

Antigua and Barbuda leads OAS Declaration on Historic ICJ Climate Opinion

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Sir Ronald Sanders, Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the OAS

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OAS Unites Behind Historic ICJ Climate Advisory Opinion



Sir Ronald Sanders, Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the OAS

On August 6, the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States (OAS) adopted a landmark declaration by consensus, welcoming the historic advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on states' obligations regarding climate change.

Sir Ronald Sanders, Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to the OAS, drafted and negotiated the text. In doing so, he won the backing of 23 of the 32 active Member States, including all 14 CARICOM countries.

Despite the opposition of the United States delegation, the support of an overwhelming majority of the OAS member states underscores the deep concern about the effects of Climate Change that permeates the hemi-

sphere.

In a footnote to the declaration, which was shared before its adoption, the US delegation stated that "this declaration includes a wide range of statements from the advisory opinion that are inconsistent with U.S. positions, including with respect to climate change and human rights."

Ambassador Sanders said, "This divergence of positions does not stop vulnerable states from welcoming the ICJ Advisory Opinion, which upholds our rights in international law, nor does it stop us from seeking to narrow the differences with the U.S".

The Declaration heralds the ICJ's Advisory Opinion of 23 July 2025 as "a landmark clarification of international

law," affirming that "greenhouse gas emissions constitute a shared global challenge. Their adverse effects—including loss of life, destruction of infrastructure, migration, and threats to food and water security—transcend borders and demand an urgent and cooperative response to facilitate a transition towards the progressive reduction of fossil fuels."

Reflecting on this achievement, Ambassador Sanders remarked that Antigua and Barbuda was honoured to lead the hemispheric effort to welcome the ICJ Advisory Opinion, describing it as "another vital step on our collective journey to halt greenhouse-gas emissions that imperil small states in particular—and all nations of the world."

APUA and CDAL Forge Partnership to Expand High-Speed Fibre Internet in Jolly Harbour

The Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA), through its Telecommunications Business Unit, is pleased to announce the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Caribbean Developments Antigua Ltd. (CDAL), the management company for the Jolly Harbour community.

This agreement grants APUA the exclusive rights to design, install and maintain a modern fibre-optic network within Jolly Harbour. Through this partnership, more than 800 residential properties, including existing homes, villas and future developments, will benefit from fast, reliable and high-capacity internet access.

Work on the Fibre to the Home (FTTH) infrastructure is set to begin shortly and is expected to be completed within approximately two months. Depending on the layout of each property, connections will be made either directly or through Multi-Dwelling Unit (MDU) systems. APUA will also provide



full technical support and ongoing maintenance as part of the service.

“This partnership represents a significant step in our mission to deliver world-class telecommunications services across Antigua and Barbuda,” said Vaughn Brown, Manager of the Telecommunications Business Unit at APUA. “We are excited to work alongside CDAL to ensure the Jolly Harbour community enjoys the benefits of secure, high-speed connectivity in both the short and long term.”

Residents can look for-

ward to a dependable internet experience, backed by APUA’s dedicated team of professionals who will work closely with CDAL to resolve any installation challenges that may arise.

The agreement takes effect on 1 August 2025, with an initial term of ten years and automatic renewal each year thereafter.

“This is not just a technical upgrade. It is an investment in the future of Jolly Harbour,” said Levor Henry, Head of Sales and Marketing at APUA Telecommunica-

tions. “We are proud to be delivering infrastructure that supports modern living, remote work, entertainment and more. We also invite other residential communities, new developments and property managers to engage with us to explore the customised telecommunications solutions we can provide.”

This collaboration reflects APUA’s ongoing commitment to expanding digital access and delivering innovative services that meet the evolving needs of residents and communities across the nation.

Antigua and Barbuda prepares for Carifesta

The Cultural Department is spearheading Antigua and Barbuda's planned participation in the Caribbean's premier cultural expression, Carifesta slated for Barbados from August 22 to 31.

Minister of Creative Industries, Daryll Matthew said Antigua and Barbuda expects to send a delegation of between 80 and 90 persons to 'demonstrate to Antiguan and Barbudans and the rest of the world' what the country has to offer culturally.

