10 No. 1</u>			X				
January 31, 2023	<u>Economic Survey of the Caribbean 2022</u>	X				X		
January 17, 2023	<u>Preliminary overview of the economies of the Caribbean 2021–2022</u>	X				X		
January 16, 2023	<u>Statistical literacy: an enabler of statistical capacity development in the Caribbean</u>		X			X		
January 10, 2023	<u>Digital inclusion in Caribbean digital transformation frameworks and initiatives: a review</u>	X		X				
January 2, 2023	<u>Improving broadband quality and affordability in the Caribbean: Policies to advance digital inclusion in the subregion. Policy Brief</u>	X	X	X	X	X		
Technical meetings								
18 September 2023	<u>Expert group meeting on measuring the digital society</u>						X	

Date	Title/Event	Data on NSGT/NSGT participated						
		AIA	BMU	VGB	CYM	MSR	TCA	VIR
	<u>to advance digital inclusion in the Caribbean</u>							
7 September 2023	<u>Expert group meeting on international migration and sustainable development in the Caribbean: an analysis of data trends from 2000 to 2020</u>	X				X	X	
Capacity-building								
1- 2 November 2023	<u>Seminar on positioning the Caribbean in the knowledge economy: the role of data</u>			X		X		
19–21 April 2023	<u>Workshop on the implementation of global guidelines to strengthen geospatial information management in the Caribbean</u>					X		