Relations between Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and the BRICS: Locating a Caribbean Space

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The base document *Latin American and Caribbean Relations with Russia, India, China and South Africa* prepared by the Latin American and Economic System SELA\(^1\) presents an overview of LAC relations with the BRICS in the context of a changed global environment that has shifted decisively towards a multipolar system. The 2013 BRICS Summit held in Durban South Africa and the proposals to emerge from this meeting concerning, inter alia, the establishment of a development bank; a foreign currency joint fund; a BRICS rating agency and proposals for coordination of positions on global matters are to be viewed in terms of a new global-minded assertiveness on the part of the BRICS.

SELA’s review of RICS\(^2\) relations with Latin America and the Caribbean has identified differences in terms of the former’s domestic demands, as well as their relative intensities in dealing with individual Latin America and Caribbean countries.

The Paper also reveals some glaring structural realities that would have to be addressed. For example, the statistics point to a growth in exports from LAC to the RICS as having moved from approximately 3% in 2001 to 10% in 2011, but that trade has been limited mainly to raw materials and agricultural products. In addition, in eighty-one (81) of the HS chapters identified in the trade, RICS imports from the LAC amounted to 10% or less while in fifty-three chapters, imports from LAC amounted to less than 1%. Further, Brazil alone exports to RICS three times as much as Chile, the next largest exporter to the Group. Clearly, if Brazil is added to form the BRICS, then the real numbers for Latin America and the Caribbean would be far less significant.

SELA’s base document also makes the point about a less than optimal engagement at the diplomatic and political levels between LAC and the RICS, even though significant improvements have been noted within recent times. Due note has been taken of increased political and diplomatic engagement between individual LAC countries and the RICS, including the initiatives undertaken by SELA and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States-CELAC, to engage the BRICS and to build platforms for deeper cooperation.\(^3\)

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\(^1\) SELA SP/RRRE-ALC-BRICS/DT No. 2-13 *Latin American and Caribbean Relations with Russia, India, China and South Africa*

\(^2\) As a LAC member Brazil has been taken out for analytical purposes.

\(^3\) The CELAC Ministerial Troika visited Moscow in May 2013. The Russian Federation has proposed, inter alia, the formation of a permanent mechanism for political dialogue and cooperation. The Troika visited India in August 2012 and there was mutual agreement to the establishment inter alia, of a CELAC-India Business Forum and an Agriculture Expert Group to address the need for more intensive agricultural research. The Troika also met with a delegation from the People’s Republic of China in New York in September, 2013 and, inter alia, advanced the proposal for the establishment of a China-CELAC Cooperation Framework.
On the more positive side, the paper offers recommendations of areas in which BRICS relations with LAC could be strengthened for better results in the future. The differences in relative size and political influence between the BRICS and LAC are seen as opportunities for greater complementarity of effort and mutual support, rather than limitations in themselves. The fact that the BRICS are also members of the powerful G-20 group, would afford the opportunity for LAC-BRICS-G20 mutual support on global issues. These require more intensive diplomatic and political exchanges and the possibilities for these have been examined in the paper.

There are also suggestions for more strategic engagement and new market development. Some of the areas identified include: trade development and negotiation of new agreements; more dynamic trade missions; mutual investment promotion; increased market research and new business development; increased south-south cooperation to build new capacities in areas such as statistical information, technical regulations, energy, agriculture, tourism, academics, small and medium enterprises and youth programmes.

The shortcomings in the SELA paper are the points of departure for the current submission, not to diminish in any way the tremendous analytical value of the paper and the information provided within the customary SELA propensity for good quality, timely research, but simply to move the argument forward and to better locate the Caribbean.

One cannot be certain about the value of excluding Brazil from the BRICS on the grounds that Brazil is also a LAC country. The exclusion distorts the picture and it may not be enough simply to suggest that Brazil could be seen as a natural interlocutor for the LAC in relation to the BRICS. The BRICS is a direct result of the successes of emerging economies within the past two decades, which is a convergence of geopolitical and economic forces taking place at a given point in time in the evolution of the global economy, and Brazil is an integral part of that convergence. The Delhi Declaration of the Fourth BRICS Summit held in March, 2012 refers quite clearly to the transcontinental nature of the BRICS and the centrality of this feature.

Secondly, the SELA document, as is the case with most of the technical publications produced in the Latin American and Caribbean Region, effectively omits the English-speaking Caribbean from the statistical and other analyses. It is perfectly understandable that this may be due sometimes to an absence of available and timely statistical information but until this is corrected, there will always be serious flaws in the scope of any analysis concerning the LAC region as a whole and its full potential, if the English-speaking Caribbean is excluded.

