

Sixth Annual Forum of Developing Country Investment Negotiators

Opening Remarks from the CARICOM Secretariat

Hon. Rudranath Indarsingh, Minister of State, Ministry of Finance and Economy, Government of Trinidad and Tobago

Nathalie Bernasconi, Program Leader & Senior International Lawyer, Investment and Sustainable Development Program, IISD

Distinguished participants

The CARICOM Secretariat has welcomed the opportunity to co-host the first Forum of Developing Country Investment Negotiators to be held in the Caribbean, and more specifically a Member country of CARICOM.

Along with the other hosts of the Forum, the Secretariat extends to you all a warm welcome to the Forum, and to those who are visitors to the Caribbean, to the Region.

As a regional organisation of small developing countries, CARICOM recognises the importance of investment to the sustainable development of the region.

Indeed, Heads of Government of CARICOM have assigned a high priority to foreign investment on the regional agenda.

The Region has also been engaged in recent years in negotiations of investment agreements at the intra-regional level and with external partners. Therefore, the focus of this year's forum on the new models for Investment and Sustainable Development is not only very germane but also timely.

This is the first Forum in which so many CARICOM countries are represented and continued participation of the Region in the Forum should be encouraged. The Forum affords participating negotiators a unique platform for capacity building, networking and exchange of experiences.

We anticipate that there will be stimulating discussions on a range of thought-provoking issues, and we look forward to a productive Forum.

Introduction of Hon. Rudranath Indarsingh

I have the pleasure of introducing the Hon. Rudranath Indarasingh, who will be delivering the Opening Address and officially opening the Forum.

The Hon. Rudranath Indarsingh, is the Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance and Economy in the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. Since May 2010, Minister Indarsingh has been a Member of the House of Representatives of Trinidad and Tobago and previously held the portfolio of Minister of State in the Ministry of Works and Transport, the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development and the Ministry of Local Government.

Minister Indarsingh began his career as an educator, after which he was employed with the All Trinidad General Workers' Union. In 2002, Minister Indarsingh served as an Opposition Senator.

