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ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES (ACS)

17TH BUSINESS FORUM OF THE GREATER CARIBBEAN

27th May 2025 – Convention Centre, Cartagena de Indias, Republic of Colombia

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

DRAFT ANNOTATED AGENDA

DAY 1: TUESDAY 27TH MAY 2025	
TIME	**ACTIVITY**
08:30 AM – 09:00 AM	Registration
09:00 AM – 9:45 AM AM	**OPENING CEREMONY – WELCOME REMARKS** • H.E. Noemi Espinoza Madrid, Secretary-General of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) • H.E. Sergio Díaz-Granados, Executive President of the CAF Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean • Chair of the Special Committee on Trade Development and External Economic Relations • Mrs. Carmen Cecilia Caballero, President of Procolombia • H.E. Julián Molina Gómez, Minister of Information Technology and Communications of Colombia • H.E. Cielo Rusinque Urrego, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Tourism of Colombia Master of Ceremony: Mrs. Elisabet Torres, ACS Officer-in-Charge and Advisor, Directorate for Transport, Trade and Sustainable Development **OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION / OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH**
9:45 AM – 10:45 AM	**KEYNOTE ADDRESSES** ***Theme: "Empowering the Greater Caribbean: Digital Pathways to Sustainable Growth"***

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	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 technology can support regional cooperation and the harmonization of policies 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.
10:45AM – 11:00 AM	Coffee Break / Exhibition Visit /Group Photograph
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM	**PANEL 1** ***Theme: "Facing Trade Challenges in the Caribbean: Trade Promotion Strategies"*** This Panel will be a discussion among Trade and Investment Promotion Organizations (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.
12:30 PM – 1:30 PM	Lunch
1:30 PM – 3:00 PM	**PANEL 2** ***Theme: "Crossing borders: opportunities and success stories in regional paperless trade"*** 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

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	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.
3:00 PM – 3:15 PM	Coffee Break
3:15 PM - 4:45 PM	**DISCUSSION** ***Theme: "'E-commerce in the Greater Caribbean, success stories"*** 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.
4:45 PM – 5:00 PM	**CLOSING REMARKS** • H.E. Noemi Espinoza Madrid, Secretary-General of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) • Representative from the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF) • H.E. Laura Sarabia, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia **CULTURAL ACTIVITY**
TBC	**COCKTAIL RECEPTION**
11:00 AM – 6:00 PM	**VISIT TO THE EXHIBITION**

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

DAY 2 – WEDNESDAY 28TH MAY 2025		
TIME	**ACTIVITY**	**LOCATION**
09:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Visit to Exhibition	CCCI