



# Caribbean Telecommunications Union

## DRAFT

### Minutes of the 19th General Conference of Ministers

Held on 20th September 2016

The Crane Resort, Crane, St. Philip, Barbados

#### Present were:

President	Barbados	Sen., the Hon. Darcy Boyce
	Anguilla	Mr. Vaughn Hazell
	Antigua and Barbuda	Ms. Joan Joseph
	Barbados	Mr. Jehue Wiltshire
		Mr. Clifford Bostic
	British Virgin Islands	Mr. Anthony McMaster
		Mr. Vance Lewis
	Dominica	Hon. Kever Darroux
		Mr. Bennette Thomas
	Grenada	Mr. Eric Nurse
	Guyana	Hon. Catherine Hughes
	Jamaica	Hon. Andrew Wheatley
		Mr. Trevor Forest
		Ms. Wahkeen Murray
	Suriname	Ms. Wendy Jap A Joe
	St. Kitts and Nevis	Ms. Eurta Chiverton
	St. Lucia	Mr. Phillip Dalsou
	St. Vincent and Grenadines	Hon. Camillo Gonsalves
	The Bahamas	Sen., the Hon. Z. C. Allison Maynard
		Gibson QC
		Mr. Stephen Bereaux
	Trinidad and Tobago	Hon. Maxie Cuffie
		Ms. Denise Duncan
		Ms. Shelly-Ann Clarke-Hinds
	Turks and Caicos Islands	Hon. George Lightbourne
		Mr. Ian Astwood
CTU Secretariat:	Secretary General	Ms. Bernadette Lewis
	Telecommunication Specialist	Mr. Nigel Cassimire
	Telecommunications Strategist	Mr. Selby Wilson
	Consultant	Mr. Trevor Prevatt

The meeting started at 10:45am with the playing of the National Anthem of Barbados and an invocation.

**1. Welcome and Call to Order**

The President of the CTU, Senator, the Hon. Darcy Boyce, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Energy, Immigration, Telecommunications and Investment for Barbados called the meeting to order. He thanked the CTU Secretariat for its thorough preparations for the meeting.

**2. Introduction of Delegations**

The President extended a warm welcome to participating Member States, in particular to the representative of Suriname, who was attending the meeting for the first time, and invited the Delegations to make their introductions. The Secretary General noted the presence of 15 Member States and reported that the meeting was therefore quorate.

**3. Adoption of the Agenda**

The agenda was amended to bring forward the 15:10 pm presentation by the Attorney General of The Bahamas, Senator, the Hon. Allison Maynard Gibson, to 12:00 in order to accommodate her travel itinerary. No further changes were made and on a motion by Barbados, seconded by Dominica, the agenda was adopted.

**4. Confirmation of the Minutes of the 18th General Conference**

There being no corrections to the Minutes, on a motion by Turks and Caicos Islands and seconded by Jamaica, the General Conference adopted the Minutes.

**5. Caribbean Candidacy for an ITU Council Seat**

The Bahamas indicated its willingness to be the English-speaking Caribbean's candidate for an International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Council Seat. There being no other expressions of interest, The Bahamas' candidacy was accepted and supported by the General Conference.

The President outlined some of the key learnings from the failed candidacy of Barbados to win an ITU Council seat and strongly suggested that persons with experience from Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago and the CTU Secretariat give their full support to ensure the success of the candidacy of The Bahamas.

The Attorney General of The Bahamas, Hon. Allison Maynard-Gibson, in making a formal acceptance of the candidacy, thanked the President and her colleague Ministers, their Permanent Secretaries, and the government officials of Barbados for the hospitality extended to the Bahamas delegation, which included Mr. Stephen Bereaux of the Bahamas' Utilities Regulation and Competition Authority (URCA) and Ms. Ryan Aubrey from the office of the Attorney General. The Attorney General assured the council of the commitment of The Bahamas to ICT Development in its country and the region because of its potential to impact and transform the lives of citizens.

The President asked the Secretary General to send out the appropriate correspondence requesting Member States to inform their respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs as to decision taken as regards The Bahamas's Candidacy. He indicated that those Ministries are a vital part of the process of ensuring The Bahamas' Candidacy will be successful.