Thirdly, two areas that hold great potential for the deepening of relations in Latin America and the Caribbean and between the LAC and the BRICS namely Sport and Culture, have not featured significantly in the document, nor in the discourses that have been recorded thus far. Several Caribbean and Latin American countries have consistently produced sporting champions in various fields over the years and in the area of culture, the Regions’ rich and

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4 The third paragraph of the Delhi Declaration states that **BRICS is a platform for dialogue and cooperation amongst countries that represent 43% of the world’s population, for the promotion of peace, security and development in a multi-polar, interdependent and increasingly complex globalizing world. Coming as we do from Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America, the transcontinental dimension of our interaction adds to its value and significance.**
diverse cultures and nascent cultural industries are assets that could be shared successfully with the BRICS and the rest of the world. President Putin of the Russian Federation made a similar point at the Fourth BRICS Summit when he proposed the formation of an intergovernmental agreement on cultural cooperation for the BRICS\textsuperscript{5}. Furthermore, these areas have the potential for generating a tremendous amount of ancillary economic opportunities and therefore they should be located more centrally in the political and economic discourse.

The premise of this paper is that in an increasingly multipolar world, the Caribbean is a viable geopolitical and geo-economic space with a substantial contribution to be made to the development of regional and hemispheric relations. Furthermore, because of their strategic location and historical linkages, the countries of the Caribbean have the capacity for developing closer relations with countries, groups of countries and regions, and so contribute towards the emergence of new viable spaces. The Caribbean is well positioned for developing closer relations with the BRICS and the case of Trinidad and Tobago is cited.

Trinidad and Tobago is located within the Caribbean geopolitical space and it is approximately 10 kilometres at its nearest point from Venezuela on the South American mainland. It is an archipelagic independent Republican State comprising a little over 5,000 square kilometres and it is normally classified as a small island developing state. Given its actual profile, however, Trinidad and Tobago would not be seen initially as the typical island state due principally to the fact that its economic fortunes are based predominantly on the fortunes of a highly developed energy sector that deals with primary production and secondary manufacturing including petrochemicals. In fact, the combined history of Trinidad and Tobago’s involvement in hydrocarbons spans over 100 years.

Trinidad and Tobago also has highly developed manufacturing and services sectors.

Due to its relatively high GDP per capita income measure of approximately US $17,000.00, Trinidad and Tobago has been classified by the international finance and development institutions as a developed middle-income country. One of the results of this classification is that this country and other middle-income countries have been graduated out of the group of countries that are eligible for concessionary development financing. Yet Trinidad and Tobago shares many of the characteristics of the small island economies of the Caribbean:

- Open economy with a high dependence on international trade
- Vulnerability to external economic shocks
- Vulnerability to natural and man-made disasters
- Export-led growth economy characterized by dependence on a few high-earning goods-producing and service sectors

\textsuperscript{5} President Vladimir Putin in his address to the Fourth BRICS Summit, New Delhi, India. Referring to cultural cooperation among the BRICS, President Putin stated that “...This is also a very important part of our lives. Our countries have unique cultures and communication between people is an extremely important area we should work on.”
- High propensity to import, including a high food import bill.

Vulnerability is not only a physical nor an economic consideration. It could be manifested also in political terms. As a small state in the global context, Trinidad and Tobago and other Caribbean states are vulnerable to decisions taken in international organizations in which they are not members or where their voting strengths are low. For example, Trinidad and Tobago is not a member of the G-20 group of countries nor the OECD, yet when in 2011, former French President Nicolas Sarkozy at the end of the G-20 Summit in Cannes, publicly listed Trinidad and Tobago among eleven (11) tax havens that continued to violate the global financial transparency rules, the country was forced to respond vigorously and publicly to refute the charge. In fact, Trinidad and Tobago at the time was meeting its obligations under the system. Since 2000, the Caribbean continues to appear regularly among the Financial Action Task Force list of "Non-Cooperative Countries or Territories" (NCCTs); i.e., countries which it perceived to be non-cooperative in the global fight against money laundering and terrorist financing. The G-20 bases its public pronouncements against non-compliant countries on the OECD black-list, which is issued annually. The so-called black-listed countries are more than likely to face negative consequences within the international system.

Trinidad and Tobago has developed deep relations with its closest neighbour, Venezuela, and has excellent linkages with all the countries of South America. Historically, Trinidad and Tobago’s most significant trade and economic linkages have been with North America and Europe and these continue to provide important markets for exports and as sources of investment and business facilitation. The signing of the Panama Treaty establishing the Latin American Economic System-SELA in 1975, marked a point when Trinidad and Tobago and other Caribbean countries initiated a new phase in the process of deepening their political and economic relations and cooperation with Latin America, taken in this case, to include the wider Spanish-speaking Caribbean, Central America and the South American mainland. More recent examples of such continuing engagement are Trinidad and Tobago joining the Brazilian constituency in the IMF governance structure and the World Bank and, in April, 2012, this country’s signing of the agreement to become a full member of the Andean Development Bank.

The 1975 Panama Treaty establishing SELA as a forum for consultation and coordination, entered into force on 7 June, 1976 with the deposit of thirteen instruments of ratification, including those of Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Guyana and Jamaica. The establishment of the Association of Caribbean States in 1994 included all of the English speaking Caribbean and the ACS is now headquartered in Port of Spain. The English-speaking Caribbean also participated fully in the first proclamation of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States - CELAC at the historical Unity Summit held in February, 2010, in Riviera Maya, Mexico.

