



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
ST. AUGUSTINE CAMPUS, TRINIDAD & TOBAGO, WEST INDIES

MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

UWI Diplomatic Academy Continues to Enhance Climate Diplomacy Capacity

ST. AUGUSTINE, Trinidad and Tobago. Wednesday 20 March 2024 – “At a time when Caribbean Community (CARICOM) leaders continue to focus on the global climate crisis and climate impacts, calling attention to the salience of reinforcing the region’s influence in the climate and development arena, we are proud to support climate diplomacy-related regional capacity building.” This according to Dr. Nand C. Bardouille, Manager of The UWI Institute of International Relations’ (IIR) Diplomatic Academy of the Caribbean (DAOC), who hailed the recently held third edition of The DAOC’s training module on ‘Caribbean Small States and the Diplomacies of Climate Change: Negotiations in Practice’ as a success.

Held virtually from 4th to 7th March, this training attracted 14 participants, comprising primarily diplomatic stakeholders.

In delivering welcome remarks during the module’s Opening Ceremony on March 4th, Acting IIR Director Dr. Annita Montoute noted that although the Caribbean region contributes little to global warming, it endures much in respect of climate-related disasters. “Therefore, for us in the Caribbean, as it is in other Small Island Developing States (SIDS), addressing climate change is of utmost importance and priority,” Dr. Montoute added.

She concluded: “The key is to understand the substantive issues, the interest of the Caribbean and the political economy of global climate negotiations, with a view to influencing and shaping the outcomes in the interest of the region; and this is where this training module comes in.”

Ms. Rueanna Haynes, an experienced international climate law and governance specialist, served as the module’s facilitator. Ms. Haynes underscored that “The Diplomatic Academy of the Caribbean

continues to do important work through making this course available. This type of capacity building is very much needed as climate change impacts continue to ramp up in the region.”

By virtue of two virtual panels, which Ms. Haynes chaired, module participants were also exposed to subject area perspectives and professional experiences of senior international experts in the field. The panels were convened as follows:

Virtual Panel Discussion#1 – March 6th – subject: The Role of SIDS in Climate Diplomacy

Panelists:

- Ms. Dizzanne Billy, Caribbean Regional Director at Climate Tracker.
- Mr. Leon Charles, Climate Change Professional and Consultant at Charles & Associates, Inc.
- Ambassador Carlos Fuller, OBE, Permanent Representative of Belize to the United Nations.
- Ms. Una May Gordon, Senior Climate Change and Development Expert.

Virtual Panel Discussion#2 – March 6th – subject: The Role of the Caribbean in the Advisory Opinion before the ICJ on Climate Change

Panelist:

- Mr. Justin Sobion, International lawyer and PhD candidate (Environmental Law) at the University of Auckland, New Zealand.

Mr. Charles also delivered Feature Remarks at the module’s Closing Ceremony on March 7th. His remarks, capped off by a strong endorsement of this training, reinforced key aspects of climate diplomacy-related learning in the module and best practice in the field. He conveyed the view that, over the past 30 years, in calling attention to their special circumstances, SIDS have played a pivotal role in the evolution of the global developmental landscape. He cautioned that “this role is being challenged, even today in the build-up to the 4th International Conference on SIDS, and that there is a need to continuously defend and advocate on behalf of SIDS in multiple fora.”

Against this backdrop, Mr. Charles commended The DAOC on offering a module whose graduates join the ranks of SIDS champions, who defend and advocate for SIDS in multiple fora and under widely differing circumstances.

Following this well received send-off for the module participants, H. E. Dr. ir. Nawin Ryan Nannan, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Suriname to the Republic of France, delivered remarks on behalf of participants. Ambassador Nannan noted: “There was clear consensus in the group that the experience was incredibly enlightening and valuable. Throughout the module, the group was provided with a comprehensive understanding of the intricate process within the UNFCCC for addressing global climate change, with a specific focus on the role of SIDS.”

He concluded: “The module’s spread across the days led us through the evolution of the negotiation process, giving us insights into the formal aspects as well as the difficulties and the political dynamics and, obviously, interests at play in such meetings.” Participants praised Ms. Haynes and the other

resource persons on hand for drawing on their expert knowledge of the subject matter, including the practical negotiation process, in teaching the module.

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About the Diplomatic Academy of the Caribbean

The DAOC is the Caribbean's premier professional development-oriented diplomatic studies centre. An integral part of The University of the West Indies' Institute of International Relations (IIR), it was established in 2014. The DAOC has a primary teaching mandate in the area of diplomatic studies, offering short, highly specialized training modules in the broad field of diplomatic studies. For Caribbean professionals seeking to expand their capabilities to advance an international career, the DAOC is a trusted educational partner. Combining a world-class suite of curricular offerings, which align with topical policy and learning trends, with a programme of advocacy and partnerships regarding the relationship between diplomacy and the Caribbean, the Diplomatic

Academy provides a unique setting for stakeholders to deepen diplomatic skills/knowledge and enhance policy expertise.

The DAOC has yielded substantial and complementary benefit to the IIR, which was established in 1966 by agreement between the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of Switzerland.

Integral to the DAOC's mission is its commitment to help close human resources capacity gaps in international affairs and diplomacy in the Caribbean, by providing capacity-building and skills development training in diplomacy to up and coming diplomats and to aspiring diplomats from the Caribbean Region. This diplomatic learning and training facility also strengthens the University's capacities for research/analysis, knowledge-sharing, advocacy, and partnerships and dialogue on the relationship between diplomacy and the Caribbean broadly conceived, with the goal of helping to facilitate policy-relevant awareness-raising on international affairs issues of import (and that are topical) to the Region.

The Diplomatic Academy derives its character from its global outlook, real-world impact, and Caribbean mindedness which, in sum, constitute The DAOC Advantage™. For more information, please visit: <https://sta.uwi.edu/daoc>.

About The University of the West Indies

The UWI has been and continues to be a pivotal force in every aspect of Caribbean development, residing at the center of all efforts to improve the well-being of people across the region for over 75 years.

From a university college of London in Jamaica with 33 medical students in 1948, The UWI is today an internationally respected, global university with nearly 50,000 students and five campuses: [Mona in Jamaica](#), [St. Augustine in Trinidad and Tobago](#), [Cave Hill in Barbados](#), [Five Islands in Antigua and Barbuda](#) and its [Global Campus](#), and global centres in partnership with universities in North America, Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Europe.

The UWI offers over [1000 certificate, diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate degree options](#) in **Culture, Creative and Performing Arts, Food and Agriculture, Engineering, Humanities and Education, Law, Medical Sciences, Science and Technology, Social Sciences, and Sport**. As the Caribbean's leading

university, it possesses the largest pool of Caribbean intellect and expertise committed to confronting the critical issues of our region and the wider world.

The UWI has been consistently ranked among the best in the world by the most reputable ranking agency, [*Times Higher Education \(THE\)*](#). Since The UWI's 2018 debut in THE's rankings, it has performed well in multiple schemes—among them including World University Rankings, Golden Age University Rankings (between 50 and 80 years old), Latin America Rankings, and the Impact Rankings for its response to the world's biggest concerns, outlined in the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Good Health and Well-being; Gender Equality and Climate Action.

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