## **6. Matters Arising**

The Secretary General took the meeting through the Matters Arising from the Minutes of the 18th General Conference of Ministers – Document 003, as follows:

### **Promoting the work of the CTU and presenting ICT perspectives to Members - Cabinet Roadshow**

CTU Secretariat Officials had met with the BVI's Premier and Government Caucus – its Cabinet and other Government members. The CTU discussed its mandate and provided an update on the work being undertaken regionally and the work done in the BVI specifically.

It was noted that the meeting was very productive and served to highlight the value of BVI's membership in the CTU and to enhance its understanding of the CTU's activities. BVI was appreciative of the meeting and the Premier of the BVI was particularly interested in how the BVI can leverage its IXP. The CTU undertook to provide resources to look at how this can be done, which could be by a workshop and other activities.

It was also noted that more Cabinet Roadshows are planned: St Kitts and Nevis – June 2016; Barbados – September 2016; and Guyana – the last quarter of 2016.

### **Membership Application by INDOTEL**

INDOTEL, the regulator in Dominican Republic (DR) had applied to join the CTU. However, given the constitutional impasse with respect to the people of Haitian descent in the Dominican Republic, the Secretary General indicated that CARICOM has taken a position that they will not engage with the Dominican Republic until the ruling has been revised, which has not yet been changed. As a result, the CTU had suspended the consideration of INDOTEL's application for membership.

### **Appointment of a Liaison**

Member States had been requested to appoint a liaison to work with the Secretariat. Various countries had submitted names and it was indicated that the CTU needs to receive the liaison officer from the remaining Member States.

### **Need for Sharing of Information among Member States**

A format had been circulated in previous years for use by all Member States to report on all their ICT initiatives. The report format was again circulated on 5th September 2016.

### **Member Feedback and CTU Performance Assessment**

Some preliminary investigations had been made into how the Executive Council could assess the organisation and its performance as well as its relationship with members. The Secretary General stated that such assessments are a very involved process and not as straight forward as previously thought. The matter has not progressed because of the severe human resource constraints within the Secretariat.

### **Civil Society Membership Application of the Puerto Rico Regulatory Board**

The membership application had been actioned and the Secretary General notified the Regulatory Board of its acceptance into the membership of the CTU. She noted, however, that the Board has not as yet paid its membership fee.

### **Caribbean Spectrum Management**

The member states were encouraged to move from analog to digital TV broadcasting and a Special Circular in this regard had been sent to Member States. The Secretary General indicated that as there is not a business case for the move, the Circular had not recommended a firm date by which the transition should be made. However, she noted that Broadcasters would be faced with obsolescence and other threats to their business if they did not make the transition.

She further indicated that before a date is given, a number of interventions need to take place to ensure the broadcasters understand the realities of the current environment and are adequately prepared to adopt new models. She indicated that the CTU had agreed to partner with the Caribbean Broadcasting Union (CBU) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), which would result in a special event for this purpose to be undertaken in January 2017.

### **CARICOM Commission on the Economy**

The Secretary General indicated that the CTU has yet to provide a report on its activities to the Commission, one of the pillars of which is ICT. She stated that the CTU was unable to prepare the report because it continues to experience severe human resource constraints. As a result, the President suggested that a 1 or 2 page document be prepared from the documents submitted to the Ministers so that it can be submitted for the Commission's next meeting in February 2017.

### **The ITU Plenipotentiary and the Securing of Proxies**

The Secretary General noted that the CTU Secretariat had already started conversations with The Bahamas regarding mobilising CTU Member States to ensure that everything required is put in place to try to ensure the success of the bid to have an English-speaking Caribbean country win a Council seat at the next ITU Plenipotentiary. As part of those plans, The Bahamas had agreed to host in 2017 both the ITU's Global Summit of Regulators and the General Conference of Ministers meeting. The Secretary General noted that preliminary plans and activities had been discussed to get the 2017 General Conference organised.

Importantly, she stressed the need to secure Proxies for Caribbean countries that would not be attending the Plenipotentiary. Despite the CTU Secretariat having mobilised members early in support of Barbados' Candidacy at the previous Plenipotentiary, there were great difficulties faced in obtaining the Proxies as countries were very reluctant to give them. The focus therefore needs to be on getting members to that point as Barbados' Candidacy had failed by two votes in the last bid and it was discovered that certain Proxies in support of Barbados were sent too late to the ITU, which, as a result, were not included in the voting.