5. The establishment of the Caribbean Common Market (CARICOM) some 40 years ago⁶, has resulted in this region becoming the second largest market for Trinidad and Tobago’s exports of goods and services. Over the years, CARICOM has signed trade Agreements with Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Venezuela, Colombia and consideration is being given to CARICOM entering into a relationship with MERCOSUR on terms to be determined. In

⁶ The Treaty of Chaguaramas establishing the CARICOM was signed in Trinidad and Tobago on 5 July 1973
addition, two CARICOM members - Guyana and Suriname, are members of the Union of South American Countries - UNASUR and Belize, a CARICOM member, is also a member of the Central American Integration System - SICA.

Trinidad and Tobago is well connected within the hemisphere and continues to play a significant role in hemispheric relations. In 1967, Trinidad and Tobago became the first English-speaking Caribbean country to join the Organisation of American States (OAS) and in December, 1972, was among four (4) countries from the English-speaking Caribbean to establish formal diplomatic relations with Cuba, which was then excluded from the OAS. In April 2009, Trinidad and Tobago hosted the OAS Fifth Summit of the Americas in Port of Spain, which assembled all of the Heads of State and Government of the hemisphere, including newly elected US President Barack Obama.

Trinidad and Tobago is well connected globally. This country joined the United Nations in 1962, the same year of attainment of political independence and in 1967, became a member of the OAS. By 1975, Trinidad and Tobago was joining with the countries of the English-speaking Caribbean, the Pacific countries and the African countries to form the African Caribbean and Pacific Group (ACP), which subsequently emerged as the major interlocutor in the evolving relationship between the countries of unified Europe and the so-called former colonies. Other examples include the leading roles played by Trinidad and Tobago in the establishment of the International Criminal Court 7 and in the successful conclusion in 2013 of the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty.

In 1971, Trinidad and Tobago was the first country in the Caribbean to subscribe to the One-China Policy and to recognize the People’s Republic of China in the United Nations. For Trinidad and Tobago, it is not insignificant that in June 2013, Port of Spain was the first stop of newly elected Chinese President, Xi Jinping, during his visit to the Americas. Trinidad and Tobago’s historical and deep cultural linkages with the Indian sub-continent continue to grow and at the moment, there is increased diplomatic activity involving the countries of Eastern Europe, Africa, the Middle East and other Asian countries, with new formal diplomatic relations being established with several countries of these regions.

Trinidad and Tobago is an active participant in the continuing process of political and economic consolidation in the Caribbean and the combined Latin America and Caribbean Region and in the growing bi-regional relationship between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean. Trinidad and Tobago is a founding member of CARICOM, the Association of Caribbean States and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States - CELAC. Trinidad and Tobago was also the prime mover in the formation of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee - CDCC in 1975 as a subsidiary organ of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America, in order to ensure that this organization pays sufficient attention to the needs of the Caribbean.

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7 Arthur Napoleon Raymond Robinson then the Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago tabled a motion at the 44th Session of the UN General Assembly, in December 1989, calling for the establishment of an International Criminal Court with jurisdiction over persons alleged to have committed crimes which may be covered under a code, including persons engaged in illicit drug trafficking across national borders. The Court was established in 2002.
The current Minister of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago, the Honourable Winston Dookeran is leading the charge in a call for new convergences within the Caribbean and in the global context to deepen the integration experiences already underway and to create new viable spaces. During an official visit to the Republic of Chile on 4 September, 2013, the Minister stated the following in a paper presented at UN ECLAC Headquarters in Santiago:

In the forty years since its birth, the Caribbean integration movement has today reached its limits. Consequently, there is an urgent need to respond to the current realities and the emerging global trends which require greater engagement from the public, students, academics and policy-makers in moving CARICOM towards a new trajectory of Caribbean convergence. The immediate concern is to devise ways to improve the convergence process among the Latin American and Caribbean countries. This convergence process will also have to be sensitive to the current and emerging global dynamics. The future of the international political economy is definitely going to be different - both in its dynamics and the architecture. For example, the articulations of global groups like the BRICS, and regional convergence as in the case of ASEAN countries, are some indications of alternative ways of dealing with global development. More importantly, the expansion of the G7 to now G20 is concrete evidence of what to expect.

The new convergences are anticipated also to involve public and private partnerships to build new alliances, develop and promote new production and investment flows and to create new infrastructure within and across borders.

It is clear that the BRICS countries have emerged as new contenders in the context of a shifting paradigm of international relations where the so-called emerging economies have moved closer to centre stage. One might even argue that the BRICS, all of whom are also members of the now powerful G-20, provide a continuous buffer against the re-emergence of a unipolar world system. The issue to be settled is whether the BRICS is a consolidated political and economic space or simply a grouping of powerful emerging countries. In the second case, it might be sufficient only to deepen relations with one or all of the BRICS individually.

What does the thrust towards deepening relations with the BRICS mean for the countries of the Caribbean and more specifically, the small island developing states of the English-speaking Caribbean? The typical BRICS country is a country with a large territory with significant human capital and a dynamic economy. The typical small island Caribbean economy could in fact have significant human capital and a dynamic economy as the case of Trinidad and Tobago illustrates, but it would still be classified as a small state that is highly vulnerable to external shocks, whether natural or man-made. The typical small island economy is also one that has succeeded over the years of its existence as an independent state to maintain relatively stable democratic institutions. What then are the realities and what are the possibilities of future relations with the BRICS?