Sources at the Cultural Department said rehearsals are underway for members of both the National Youth Theatre company and the National Youth Dance company, all of whom will be among the of-



ficial delegation going off to Carifesta.

The delegation will also feature representation from pan (Hell's Gate Steelband), arts and craft

from the department, traditional masqueraders and the food of the country with an emphasis on lobsters from Barbuda.



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The Independence Calypso Competition returns for this year's celebrations



Creative Industry Minister Daryll Matthew

tions of being a calypso monarch, you will have another opportunity to do so with this competition," the minister announced.

Minister Matthew named the sub-committee led by Peter Abraham and Yvonne 'YB' Benjamin that planned and executed the Calypso Monarch competition during the

Carnival as the persons who will be called upon to manage and execute the upcoming competition.

According to the minister there will be 'substantial prizes' for the winners of the competition and he is therefore urging all interested calypsonians to begin preparations as soon as possible.

Calypsonians and calypso enthusiasts can look forward to the return of the Independence Calypso Competition as the Ministries of Creative Industries seeks to build upon the momentum coming out of this year's Carnival.

Making the announcement, Creative Industry Minister Daryll Matthew stating that the calypso art-form appears to be on a rebound with the performances and the support from the public witnessed during the just concluded Carnival festivities.

"I wish the public to know that this year, 2025, we will be staging once again our Independence Calypso competition and so all of those artists who have aspira-



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Directorate of Gender Affairs

Antigua and Barbuda submits major international report- Belem Do Para

The Directorate of Gender Affairs (DoGA) proudly announces the completion and submission of Antigua and Barbuda's 2025 Belem do Para Report, marking a significant milestone for the nation in its continued commitment to addressing and eliminating violence against women.

The Belem do Para Convention, formally known as the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women, was adopted in 1994. This vital international instrument "defines violence against women, establishes that women have the right to live a life free of violence and that violence against women constitutes a violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It also calls for the establishment of mechanisms for protecting and defending women's rights as essential to combating the phenomenon of violence against women's physical, sexual, and psychological integrity, whether in the public or the private sphere, and for asserting those rights within society."

The report accounts for Antigua and Barbuda's progress in the implementation of the Belem do Para Convention in the 2018- 2024 period. Antigua and Barbuda responded to a set

of indicators regarding Legislation, National Plans, Access to Justice, Information and Statistics, and Diversity.

This achievement is the result of the collective efforts of the technical team at the Directorate of Gender Affairs, working in close collaboration with a wide range of government departments, civil society organizations, and social partners to include the Royal Police Force of Antigua and Barbuda, Family and Social Services Division, the Ministry of Legal Affairs and Legal Aid, Civil Registry and Woman Against Rape (WAR). Their contributions ensured that the data and insights submitted were comprehensive, current, and reflective of on-the-ground realities.

Ashlea Ambris, Project Officer at the Directorate of Gender Affairs, who played a key role in coordinating the report, expressed pride in the successful submission: *"This submission speaks not only to our country's commitment to international human rights standards but also to the strength of our national partnerships. It highlights the pivotal role the Directorate of Gender Affairs plays in ensuring Antigua and Barbuda remains accountable to the protection and advancement*

of women's rights. The impact of this report is far-reaching—it helps us track progress, identify gaps, and improve national policies to create a safer, more equitable society for all."

Melanie Williams-Kirnon, Program Officer at the Directorate of Gender Affairs, also expressed delight in the completion of the report, highlighting that:

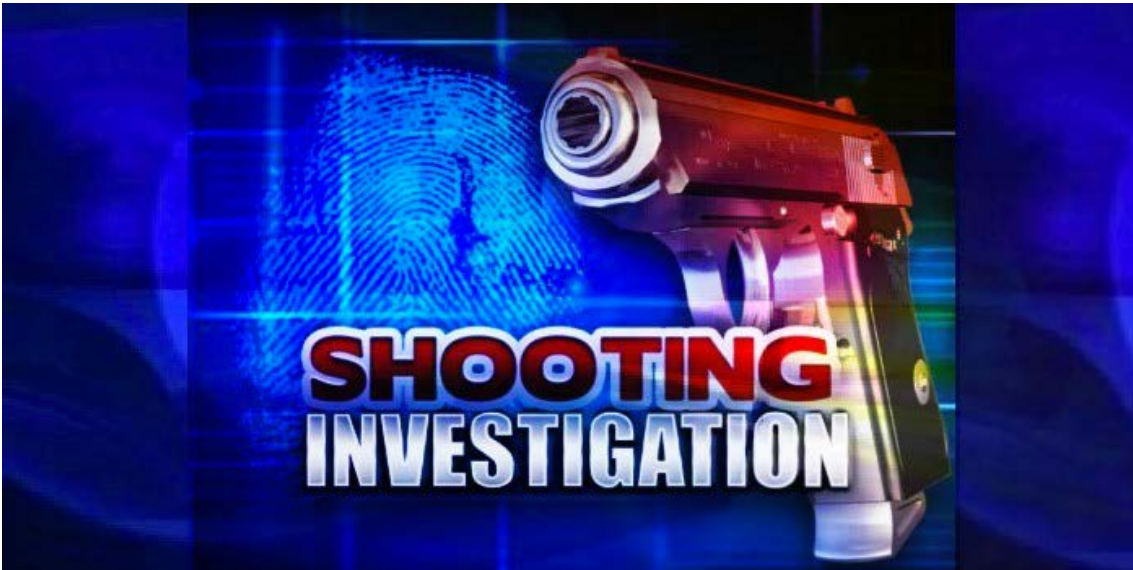
"The importance of addressing violence against women is not just a necessity, but a moral imperative for a just and equitable society. With all stakeholders working together, we can break negative cycles and foster a future where every woman lives free from fear and harm."

DoGA extends sincere thanks to all stakeholders who contributed to this important effort. Their expertise and commitment to gender equity made the completion of this report possible.

The Directorate remains steadfast in its mission to monitor, coordinate, and advocate for policies and programs that address gender-based violence, promote equality, and fulfill Antigua and Barbuda's obligations under international conventions like Belem do Para.

Local News

Police Investigate another Shooting; this time in Bolans



The police are investigating a shooting incident that occurred in Bolans on the evening of Wednesday, 6 August 2025.

It was reported that a male resident of Hatton was visiting his girlfriend in the area, when an unknown assailant emerged from the eastern side of a

nearby house and opened fire on the vehicle he was driving.

The victim sustained gunshot wounds to his left foot and right thigh

and was transported to the Sir Lester Bird Medical Centre. His injuries are non-life-threatening, and he is reported to be in stable condition.

The suspect was described as wearing a black hoodie, black jeans, and black face mask.

The police are appealing to anyone with information that may assist in this investigation to contact the Criminal Investigations Department at 462-3913 or call Crime Stoppers at 800-TIPS (8477).



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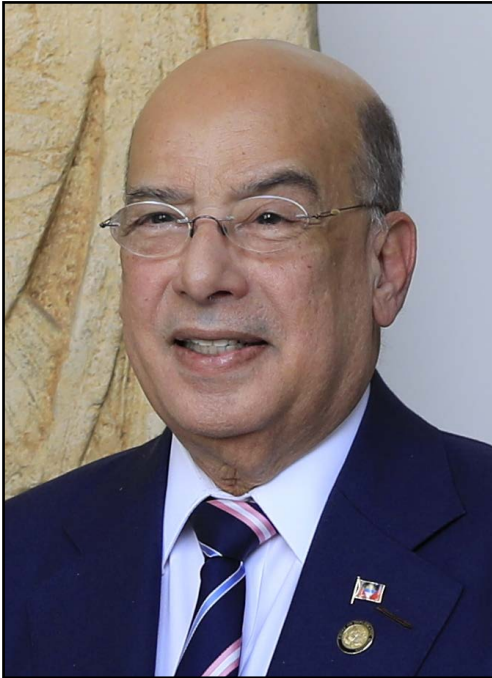
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Commentary

Why a vicious attack on the OAS Secretary General and an Ambassador from the Caribbean?



By Sir Ronald Sanders

On August 5, a website I had never encountered published a hatchet job on Albert Ramdin, who took office as

Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS) less than two months ago.