To address this reluctance, the President asked whether it is possible to craft a specific, narrowly defined Proxy. The Bahamas clarified that each country can only give one Proxy, which must be submitted on a standardised form. Trinidad and Tobago confirmed that it is indeed possible to narrowly define the Proxy that a country would provide.

### **Status of Members Contributions**

The Secretary General noted that Antigua and Barbuda had previously acknowledged that it was in serious arrears. To address this situation, the Member State had committed to paying in three equal tranches to clear their arrears, the first of which had already been made. As regards Cuba, she noted that there had been no change in the country being able to easily remit funds to the CTU.

### **Sustainable Funding for the CTU**

She indicated that although the President had suggested that the CTU should pursue having a levy raised on the operators in the region in order to sustain its funding, a process was already in place based on recommendations and resolutions made at previous General Conferences. It had been agreed that Member States should seek to have their Regulatory body make their CTU Contributions on their behalf. She noted that this is already being done by a number of Member States.

The President then indicated that he had spoken with some members about their arrears but that he had not as yet advanced the discussion about introducing a levy. He stated that he would meet with a number of Finance Ministers to see how they responded to such a suggestion. He added that since it was difficult to get funds out of the Treasury once they are paid into the Consolidated Fund, what he is contemplating is that the levy would be paid over to the Regulators to be held in something like a Trust Fund for the CTU. After giving the matter some further thought, the President indicated that he hoped to come up with a solution by the next Heads of Government meeting in February 2017 as to how to approach the funding for the CTU as well as the Single ICT Space.

**Harmonised Caribbean Spectrum Planning and Management Project**

GC18 had been agreed that an extraordinary General Conference meeting, by video conference, would be called subsequent to the Executive Council's approval of the Spectrum Strategic Plan at its March 2016 meeting. However, as the Project Consultant had shared this morning in the joint EC/GC meeting, two organisations are funding this project, the IDB and Compete Caribbean, which had required that the end of the Project be synchronised. As a result, there was an extension, which was used to circulate the Strategic Plan and also the Sustainability Plan documents for the Project. The opportunity was also taken to get a wide cross section of stakeholders to consider both Plans, before bringing them to the Executive Council and General Conference for final approval. The extension enabled a number of activities to be undertaken, which helped to confirm the findings of the Spectrum Management Task force. The draft Plans have been finalised, were approved by the Executive Council, which recommended that they be submitted to the General Conference of Ministers for final approval.

**CARICOM Single ICT Space**

The Secretary General explained that the Ministers at GC18 had approved the Vision and Roadmap for the Single ICT Space and had instructed the Secretariat to write to the CARICOM Secretariat informing them of their approval of the document. This was done in October 2015 with a view to enabling the CARICOM Secretariat to recommend the document for approval to the Heads of Government. However, the Secretary General of CARICOM indicated that CARICOM's processes require that a CARICOM ICT COTED Meeting be held to approve the document before it can be sent to the Heads. He clarified that even though many of the Ministers in the CTU's General Conference of Ministers are members of the CARICOM ICT COTED, the two bodies are not the same.

The President, whilst noting that an ICT COTED meeting would be needed to approve the Single ICT Space Plan, stated that it would be better to hold such meetings in conjunction with the General Conference of Ministers meeting, since there is so much overlap of Ministers and so that the Ministers can more effectively do all they have to do. He noted that the CARICOM Secretariat does not always wish to hold meetings at the same time, but he believed that Member States should speak to their Heads to insist that it be done in this way in order to be efficient and effective.

**World Radio Communication Conference (WRC) 2015**

GC18, held in September 2015, asked the Secretariat to put on the General Conference agenda the tracking of the future WRC proposals in order to keep the conference informed of developments. The meeting also urged Member states to attend WRC 2015, which took place in late 2015. As requested, the Secretariat notified Member States about proposals that were relevant to the region and urged them to attend, both of which were done by Special Circular.

### **Hosting of 2016 CTU Meetings**

On behalf of the CTU, the Secretary General gave a special thank you to the Government of Barbados for hosting the current ICT Week. She noted that the 34th Executive Council Meeting will be held in Antigua and Barbuda in March of 2017 and the 35th Meeting will be in the Bahamas together with the 20th General Conference of Ministers in September 2017 and that the process for planning of the meetings had already begun. She further indicated that the aim of the Secretariat is to confirm the venues and dates for the Statutory Meetings at least two years in advance so as to be better able to attract the audience needed for these meetings.