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8 Winston Dookeran A New Frontier for Caribbean Convergence: Integration Without Borders pg. 2.
The cases of Trinidad and Tobago and Trinidad and Tobago as a part of CARICOM are examined. Trinidad and Tobago and CARICOM are very well connected globally and have strong diplomatic relations with all of the BRICS countries. Bilateral relations are also well developed.

In the case of the Russian Federation, Trinidad and Tobago established diplomatic relations with the former Soviet Union (USSR) on June 6, 1974. As the successor state to the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation maintains international commitments entered into by the USSR. Current diplomatic relations between Trinidad and Tobago and Russia are conducted through a non-resident Russian Ambassador based in Georgetown, Guyana, accredited to Trinidad and Tobago.

On September 23, 2004, the Governments of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Russian Federation agreed upon the Protocol on Political Consultations between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, allowing both countries to conduct consultations on international issues of mutual interest with a view to promoting bilateral relations.

In September 2010, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Russian Federation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York. The MOU establishes a Mechanism for Political Dialogue and Cooperation between the two parties and is a result of the mutual desire to strengthen traditional friendly relations, as well as to develop fruitful cooperation in spheres of common interest. The MOU makes provisions for enhancing dialogue and cooperation between the parties within multilateral organizations on issues of mutual interest. It seeks to promote cooperation and exchanges in the economic, trade, financial, investment, technological, scientific and technical spheres, as well as exchanges and training in the fields of culture, education, health care, sports, youth development and tourism.

In 2013, the Russian Federation offered scholarships to Latin American and CARICOM States, including Trinidad and Tobago, for training in the fields of policing and fire prevention, to be conducted at Russian Police Universities. Russia also indicated its interest in assisting Trinidad and Tobago and the entire Caribbean region with natural disaster response and preparedness training and the role of the Russian Federation in Haiti’s reconstruction has been noted.

On September 12, 2013, Russia’s Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago, H.E. Nikolay Smirnov, in an interview with the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC), expressed an interest in building stronger trade and tourism ties with the region. He admitted that trade with the Caribbean remains at a low level and he expressed an interest in building stronger trade and tourism ties with the region, noting that trade interaction “is not as large as we will like to have due to the distance, maybe because of the competition from other countries in Latin America but we hope it will change...so we hope trade ties will be growing, tourism will increase because right now it’s on the rise to the Caribbean”. He explained that Russian tourists continue to view the Caribbean as a preferred destination, with the Dominican Republic receiving 60,000 tourists last year, in addition to Cuba, Jamaica and Barbados.
In 2011, Trinidad and Tobago granted visa exemption to visitors from Russia as a measure to boost arrivals. Visitor arrivals have been increasing since 2008.

### Visitor Arrivals to Trinidad and Tobago from the Russian Federation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of visitors</td>
<td>453</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>788</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Central Statistical Office, Trinidad and Tobago*

In terms of bilateral trade, Trinidad and Tobago has traditionally exported products ranging from static converters, grading machines and machinery for the manufacture of cocoa and chocolate to agricultural products. Imports include crude petroleum, steel alloy, lubricating oil, match splints, office machines and coiled products. The balance of trade between both countries is primarily in Russia’s favour.

### Trinidad and Tobago’s Trade with the Russian Federation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Imports (Total Value in TT $)</th>
<th>Exports (Total Value in TT $)</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>3,436,677,709</td>
<td>3,790,976</td>
<td>(-) 3,432,886,733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1,400,723,045</td>
<td>1,249,274</td>
<td>(-) 1,399,473,771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>5,129,301,693</td>
<td>76,758</td>
<td>(-) 5,129,224,935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 (provisional)</td>
<td>5,132,399,738</td>
<td>1,116,229</td>
<td>(-) 5,131,283,509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 (Jan-July)</td>
<td>5,392,204,539</td>
<td>734,700</td>
<td>(-) 5,391,469,839</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Central Statistical Office, Trinidad and Tobago (September 2013)*

Trinidad and Tobago and the Russian Federation are both very active members of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF), a strategic grouping of countries that together hold over 75% of the world’s proven reserves of natural gas. Trinidad and Tobago participated in the Second Summit of the GECF held in June 2013, in Moscow and Russia has indicated its willingness to help the Caribbean explore for oil and gas.

Trinidad and Tobago has been at the forefront in advocating for national, regional and international action to focus on non-communicable diseases (NCDS) as a developmental issue of global concern. The country, together with CARICOM, assumed a leading role at the UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs in 2011 and continues to underscore the importance of creating a Global Strategy to address the most urgent challenges posed by NCDS. In April 2011, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Russian Federation jointly organised the First Global Ministerial Conference on Healthy Lifestyles and Non-communicable Disease Control prior to
the United Nations General Assembly Debate. Trinidad and Tobago has maintained that in order to combat NCDs, the dialogue must focus on the social determinants of health, with an emphasis on in-depth research of causal (especially man-made) factors and the reduction of risk factors. The Caribbean continues to have the highest prevalence of chronic NCDs in the Americas (as at August 2013).