The article claimed to expose “lavish spending” and “nepotism” by Albert Ramdin in the brief two months he has been at the helm of the Organization. It layered one anonymous rumor atop another until fact and fiction blurred. Its sensational depiction of Secretary-General Albert Ramdin—limousines billed at US \$25,000, an “ivory-tower” renovation of the eighth floor, and a stubborn refusal to fund critical communications upgrades—rests entirely on unnamed “internal OAS sources.” No single source is identified by name, and no budget lines, audit reports, or on-the-record statements back these allegations.

This article is nothing less than a hatchet job on Ramdin – the first Secretary General elected from a Caribbean

an Community (CARICOM) country. The question is why? And the answer lies in the murky world of marginalization of the Caribbean area as small and insignificant and, therefore, underserving. It may also lie in the misguided idea that Caribbean governments favour China over the US and Canada, and somehow Ramdin symbolizes that position.

The truth is that Caribbean countries have no such preference. Their only desire is to work harmoniously with all wealthier countries to promote their people’s economic and social development. Right now—and for some time—China has been more ready to provide that support.

Against that backdrop, the article compounds its abusive attack on Ramdin by dragging the Bahamas Ambassador, Chet Donovan Neymour, into the fray with an equally unsubstanti-



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Commentary

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ated claim that he is “currently under investigation for corruption.” This is a massive untruth and a nasty stain on Neymour’s reputation – again in service to those who feel that Caribbean officials should not be predominant. A search of mainstream news wires—Reuters, the Associated Press, Deutsche Welle—and the OAS’s press releases reveals no hint of any inquiry into Ambassador Neymour. As Dean of the Corps of OAS Ambassadors, I can confirm that no organ of the Organization has opened a probe into Neymour. The only prior allegation—fifteen years ago when Neymour was a staff member of the OAS—was thoroughly investigated, dismissed on appeal, and has left his record unblemished ever since.

Persons determined to smear and besmirch treat truth as inconvenient in pursuit of dirty ends. However, any member state delegate who wishes to adopt these rotten tactics will be summoned to prove what they accuse.

The maneuver to conflate Neymour’s impeccable service with the unverified allegations against Secretary General Ramdin betrays political motives, not journalistic integrity. Ambassador Neymour is a career diplomat representing The Bahamas at the United Nations and the OAS. In 2024, he guided the Permanent Council with steady leadership as Chairman. He then chaired the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs with transparency and fiscal discipline. Earlier in his career, as OAS Ombudsman, he protected due process for all staff.

Ramdin’s wish to appoint Neymour as his Chief of Staff requires a waiver from the Permanent Council. This precedent was recently utilized when Ramdin nominated the Ambassador of Chile, Sebastian Kraljevich, as the Executive Secretary for the Secretariat for Strengthening Democracy. It is this Permanent Council requirement, a clear manifestation of a double standard and ulterior motive, that has provided the opportunity for mudslinging.

If the author of the article in “Centra News” truly sought the facts, a transparent review would confirm that Ambassador Neymour’s career has been defined by competence and integrity, not by scandal.

In Secretary General Ramdin’s defense, the General Secretariat of the OAS issued a formal statement on 6 August rejecting all mischaracterizations of his travel, office renovations, and budgetary priorities. The statement underscored that every expenditure adheres to OAS rules and financial controls. In the case of one of the allegations that in Antigua and Barbuda at the 55th General Assembly of the OAS, Ramdin chose an expensive Hotel away from the staff of the Secretariat, I make it clear that it was the Government of Antigua and Barbuda that allocated the Hotel for Ramdin and heads of delegation for security

reasons. It was not the OAS that paid his hotel bill. The government of Antigua and Barbuda did so as part of its obligations as the host government.

The OAS was founded to uphold democracy, human rights, and development across the Americas. It will degrade its mission if it allows rumors to drive its governance. Ambassador Chet Donovan Neymour deserves affirmation of the merits of his service, not conflation with unfounded claims. Member states of the OAS and their citizens must see through this orchestrated smear campaign against Neymour as part of a broader attack on Ramdin, and ask themselves why?