### **ITU's Smart Sustainable Development Model**

The Secretary General indicated that the former President had offered to share a Report of the Task Force coordinating the ITU's Smart Sustainable Development Model, in which the Government of Jamaica had been involved, with his fellow Ministers and with the CTU Secretariat and asked Jamaica whether this was still possible. Minister Wheatley indicated that he would organise to have the report forwarded to the Secretariat.

The President inquired whether Jamaica would be hosting an Internet Governance Conference that year. Minister Wheatley indicated that if their budget allows Jamaica to do so, they will but was unable to make a commitment at that time.

The President thanked the Secretary General for taking the meeting through the matters arising.

## **7. Report of the Chairman of the Executive Council**

In taking the General Conference of Ministers through his Report, which had been circulated to them at the meeting, the Chairman of the Executive Council stated that the Council met for its 33rd Council Meeting on the previous day and received a number of reports on the programmes, activities and projects being undertaken by the CTU. He indicated that it was important to note that many of the projects featured the collaborative approach that the CTU uses to ensure that it effectively fulfils its mandate. He referred to a number of the projects which used this approach and which would be reported on in more detail later in this meeting.

He stated that all the projects mentioned were in keeping with the theme of ICT Week – Barbados which is “Conquering Resource Constraints and Enhancing Effectiveness through Collaboration” and that a great deal of the CTU's resources continue to be dedicated to its ongoing projects.

The Chairman noted that the Council recognised that the Secretariat continues to be financially challenged and salaries for the senior members of the Secretariat are sometimes several months in arrears. In addition, the Council recognised that the Secretariat continues to experience severe human resource constraints due to a number of factors. Despite these constraints, the Council

recognised that the Secretariat continues to exceed expectations in the execution of the mandate of the CTU.

The Chairman then shared more details from 33rd Executive Council Meeting as included in his Report, in particular highlighting that there was representation from 15 Member States, one virtually, which is a record attendance of 75% of Member States being present.

As regards the Business Plan for 2016-2018, the Chairman indicated that the Council had appreciated the details presented and accepted the underlying assumptions used to arrive at the predicted results. However, the Council was concerned that many of the members would be unable to pay the proposed increase in Contributions of 30% in 2017 and 10% in 2018. In addition, the Council noted the key issues and the consequences of not being able to support the 2017 and 2018 Business Plan. The Chairman stated that while the Council believed that the plan is realistic and the increases were justified, they were not optimistic that the members could afford the increase and that the Plan would be discussed as a separate agenda item later in the meeting.

The Chairman highlighted that the council had received and approved recommendations with a reconstitution of the Spectrum Planning and Management Project steering committee and had taken the opportunity to commend the sterling work done by the Secretariat and the Task Force in advancing the policy initiative.

He also highlighted that the Secretary General had presented the Caribbean ICT Sou Sou Framework, which the Council had commended the Secretary General for its innovativeness and accepted it as an appropriate and viable homegrown solution to be pursued.

He then outlined, in summary, the Resolutions, which were included in his Report and which the Council had asked to be brought to the General Conference for review, adoption and approval by the Ministers. He indicated that each of the Resolutions would be presented to the Ministers for approval as part of a substantive agenda items in this meeting.

In concluding his Report, the Executive Council Chairman noted that the Council had commended the Secretary General on the amount of work undertaken by the Secretariat despite its human resource and financial limitations. On behalf of the General Council of Ministers, the President then thanked the Chairman for his comprehensive Report and the extensive work done by the Executive Council and the Secretariat. The Chairman's Report was unanimously accepted by the General Conference of Ministers.

## **8. Presentation of the Recommendations/Resolutions from the 33<sup>rd</sup> Executive Council**

The President asked the Telecommunications Strategist to take the meeting through the Financial Reports.

**Financial Reports/Administrative**

The Telecommunications Strategist first took the meeting through the various components of the Audited Financial Statements and the Schedule of Sponsorship Income for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015. He noted that the Auditors gave the CTU a clean bill of health and that the fall in sponsorship income was a result of the greater challenge in obtaining such income, as it is the same stakeholders that are approached each year.