Trinidad and Tobago sees the dialogue on NCDs and health with the Russian Federation as one which could include cooperation in transferring health care technologies, assisting with health care infrastructure and the provision of expert guidance and training on prevention, care and treatment practices, as well as treating with health impacts linked to climate change and natural disasters (e.g. dengue fever, malaria and leptospirosis).

The history of bilateral relations between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and China dates back to the introduction of Chinese labour in 1806, in the anticipation of the imminent emancipation of slaves in the British colonies. Chinese labour soon became an integral part of the policy articulated by the colonial Government that sought to relieve plantation labour shortages.

Formal diplomatic relations were established on June 20, 1974. Trinidad and Tobago has consistently remained an adherent to the One China Policy, and gave active support to the restoration of the People’s Republic of China’s legitimate rights in the United Nations during the 26th Session of the UN General Assembly in 1971.

The relationship between the two states has grown even stronger in recent years. In 2011, Trinidad and Tobago co-hosted the 3rd China-Caribbean Trade and Economic Forum, the highest level of economic and trade dialogue between China and the Caribbean region. Chinese Vice Premier, Wang Qishan, attended the Forum and in his speech at its opening ceremony, he reaffirmed China’s commitment to further deepen China-Caribbean cooperation. Areas particularly identified for cooperation were: finance and investment, capacity building, environmental protection, new energy, culture, education, health, trade, tourism, and agriculture and fisheries.

Relations between the two countries have been enhanced by the exchange of several high-level visits. Trinidad and Tobago’s first Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Dr. Eric Williams visited the People’s Republic of China in November 1974, at the invitation of then Premier Zhou En Lai, and this was the first visit by a Head of Government from the Caribbean.

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9 At the opening ceremony of the Forum, Vice Premier Wang Qishan announced six measures to strengthen cooperation with the Caribbean countries in the coming three years: Strengthen Financial and Investment Cooperation; Enhance Cooperation in Capacity Building; Strengthen Cooperation in Renewable Energy and Environmental Protection; Strengthen Cooperation in Culture, Education and Public Health; Enhance Cooperation in Trade and Tourism; Strengthen Agricultural and Fisheries Cooperation.
region to China. There were other visits - Dr Williams again in 1975 and the late former Prime Minister, George Chambers in 1985. Over the years and consistently, there have been other interactions involving senior Trinidad and Tobago and Chinese officials including the visit of then Chinese Vice Premier, Wang Qishan to Trinidad and Tobago, on the occasion of the Third China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum held in Port of Spain in 2011.

The trading relationship between China and Trinidad and Tobago is a vigorous one. China was Trinidad and Tobago’s fifth largest import market in 2010, accounting for 5.2 per cent of the country’s total imports. Trinidad and Tobago’s exports to China, however, accounted for only 0.7 per cent of the country’s total exports in 2010 and consisted primarily of asphalt, methanol and liquefied natural gas, copper and scrap metals. From 2005 to 2010, the trade deficit between the two nations expanded from US$158.7 million to US$380.9 million, in favour of China. However, trade data for 2011 indicates that the total trade volume between the two nations recently surpassed the US$400 million, rising sharply from the US$100 million figure from 2010, allowing Trinidad and Tobago to enjoy its first trade surplus with China in the history of their long trading relationship.

With regard to trade in services, many sizeable contracts have been awarded to Chinese firms in Trinidad and Tobago. A Chinese firm, Shanghai Construction Company, was awarded contracts for the construction of the Port of Spain and San Fernando National Academies of the Performing Arts, the Diplomatic Centre and Official Residence of the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, the Ministry of Education Tower, the Scarborough General Hospital and, more recently, the George Bovell III Aquatic Centre, a cycling velodrome, a tennis centre, and three multi-purpose sporting facilities. Another Chinese construction firm, China Jiangsu International, secured a contract for the construction of the University of the West Indies South Campus in Trinidad, as well as for a Children’s Hospital Project in Couva, Trinidad.

Overall, there are over forty (40) bilateral agreements between the two countries. China has shown great interest in developing Trinidad and Tobago’s natural resources, particularly its asphalt, and oil and gas industries. In addition, cooperation between the two countries is generated in several areas, including the provision of professional development courses and scholarships, infrastructural development, and development loans and grants by the Government of the People’s Republic of China. Many Trinidad and Tobago nationals have benefited from training programmes and degree-level courses administered in China in a wide variety of fields, including governance, diplomacy, agriculture and environmental management.

The relationship between China and the Caribbean is centered on three major areas: diplomatic support for the One China Policy; trade and investment opportunities; and, development assistance and technical cooperation.
The Caribbean region is particularly important to Beijing's foreign policy goals with respect to Cross-Strait relations with Taiwan. It is noteworthy that eleven out of Taiwan's twenty-three surviving diplomatic relationships can be found within the Greater Caribbean. According to a March 2012 report by the Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA), a critical aspect regarding the extent of Chinese interests in the Caribbean is Beijing's determination for Caribbean countries to adopt the One China Policy, thereby severing relations with Taiwan.