(The author is the Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda to the United States and the OAS, and Dean of the OAS Ambassadors accredited to the OAS. Responses and previous commentaries: www.sirronaldsanders.com)

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Social Media and Social Surveillance



Andrecia Lewis

Many individuals who are commonly classified as conspiracy theorists, view mobile devices as tools used by governments and other agencies to surveil the common man. The truthfulness or lack thereof of this assumption will not be debated. However, the irony of this mode of thought lies in the fact that to keep the average joe under any form of surveillance is a rather unchallenging task. After all, it is not the “FBI monitoring phone conversations” that one must be deeply concerned about. Instead, it is the person sitting adjacent to you on public transportation one must be weary of, or even the unpredictable cameras constantly rolling during events such as concerts. A couple learnt the latter lesson the hard way.

By now, it is safe to hypothesize much of the globe is aware of “Coldplaygate.” A cheating scandal involving the married CEO of a billion-dollar company and his lover who is also married and the Chief People officer at said company. This scandal rocked the internet inciting widespread conversation and interest on social media platforms. Thousands of strangers took it upon themselves to find the CEO’s wife’s social media accounts, forwarding the video to her, circulating pictures of his wife and children online, recreating the video and harassing the company online. Why then would agencies invest resources in spying on citizens? After all, the average person is willing to play the role of an uncompensated private investigator. This incident served as a chilling reminder that there are cameras almost everywhere.

Indeed, we are living in a panopticon. However, the prison is society itself. Whenever an individual steps out of the privacy of their home, it is important to comport oneself in a way that suggests one can be recorded at any given moment. Many constantly repeat the phrase “no right to privacy in a public space.” After all, there is no “reasonable expectation of privacy” in a public space and it would be absurd to believe there would be. However, given the context of the society we now live in, the absence of privacy in public also bleeds into a person’s

private life and “Coldplaygate” is the perfect representation of this. Our world has become too interconnected for “no right to privacy in public spaces” to still be seen as an absolute truth.

The rapid advancement of technology and the ease of access most individuals have to a device and the internet must be considered. These factors were responsible for the original “Coldplaygate” video amassing over 100 million views on one social media platform. Therefore, the private details concerning his family posted in the comment section has the possibility to expose him and his family’s private details to hundreds of millions of random strangers. Many would claim that maybe he should not have cheated on his wife. However, the topic of social media and over-sensationalism for “clout” disguised as moral justice is a different topic.

To conclude, we currently live in an attention economy. Therefore, it is no surprise the average person has now taken on the role of paparazzi and celebrity. Albeit, without the glitz and glam. Constant social surveillance and the fear of being recorded can alter the ways in which we express ourselves. It can slowly chip away at one’s freedom and authentic expression. Most importantly, social surveillance mixed with technology and increased connectivity has now caused the line separating private and public to be blurred.



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HON. DARYLL S. MATTHEW

Minister of Education, Sports and The Creative Industries

Queen Elizabeth Highway, St. John's, Antigua

Email: daryll.matthew@ab.gov.ag

Tel: 268.468.3022 / 268.468.3023



Deputy Kirsten Morel

Minister for Sustainable Economic Development

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August 5th 2025

Dear Deputy Morel,

Thank you for your kind and deeply moving letter of condolence following the tragic loss of young Vonde Bowers.

This senseless and heartbreaking event has shaken our entire nation, particularly the sporting community, which held such high hopes for Vonde's future. He was a talented cricketer and a Youth Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda, whose discipline, and quiet determination reflected the very attributes that epitomize the best of our youth.

We are particularly grateful to you, your officials in the Ministry of Sustainable Economic Development, and Jersey Cricket for your kind words and heartwarming gestures. The decision by the Jersey Under-19 team to wear black armbands in his honour is a symbol of solidarity that is both touching and deeply appreciated.

While the pain of this tragedy will linger, let me assure you that it will not deter our spirit of collaboration. On the contrary, it compels us to work even more closely with partners like you, to ensure that young talents like Vonde are supported, protected, and remembered.

Thank you once again for standing with us during this difficult time. We look forward to continuing our joint efforts in sport and youth development, in tribute to Vonde's legacy.

Cordially,

Hon. Daryll Matthew

Minister of Education, Sports and The Creative Industries

Antigua and Barbuda

Regional News

Caribbean regional stakeholder meeting highlights urgency on NCDs and mental health



On July 30th, 2025, the Healthy Caribbean Coalition (HCC), in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), hosted the Caribbean Regional Stakeholder Meeting in support of the upcoming 4th UN High-Level Meeting (HLM4) on Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs) and Mental Health.