As regards Members' Arrears, the Telecommunications Strategist indicated that the arrears were discussed in detail earlier during the Matters Arising from the Minutes of the previous General Conference. He apologised to Jamaica for the error in the figures shown earlier and confirmed that Jamaica was not in arrears. He again stressed that the arrears situation was not good and this did not help the CTU's cashflows, which are made extremely difficult because of the unpredictable receipt of funds from Members.

The Telecommunications Strategist then took the meeting through the yearly Budgets for 2016 to 2018, in which he gave information on the CTU's Team, who have over 200 man-years of experience; the CTU's current activities and achievements over the years; and its goals and objectives that underpin the numbers shown in the plan; and the underlying assumptions. He highlighted that, in order to fully carry out the mandate of the CTU, the plan budgeted for increasing staff numbers and that salaries would be increased to 60% of the market rate based on 2013 rates, with a 2% increase in 2018. Despite the budgeted increase in Members' Contributions, he noted that the plan projects that in each of the years 2016 to 2018, the CTU will have significant net deficits, that is, its expenses will be greater than its income.

The President indicated that he was uncomfortable projecting a deficit over the next three years, which would lead to the CTU becoming bankrupt. He suggested that there was a need to come to an arrangement to sort out its sustainability. Much discussion ensued, including the President suggesting a solution could be to have the levies paid into each Member State's USF increased a little but that this would require legislative changes to be made for the funds to be passed on to the CTU; Trinidad and Tobago's concern that some Member States are carrying others that do not pay their Contributions; Guyana indicating that it appeared that the policy of the previous Government was not to support organisations such as the CTU but that the current Government was attempting to re-address this and to try to carry their weight, and that they would be speaking with the Secretariat to work out a mechanism to deal with its arrears; Jamaica expressing its concern about the level of overlap within CARICOM organisations and indicating its belief that there is a need to rationalise them to reduce the overall burden on States; Trinidad and Tobago suggesting that any solution found needed to be one that was outside of the Governments and their Consolidated Funds, the President agreeing with that view indicating it should be along the lines of what is done for the Caribbean Court of Justice; and St. Vincent and the Grenadines that it and other States could

not accept the Contribution increases proposed, and it may be that the CTU needs to look at the work that it would do in order to bring that in line with the Revenues it can generate.

The President indicated that debt-forgiveness is not an option for Member States in arrears but because of the difficulty that some States have, he could not at this time recommend that the Ministers accept an across the board increase in Member States' Contributions which were budgeted at 30% in 2017 and a further 10% in 2018 and suggested that the Ministers note the projections rather than approve them. He stated, however, that realistically the CTU must be sustained because it is doing work that the Member States need.

In wrapping up the discussions, the President asked that the Secretariat to get from Member States the level of revenues from their telecommunications sector and based on that to determine the contributions that would need to be made by each country to make the Secretariat self-sufficient. The Secretariat would then determine and recommend what the carriers in each country would need to be charged and refer that information quickly to the Ministers.

Further, the President indicated that each Member State should do similar work themselves so that they can reconcile their information with what is presented by the Secretariat and thereafter come up with a proposal to take to their respective Cabinets which, when combined, would deal with how the CTU would be funded going forward. He indicated that this needed to be done before the end of the year so that the CARICOM Heads of Government can make a joint decision at their next meeting in February 2017.

### **Other Resolutions**

At this point, the General Conference unanimously accepted the Report of the Chairman of the Executive Council. The President then asked the meeting to accept the following Resolutions brought by the Executive Council to the General Conference of Ministers, noting that a number of the items had been presented to them in the joint meeting of the General Conference and the Executive Council that morning. The Appendix to the Minutes contain the full text of each Resolution.

Resolution No. 1: Adoption of the Secretary General's Report April to Sept 2016. On a motion by Dominica, seconded by the Turks and Caicos Islands, resolution No. 1 was approved.

Resolution No. 2: Adoption of the Audited Financial Statements 2015. On a motion by Jamaica, seconded by Trinidad and Tobago, Resolution No. 2 was approved.

Resolution No. 3: Financial Forecast 2016-2018 increase in contributions. The Financial Forecast was noted by the General Conference.