Nine CARICOM Member States currently have diplomatic relations with the People’s Republic of China - Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

In addition to its diplomatic objectives, China also views the Caribbean region strategically with respect to exploring investment opportunities and sourcing raw materials and mineral resources. The Caribbean has significant mineral resources, most notably asphalt, petroleum and natural gas in Trinidad and Tobago, bauxite in Jamaica and Guyana, and timber and minerals in Guyana. The region also has vast amounts of maritime resources and Guyana, Belize and Suriname have land for agricultural production.

Furthermore, the Greater Caribbean, including Cuba, Dominican Republic and the Overseas Territories, has a combined population of approximately 40 million people. China therefore would engage the Caribbean in the interest of finding new markets for its staggering manufacturing output. The Caribbean is also widely considered as an entry point for Chinese products to the US, Canada and EU markets, particularly in light of the preferential agreements that CARICOM enjoys, including the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act, the Caribbean-Canada Trade Agreement and the CARIFORUM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement.

Over the past decade, the Caribbean has seen a substantial increase in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from China. According to China’s Ministry of Commerce, FDI in Caribbean countries by Chinese firms amounted to almost US$ 7 billion in 2009, a massive increase from the US$ 1.7 billion invested in 2004.

Two mechanisms for China-Caribbean cooperation have been established in recent years. The First Consultation Meeting Consultative Mechanism between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China and Caribbean Foreign Ministries was held in the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York, in September 2002. The second consultation meeting between the Foreign Ministry of China and nine Caribbean nations was held in Antigua and Barbuda in June 2004; the third meeting in Beijing, in July, 2006 and the fourth was held in Nassau, the Bahamas in May, 2010. At the Fifth Round of Consultations, which was conducted in Beijing on September 14, 2012, the two sides pledged to deepen cooperation through increased political exchanges and dialogue, and economic and technical cooperation in the following areas: agriculture; science and technology; tourism; sport and culture; and international issues.

In its quest to further enhance economic development, trade exchanges and co-operation with the Caribbean, the Chinese government proposed the establishment of the China-Caribbean Trade and Economic Cooperation Forum. It was initiated in 2004, with the first meeting held in Guyana at the technical level. The First Ministerial Forum was convened in Kingston, Jamaica
from February 2-3, 2005. The Forum was also accompanied by a Trade Fair from February 3-5, 2005. At the conclusion of the Forum, a Guiding Framework, which outlined mechanisms for future economic and trade relations between the participating Caribbean countries and China, was signed. The Guiding Framework highlighted specific areas of the cooperation in trade, investment, agriculture, civil aviation, financial services, engineering and infrastructural development, natural resources and human resource training.

The Second China-Caribbean Economic and Trade Cooperation Forum took place in Xiamen, China from September 07-08, 2007 and the Third Forum was held in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, on September 12, 2011.

Trinidad and Tobago and the Republic of India have a long history of association that began, in fact, with the arrival of immigrant labour from India to the island of Trinidad, during the 19th century. The countries established diplomatic relations in 1962 and enjoy an excellent bilateral relationship. The Government of India has a resident High Commission in Port of Spain since 1962 and Trinidad and Tobago established its High Commission in New Delhi in 1969.

Trinidad and Tobago exports to India comprise liquefied natural gas, alloy steel, lubricating oils, iron and steel and safety valves. Imports from India include tea, pipes/tubes, cashew nuts, fabric, aluminium zinc plated products and turmeric. Trinidad and Tobago’s relations with the Republic of India focus on three major areas: trade, technical cooperation and cultural cooperation. Trinidad and Tobago sees India’s changing global dynamic as holding great potential in terms of markets for Trinidad and Tobago products and services, including tourism, as a source of foreign direct investment, as well as a means to acquire up-to-date technology and innovation.

**Trade between India and Trinidad and Tobago**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Imports From India ($ TT)</th>
<th>Exports To India ($ TT)</th>
<th>Balance ($ TT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>174,375,528</td>
<td>105,353,933</td>
<td>-690,215,95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>231,973,995</td>
<td>126,942,73</td>
<td>-219,279,722</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>320,193,928</td>
<td>3,533,175</td>
<td>-316,660,753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>297,275,253</td>
<td>493,114,700</td>
<td>195,839,447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 (Jan–Jun)</td>
<td>176,543,445</td>
<td>512,629,265</td>
<td>336,085,820</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>78,820,360</td>
<td>232,043,363</td>
<td>153,223,003</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>870,044,320</td>
<td>330,183,968</td>
<td>-539,860,352</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>409,959,270</td>
<td>322,689,540</td>
<td>-87,269,730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>10,386,925</td>
<td>309,071</td>
<td>-10,077,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 (Jan-Jun)</td>
<td>4,583,215</td>
<td>75,898,566</td>
<td>71,315,351</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Central Statistical Office

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations, Trinidad and Tobago and India have signed approximately eighteen (18) agreements and Memorandums of Understanding. The past five (5) years have seen a proliferation of Indian Trade Fairs/Expos to Trinidad and Tobago, as Indian businessmen have seized the opportunity to conduct business in this country because of
existing trade agreements and the lucrative consumer market in Trinidad and Tobago. In 2011, Trinidad and Tobago granted visa exemption to visitors from India as a measure to boost arrivals.

