



TRADE/2025/17/PAANN

Original language: English

Last updated: 22nd May 2025

ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES (ACS)

17th ACS BUSINESS FORUM OF THE GREATER CARIBBEAN

May 27th, 2025 | Claustro de las Ánimas, Convention Center - Cartagena de Indias, Colombia

Theme: Empowering the Greater Caribbean: Digital Pathways to Sustainable Growth

AGENDA

| TIME | ACTIVITY |
|---------------------|---|
| 08:30 AM – 09:00 AM | Registration |
| 09:00 AM – 9:45 AM | OPENING CEREMONY – WELCOME REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Her Excellency Noemí Espinoza Madrid, Secretary General of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS)• His Excellency Sergio Díaz-Granados, Executive President of the CAF-Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean• Mrs. Carmen Caballero, President of Procolombia• H.E. Julián Molina Gómez, Minister of Information Technology and Communications of Colombia. <p>Mistress of Ceremony: Mrs. Elisabet Torres, ACS Officer-in-Charge and Advisor, Directorate for Transport, Trade and Sustainable Development</p> OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION / OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH |
| 9:45 AM – 10:45 AM | KEYNOTE ADDRESSES <p><i>Theme: "Empowering the Greater Caribbean: Digital Pathways to Sustainable Growth"</i></p> <p>The feature addresses would explore the intersection of digital transformation and sustainability in advancing regional trade. The speakers would begin by outlining the current trade landscape, highlighting the region's dependence on traditional trade systems and the disruptions caused by global phenomena such as the pandemic, AI technologies, etc. The addresses would emphasize how digital tools such as e-commerce platforms, paperless trade systems, and artificial intelligence can streamline logistics, reduce inefficiencies, and improve cross-border trade processes. Additionally, the speakers will also be invited to explore how</p> |

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| | <p>technology can support regional cooperation and the harmonization of policies so as to better connect Greater Caribbean countries and to connect the region to the rest of the world. The addresses would also acknowledge challenges, such as infrastructure gaps, cybersecurity concerns, and resistance to digital adoption, while stressing the need for capacity building and cross-sector collaboration.</p> <p>Moderator: Mrs. Elisabet Torres, Officer-in-Charge and Advisor, Directorate for Transport, Trade and Sustainable Development, Association of Caribbean States (ACS)</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. Stacy Richards-Kennedy, Regional Manager for the Caribbean and Representative in Barbados, CAF-Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean • Mrs. María Fernanda Quiñones, Executive President, Chamber of E-Commerce of Colombia • Mrs. Gabriela Ramos, Assistant Director-General of Social and Human Sciences, The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) |
| 10:45AM – 11:00 AM | Coffee Break / Exhibition Visit /Group Photograph |
| 11:00 AM- 12:30 PM | <p>PANEL 1</p> <p><i>Theme: "Facing Trade Challenges in the Caribbean: Trade Promotion Strategies"</i></p> <p>This Panel will be a discussion among Trade and Investment Promotion Organizations (TIPOs). This panel will be a discussion among Trade and Investment Promotion Organisations (TIPOs). The objective is to analyse the different approaches implemented as promotional strategies by the governments of ACS member countries facing the challenges presented by a changing trade environment with the aim to continue supporting the process of internationalisation of sustainable exports, investment and tourism.</p> <p>Moderator: Mrs. Safiya Peters, Advisor, Directorate for Transport, Trade and Sustainable Development, Association of Caribbean States (ACS)</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Nicolás Mejía, Vicepresident of Exports, ProColombia |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Wendy Palma-Beckford, Jamaica Business Development Corporation, Jamaica Ms. Monique Usher, Deputy Director of BELTRAIDE, Belize Trade and Investment Development Service (BELTRAIDE) Ms. Ligia Hernández, Advisor to the Vice-Ministry of Integration and Foreign Trade, Republic of Guatemala |
| 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM | Lunch |
| 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM | <p>PANEL 2</p> <p><i>Theme: "Crossing frontiers: opportunities and success stories in regional paperless trade"</i></p> <p>The Panel will explore the challenges and opportunities for strengthening digitalisation of cross-border trade in the Greater Caribbean Region taking into consideration the differences in the levels of implementation of paperless trade among countries. Based on success stories and effective national strategies to improve interoperability, digital infrastructure and trust in the e-processes will be analysed. In addition, the impact of the connectivity gap on the adoption of these technologies will be addressed, as well as the importance of SMEs inclusion of in digital trade. The discussion will seek to generate recommendations to ensure the digitisation of regional trade by promoting more equitable market access, export growth and the adoption of sustainable trade practices.</p> <p>Moderator: Mr. Rafael Laurentino, Head of the Department of Physical and Digital Integration, Latin American Integration Association (ALADI)</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Luis Felipe Quintero, Viceminister of External Trade, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce, Republic of Colombia Mr. Darwin Telemaque, Port Manager, Antigua Port Authority, Antigua and Barbuda Ms. Patricia Telle, Vice-president of the Territorial Assembly and President of the International Cooperation Commission, Territorial Collectivity of Martinique. Ms. Helena Castañeda, Director of Regional Integration, CAF - Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean |

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| 3:00 PM – 3:15 PM | Coffee Break |
| 3:15 PM - 4:45 PM | <p>DISCUSSION</p> <p><i>Theme: "E-commerce in the Greater Caribbean, success stories"</i></p> <p>Through success stories, entrepreneurs will share the keys to the development of e-commerce as a growth strategy in the Caribbean region. Have borders really been blurred by e-commerce? Each entrepreneur will present the key factors in creating an enabling and sustainable climate for e-commerce in the Caribbean, as well as the challenges they have overcome in their respective countries.</p> <p>Moderator: Mr. Mauricio Agudelo, Senior Executive, Digital Transformation, CAF - Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Stephan De Roche, Chief Executive Officer of Buzz Media, Trinidad and Tobago • Mr. Juan Felipe Arango, Head of Acquisition Chile & Andino CLCOPECR, Zubale, Republic of Colombia • Ms. Luz M. Ramírez, Vice President of Consulting and Engineering at Integral S.A., Republic of Colombia • Mrs. Sandra Borda, AI & Data Solutions Sr Manager, Mercado Libre, Colombia |
| 4:45 PM – 5:00 PM | <p>CLOSING REMARKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Her Excellency Noemí Espinoza Madrid, Secretary General of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) • Her Excellency Laura Sarabia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia |
| 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM | CULTURAL ACTIVITY – CREOLE GROUP |
| 6:00 PM- 08:00 PM | COCKTAIL RECEPTION |
| 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM | VISIT TO THE EXHIBITION (HALL CLAUSTRO DE LAS ÁNIMAS) |

Note: At the end of each panel there will be a Question-and-Answer segment for the audience.