Resolution No. 4: Adoption of the Caribbean Spectrum Management Strategic Plan, Action Plan and Steering Committee. On a motion by Dominica, seconded by Turks and Caicos Islands, Resolution No. 4 was approved.

Resolution No.5: Adoption of the Declaration of Port of Spain on Collaboration on Caribbean ICT Development. The Executive Council Chairman took the meeting through this Resolution. The President then indicated that at a CANTO meeting earlier in the year, Ministers had agreed to have CANTO and the CTU work on issues of importance to the operators. Given the nature of the Collaboration Forum, he suggested that the work envisaged could be included in the Forum. The Telecommunications Strategist noted that a 2<sup>nd</sup> Forum is to be held in October at which time the members of the Collaboration Committee would be agreed upon from amongst the CTU's stakeholders, one of which would be CANTO. In addition, however, the President asked Member States to nominate by the end of September persons who they would like to be part of the Committee. Following this, on a motion by Barbados, seconded by Turks and Caicos Islands, Resolution No. 5 was approved.

Resolution No.6: Recommendation of Projects for ITU WTDC. The Chairman of the Executive Council outlined to the meeting the projects that the Council recommends be put forward to the upcoming WTDC. On a motion by Trinidad and Tobago, seconded by Dominica, Resolution No. 5 was approved.

Resolution No.7: Support for Bahamas for an ITU Council Seat. This Resolution had been approved earlier in the meeting.

Resolution No.8: Adoption of the Caribbean Cyber Security and Cybercrime Action Plan. This Resolution was deferred to later in the meeting after the presentation of the Plan by a representative of CARICOM IMPACS.

Resolution No. 9: Caribbean ICT SouSou Framework. This Resolution was deferred to later in the meeting after the presentation of the Framework by the Secretary General.

#### **9. 2017 and 2018 Provisional Activities – Request for Hosts**

The Secretary General took the meeting through the schedule of events that had been identified thus far, which had been previously circulated. She reiterated that the Secretariat was aiming to confirm activities for the next two years, which would facilitate their planning and the ability to obtain funding for them. She noted that Ministers had agreed and approved that Dominica be the host of the 37<sup>th</sup> Executive Council and the 21<sup>st</sup> General Conference of Ministers to be held in September 2018 as part of ICT Week – Dominica.

As regards other events in which hosts were needed, the Meeting approved that St. Vincent and the Grenadines would host the 36<sup>th</sup> Executive Council meeting in March 2018 and the 14<sup>th</sup> CIGF in August 2018.

## **10. Caribbean Cyber Security and Cyber Crime Action Plan**

The President invited Mr. Sean Fouche, IT Manager, of CARICOM IMPACS to present the Plan. Using a powerpoint presentation, Mr. Fouche shared with the meeting information about CARICOM IMPACS and its responsibilities; how the Plan was developed, firstly from a Cyber Security and Cybercrime Framework, first formulated by the CTU and the OAS/CICTE in 2012; and then through the collaboration of those two organisations, CARICOM IMPACS and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

In response to the presentation, Jamaica and Dominica commended CARICOM IMPACS and the CTU for the work done in preparing what is a comprehensive Plan. However, Jamaica, Dominica and Trinidad and Tobago stated that the ICT Ministry in certain countries must be part of the Committees overseeing the Plan. This arose from the fact that in those countries the responsibility for Cyber Security lies with the ICT Ministry and for Cybercrime with their Ministry of National Security.

In response, Mr. Fouche suggested that this issue could be handled by having States appointing if needed two National Cyber Points of Contact (NCPOCs), one from ICT and the other from National Security. The President suggested that the Plan should also include the flexibility for Member States to include parties such as the DPP and the Chief Parliamentary Counsel, officers that Barbados would certainly include, as they are important players in getting the legislation needed right.

The Resolution presented was amended to include the changes requested and Mr. Fouche undertook to have the plan to go forward amended to include the flexibility requested by the Ministers. On a motion by Jamaica, seconded by Trinidad and Tobago, Resolution No. 8, as amended, was approved.

## **11. Caribbean ICT SouSou Framework**

The President invited the Secretary General to take the meeting through the SouSou Framework. She did this by way of a powerpoint presentation based on the paper that had been previously circulated. The Secretary General summarised the Framework as a new funding approach by Governments to Caribbean ICT development, which is being proposed to overcome the historical development funding challenges the region has faced. In essence, Caribbean Governments would come together using the SouSou funding concept, which is used by individuals in many Caribbean Countries, to fund some of their own development in the area of ICT development.