Trinidad and Tobago benefits from the Indian Technical and Economic Co-operation (ITEC) Programme which is a bilateral programme of assistance of the Government of India. There is active collaboration in Education and the St. Augustine Campus of the University of the West Indies currently hosts three (3) Academic Chairs in Hindi, Contemporary Indian History and Ayurveda, which are sponsored by the Indian Government. The Campus has worked closely with the Indian High Commission in Trinidad and Tobago to mount a wide range of conferences, symposia and cultural events. Staff members of the University have also benefitted from scholarships under the ITEC Programme.

Trinidad and Tobago and India signed a Cultural Co-operation Agreement on March 13, 1987. The Agreement aims at encouraging co-operation in the fields of art and culture, including academic activity in the fields of science and technology, public health, sports and journalism, through reciprocal visits and several visits and exchanges have taken place over the years.

In 2003, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of the Republic of India signed an Agreement for the establishment of an Inter-Governmental Commission on Political, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation which is aimed at the facilitation of exchanges of information and expertise and the provision of technical training by the two countries. This Agreement established a Joint Commission to monitor the progress made in various fields of cooperation between the two countries. The Inaugural Session of the Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) was held in New Delhi on November 28 and 29, 2011

Trinidad and Tobago and Brazil established formal diplomatic relations in 1965.

Trinidad and Tobago and Brazil share membership in a number of international and regional organizations such as the United Nations (UN), the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). As such, they share common values in their adherence to the principles and objectives of these Organizations, and often share common positions on matters of international concern.

Since 1999, Trinidad and Tobago has entered into twelve (12) bilateral agreements with Brazil10. Further to the signing of a Bilateral Air Services Agreement in 2008, Trinidad and

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Tobago and Brazil have been engaged in talks to establish a direct air link between the two countries in order to enhance business connections and the development of the tourism sector. As a result of the Technical Cooperation Agreement between Trinidad and Tobago and Brazil which was signed in 2008, significant activity in the field of agriculture has been undertaken by both Governments. Over the years 2010-2011, Trinidad and Tobago twice received technical missions from the Brazilian Agency for Cooperation (ABC) as well as the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA). Brazil has provided training for officials of the Ministry of Food Production in the areas of shade-house technology, on-farm irrigation systems, as well as apiculture, and officials of both countries’ Agricultural agencies held discussions on methods to deal with pests and diseases in coconuts. In early 2013, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago expressed interest in exploring with the Government of Brazil, further avenues for bilateral cooperation in agriculture.

The Government of Brazil has created a new Scientific Mobility Program (Ciência Sem Fronteiras) that aims to provide scholarships to students from Brazil for research studies at universities abroad. The scholarships will be given primarily to students in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields and the candidates of the programmes will return to Brazil to complete their degrees. This programme is administered by the International Institute of Education and is part of the Brazilian government's larger initiative to grant 100,000 scholarships for the best students from Brazil to study abroad at the world’s best universities. Trinidad and Tobago aims at becoming a destination for students from Brazil wishing to further their research in engineering and in the energy sector, it has been proposed that the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) and the University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine Campus be included in the list of internationally recognised universities by Brazil for enrolment by Brazilian students.

Discussions between Trinidad and Tobago as the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) supplier and Brazil as an LNG consumer provided the catalyst for bilateral collaboration and synergies between both countries, which led to the first shipment of LNG from Trinidad and Tobago to Brazil in July, 2008, following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in the Field of Energy.

Over the years, Brazil has maintained a favourable balance of trade with Trinidad and Tobago, with most of the revenue from Trinidad and Tobago’s exports to Brazil coming from products in the petroleum and petrochemical industries such as anhydrous ammonia, methanol and Liquefied Natural Gas. The main imports from Brazil included iron ore & concentrates and crude petroleum products.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>IMPORTS</th>
<th>EXPORTS</th>
<th>BALANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007-2013 (TTS)</td>
<td>[2012-2013 provisional statistics]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Diplomatic relations between Trinidad and Tobago and the Republic of South Africa were established on January 10, 1995, and South Africa opened a High Commission in Port of Spain at the level of Chargé d’Affaires in December 2006. In July 2011, Agrément was granted for the first resident South African High Commissioner to Trinidad and Tobago since the establishment of diplomatic relations. Trinidad and Tobago has had a resident High Commissioner to South Africa since 2005.

In the area of trade and economic relations, imports from South Africa include, inter alia, mixed juices, groundnuts, beverages, machinery parts, dumpers. Trinidad and Tobago’s exports to South Africa include inter alia syrup, rum, aromatic bitters, liquefied propane and butane, diesel oil and iron and steel products. In addition, Trinidad and Tobago businesses continue to explore possibilities for direct investment in South Africa, which is seen as a very lucrative emerging market.