In response to the presentation, Trinidad and Tobago questioned strongly whether trust, which is at the core of the concept, would be there amongst Caribbean Governments. Without trust, then the proposed Framework may not suit the needs of what the CTU is trying to achieve.

The President, whilst accepting that the idea of the SouSou Framework is fine, stated that his experience in the region has been that too often some countries fund regional activities because other countries do not pay their share of the funding. He indicated that for the concept to work what fundamentally needed to be resolved would be how Caribbean Governments would raise the funding needed to be part of it.

He suggested two possible approaches. Firstly, development agencies, such as the World Bank and IDB, now recognise that they must lend on what had hitherto been seen as soft projects. He suggested that those agencies should be approached for funding for ICT development projects. Secondly, given that Caribbean economies are all open and highly dependent on foreign exchange, that funding for development and for the financing of all regional agencies such as the CTU and the activities they need to undertake, could be done by way of a very small charge on foreign exchange transactions, which would not be noticeable but which in the case of Barbados, he estimated could generate \$50M annually. He suggested that this should be a common approach adopted by the region.

In concluding the discussion, the President indicated that the consensus of the meeting is that the Ministers recognise the initiative and that the Secretariat should do additional work to determine how the concept could be funded, for example, by targeting funding from the development agencies. On a motion by Barbados, seconded by the British Virgin Islands, Resolution No. 9, as amended, was approved.

## **12. Any Other Business**

### **Support for the Work of the OAS and its Inter-American Commission on Telecommunications (CITEL)**

The Secretary General indicated that the OAS had very recently approached the CTU concerning a new project called the Caribbean Interconnectivity Initiative, which has a very close nexus with what the CTU is trying to achieve with the Single ICT Space. The OAS would like to partner with the CTU and the Region by deepening cooperation and collaboration in order to roll out the project, a key element of which is expanding regional broadband, which is also a key element of the Single ICT Space.

In addition, the Secretary General indicated that the OAS is requesting support for CITEL because of the budgetary challenges both the OAS and CITEL face. The OAS would like CTU Member States, through their Ministries of Foreign Affairs, to register their support for the work of CITEL. Noting that the CTU has an MOU with CITEL, that it participates in its meetings and that CITEL had been supportive of the CTU's work, the Secretary General asked that Member States give their support. She further indicated she would send a text to Member States as to what the letter of support could include.

The meeting unanimously agreed that Member States should give their support to CITEL.

**13. Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Presentation on IDB Support for Broadband Services and ICT Initiatives in the Caribbean Region**

Mr. Eduardo Sierra Gonzalez, Financial Markets Specialist of the IDB, presented to the meeting on the work that the IDB is doing in this area, which includes its financing of the CTU's Spectrum Planning and Management Project.

**14. Closing Remarks**

There being no further business, the President thanked all present for their active participation, which resulted in a smooth and successful meeting. He looked forward to Member States following up on the work discussed in the meeting in order to ensure that ICT Sector moves forward and plays its role in developing the region.

The Secretary General took the opportunity to thank the President and the Government and citizens of the Barbados for their hospitality and their work in so ably hosting ICT Week – Barbados.

The meeting ended at 4:45pm.

## Appendix

### Resolutions of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Executive Council to the 19<sup>th</sup> General Conference of Ministers

#### Resolution No. 1:

##### **Adoption of the Secretary General's Report April to Sept 2016**

Whereas the Secretary General presented a detailed report on the activities of the Secretariat for the period April 2016 to September 2016

Whereas the Executive Council was satisfied with the completeness and quality of the report despite the resource constraints of the Secretariat

##### **Be it Resolved:**

That the Executive Council recommends the adoption and approval of the Report to the General Conference of Ministers.

#### Resolution No. 2:

##### **Adoption of the Audited Financial Statements 2015**

Whereas the Executive Council received the Audited Financial Statements for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015

Whereas the Executive Council was satisfied with the explanations of the Financial Statements

And

Whereas the Executive Council noted that the Independent Auditors, Anthony and Associates, opinion was unqualified

##### **Be it Resolved:**

That the Executive Council recommends the adoption and approval of the Financial Statements for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015.

#### Resolution No. 3:

##### **Financial Forecast 2016-2018 increase in contributions**

Whereas the executive council understands the Goals and Objectives and the underlying Assumptions used in the preparation of the Forecast

Whereas the Executive Council received explanations for the basis of the Forecast

Noting that members in the current economic circumstances may have difficulty in paying 30% increase in contributions in 2017 and a further 10% in 2018 and

Noting the Key issues and consequences of not addressing accepting the increase in contributions and rewarding the professional staff at 60% of 2013 market rates

**Be it Resolved:**

That the General Conference of Ministers note and discuss these assumptions and forecast with their respective governments.

**Resolution No. 4:**

**Adoption of the Caribbean Spectrum Management Strategic Plan, Action Plan and Steering Committee**

Whereas the Executive Council received and considered the Spectrum Management Plan, the Spectrum Action and the Reconstitution of the Spectrum Steering Committee

Whereas the Council was satisfied with the scope and explanation of the elements of the Proposals and Plans

Whereas the Council commended the work of the Secretariat in managing this initiative

**Be it Resolved:**

That the Council recommends the adoption of the Plans and the establishment of the Reconstitution of the Steering Committee.

**Resolution No.5:**

**Adoption of the Declaration of Port of Spain on Collaboration on Caribbean ICT Development**

Whereas the Council noted that CTU hosted its first Collaboration Form in February 2016

Whereas the Council noted that it was open to multi-stakeholders including international and regional organisations

Recognising the value of collaboration as summarized in the report

Recognising the outcomes of the practical exercises conducted at the forum

Noting the institutional arrangements for collaboration including the terms of reference for a Standing Committee

**Be it Resolved:**

The Council recommends that the Declaration of Port of Spain on Collaboration be adopted and approved by the General Conference of Ministers and the Council further resolves that the forum be open to multi-stakeholders including international and regional organisations, and that

in particular, that CANTO be specifically invited to sit on the ICT Standing Collaboration Committee.

**Resolution No.6:**

**Recommendation of Projects for ITU WTDC**

Whereas the Executive Council received and considered the following projects for submission to the ITU WTDC:

- ICT4PWD- Provision of Caribbean Video Relay Services for the Blind and Deaf
- Caribbean Research and Education Network
- Caribbean ICT Standardisation, Conformance and Interoperability
- Caribbean E-government services: National ID and Immigration system.

Whereas the Council was satisfied that these projects could advance the development of the region.

**Be it Resolved:**

That the Council recommends the adoption and approval of these projects to the ICT WTDC for consideration.

**Resolution No.7:**

**Support for Bahamas for an ITU Council Seat**

Noting that Bahamas was contesting for an ITU Council

Recognising the importance for the Caribbean region to be represented at the ITU and other International Policy making bodies

Recognising the need to marshal Caribbean votes to provide Bahamas with the best possible chance of success

**Be it Resolved:**

That the General Conference of Minister register their support for Bahamas and to be prepared to issue proxies in time if member states are unable to attend the ITU meeting at which this issue will be decided.

**Resolution No.8:**

**Adoption of the Caribbean Cyber Security and Cybercrime Action Plan**

Whereas the Council considered the Cyber security and Cybercrime Action Plan and noted that proper implementation of the plan would require the involvement of ICT Ministries and National Security to work collaboratively given the cross-cutting nature of these issues involved.

**Be it Resolved:**

That the General Conference of Ministers approves the plan and recognises the role that ICT Ministries, DPPs and Chief Parliamentary Counsels must play in ensuring the success of the Plan.

**Resolution No.9:**

**Caribbean ICT SouSou Framework**

Whereas at EC32, the Council had received a preliminary concept paper on the Caribbean ICT SouSou.

And whereas at EC33, the Secretary General presented the Caribbean ICT SouSou Framework, which is a collaborative funding mechanism for pursuing national and regional ICT projects. The Council commended the Secretary General for the innovation and accepted this as an appropriate and viable, home grown solution that should be pursued.

**Be it Resolved:**

That the General Conference of Ministers recognises and notes the initiative and requests the Secretariat do additional work to determine how the concept could be amended to ensure that there is a guarantee for the funding deposited by Member States.