### Trade between Trinidad and Tobago and South Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Exports (TTD)</th>
<th>Imports (TTD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>255,808,750</td>
<td>24,294,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>29,466,261</td>
<td>22,920,654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>4,934,450</td>
<td>41,613,803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>13,049,000</td>
<td>23,278,772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>55,457,157</td>
<td>119,995,843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January to July 2013</td>
<td>68,868,233</td>
<td>63,529,817</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Trinidad and Tobago Central Statistical Office

Trinidad and Tobago and South Africa are currently pursuing further discussions with a view to concluding bilateral agreements in a number of areas, including air services and cooperation in the fields of art and culture.

### Summary and Conclusion

In an evolving global scenario, the BRICS, with Brazil included, has emerged as a new and viable geopolitical space, and Latin America and the Caribbean should continue to explore new areas of cooperation.
The available evidence points to the fact that Trinidad and Tobago and most of the Caribbean are well connected globally and bilaterally with the countries of the BRICS and the prospects for closer cooperation are very good. The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States - CELAC has included deepening relations with the BRICS on its active agenda and the Caribbean is an integral part of this. Moving forward, the onus is also on the BRICS to demonstrate that they continue to be a viable point of convergence on the global stage. Five well-publicized Summits have been held and the projects for the establishment of a development bank and new currency arrangements, for example, are very forward looking. These and other initiatives, once they become successful, have the potential to alter the current international financial architecture and other global relations.

The Caribbean has to be seen as a viable geopolitical and economic space and should be better located in the analyses and programmes, if in fact the true value of Latin American and Caribbean engagement with the BRICS and any other groupings is to be derived. Trinidad and Tobago and the small island developing states of the English-speaking Caribbean are well connected regionally, in the hemisphere and globally, and they have the potential for engaging the BRICS both individually and collectively.

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, an independent small island developing state in the Caribbean has close bilateral relations with all of the BRICS and could provide some examples of good practice in this regard.
Relations between Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and the BRICS: Locating a Caribbean Space

Presentation by Gerard Greene, Director Bilateral Relations and National Coordinator for CELAC, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

SELA Conference on Latin American and Caribbean Relations with the BRICS - Brasilia, Brazil, 18 November 2013
SELA’s Working Document

Takes note of the rise of the BRICS in a dynamic multipolar global context and offers recommendations for more intensive engagement by LAC. Recent bilateral initiatives and the move by CELAC as a region to develop closer linkages with China, Russia, India and South Africa, have also been noted.

- Negotiate new agreements to facilitate more trade and mutual investment promotion
- Mount dynamic trade missions
- Promote more intensive market research
- Promote new business development
- Development cooperation to build capacity
Structural Realities

The profile of LAC exports to Russia, India, and China and South Africa is dominated by Brazil and the larger countries of the LAC and reflects mainly increased volumes of raw materials and agricultural products.

Why exclude Brazil? Brazil is an integral part of the new transcontinental space created by the BRICS.
Structural realities – The Caribbean is excluded from the analysis

- The exclusion of the English speaking Caribbean from analyses and databases limits the possibilities.
- Trinidad and Tobago sees itself as belonging to a viable geo-political geo-economic space called the Caribbean.
- The Caribbean is well connected regionally, in the hemisphere and in the global context and has its contribution to make in terms of engaging the BRICS.
- The current MFA of Trinidad and Tobago has initiated discussion in CARICOM about new convergence that could include new global convergence.
Main Points

- In an increasingly multipolar world, the Caribbean is a viable geopolitical and geo-economic space with a substantial contribution to be made to the development of regional and hemispheric relations.
- Because of their strategic location and historical linkages, the countries of the Caribbean have the capacity for developing closer relations with countries, groups of countries and regions, and so contribute towards the emergence of new viable spaces.
- The Caribbean is well positioned for developing closer relations with the BRICS and the case of Trinidad and Tobago is cited.
The case of Trinidad and Tobago

- Small island CARICOM country with a well developed energy sector; high per capita income.
- Trinidad and Tobago has developed deep relations with its closest neighbour, Venezuela, and has excellent linkages with all the countries of South America.
- Trinidad and Tobago is well connected within the hemisphere and continues to play a significant role in hemispheric relations.
- Trinidad and Tobago is well connected globally.
The case of Trinidad and Tobago

- Trinidad and Tobago is an active participant in the continuing process of political and economic consolidation in the Caribbean and the combined Latin America and Caribbean Region.
- The call for a new convergence - Winston Dookeran, current Minister of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago.
Future relations with the BRICS

What does the thrust towards deepening relations with the BRICS mean for the countries of the Caribbean and more specifically, the small island developing states of the English-speaking Caribbean?
Conclusions

LAC should move ahead with initiatives to deepen relations with the BRICS. Brazil must remain added to the BRICS.

Trinidad and Tobago and CARICOM are very well connected globally and have strong diplomatic relations with all of the BRICS countries. Bilateral relations are also well developed.
Conclusions

The Caribbean has to be seen as a viable geopolitical and economic space and should be better located in the analyses and programmes, if in fact the true value of Latin American and Caribbean engagement with the BRICS and any other groupings is to be derived.

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, an independent small island developing state in the Caribbean has close bilateral relations with all of the BRICS and could provide some examples of good practice in this regard.