The virtual event also marked the 18th anniversary of the 2007 Port of Spain Declaration on NCDs.

The meeting brought to-

gether over 200 participants from civil society, government, regional institutions, and international partners. The objectives of the webinar included:

Reflecting on progress made in the Caribbean since the 2007 Port of Spain Declaration, including achievements, challenges, and lessons learned.

Exploring NCD priorities and strategies within CARICOM to accelerate action in the lead-up to and beyond HLM4.

Discussing approaches

to prevent new NCD cases and improve the lives of individuals living with NCDs.

During the meeting, Sir George Alleyne, Director Emeritus of PAHO and Patron of the HCC, referenced a line from Barbadian calypsonian Gynner—"We want more, Gynner. We want more"—to express the desire for increased efforts in addressing NCDs and mental health in the region. He stated, "We just wish more to be done."

Participants engaged in

dialogue on the current state of NCDs and mental health in the Caribbean, emphasizing the importance of leadership, policy development, and regional collaboration to meet the health-related targets of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

The stakeholder meeting served as a preparatory forum ahead of the 4th UN High-Level Meeting, scheduled for September 25th, 2025, at the United Nations General Assembly in New York. (Dominica News Online)

Trinidadian extradited to United States on federal charges



A Trinidadian, Shurlan Guppy, has been extradited to the United States where he will face federal charges in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

The US Embassy in Port of Spain said that Guppy had been under investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in Philadelphia since 2019 and following a lengthy investigation and cooperation between the United States and Trinidad and Tobago law enforcement authorities, Guppy was arrested on September 26, 2023.

On July 31, last year, a Port of Spain Magistrate Court approved Guppy's extradition to the United States, but he appealed the matter and on March 25, this year, the Court of Appeal dismissed the matter, clearing the way for his extradition.

The US Embassy said that on Tuesday, Guppy was escorted to the United States by Deputy Marshals from the United States Marshals Service and Special Agents from the DEA.

"This extradition is indicative of the strong law enforcement relationships and close cooperation between the United States and Trinidad and Tobago, as we continue to work together to make our countries safer and prosecute

criminal activities," said Chargé d'Affaires, Dr Jenifer Neidhart de Ortiz."

DEA Caribbean Division Special Agent in Charge, Michael A Miran-

da said, the successful extradition of Guppy is a powerful testament to the strength of international cooperation and the unwavering commitment of law enforcement on both sides of the Caribbean.

"I commend the dedicated efforts of DEA special agents who worked tirelessly alongside other US and Trinidad and Tobago agencies. Together, we sent a clear message that transnational criminal organisations will be pursued relentlessly, no matter where they hide.

"This operation reflects the professionalism, coordination, and resolve that define our shared mission to safeguard our communities from the threat of drug trafficking," Miranda said. (CMC)



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Regional News

Former Ambassador Crispin Gregoire among five honoured at 17th Annual Diplomats Diversity Gala in U.S.



Dominican Ambassador Crispin Gregoire was among five distinguished honorees celebrated at the 17th Annual Diplomats Diversity Gala, held on Sunday 3rd August 2025, evening at the Porsche showroom in Los Angeles, California.

Ambassador Gregoire served as the premier Guest of Honour at the prestigious event, which drew approximately 200 attendees. He addressed the audience

during the ceremony, which was hosted by Ambassador April Sutton, Founder of the annual Gala and a former Delegate to the United Nations General Assembly.

The Gala opened with a vibrant red-carpet reception, featuring a buffet of international cuisine and the tropical rhythms of steel drums. Guests included diplomats, celebrities, and business leaders.

In addition to Ambassador Gregoire, honorees included diplomats representing Sweden, Belize, and Azerbaijan, each receiving a custom-made trophy in recognition of their service. A humanitarian from Morocco was also honored for his philanthropic outreach and involvement with global initiatives.

Ambassador Sutton highlighted Gregoire's decades-long diplomatic career, citing his roles as Permanent Representative of Dominica to the United Nations, Special Adviser to the President of the UN General Assembly, and Facilitator of the first UN World Conference on Indigenous Peoples. She also noted his contributions to commemorating the legacy of slavery, including his role in establishing the UN International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, observed annually on

March 25.

"His work has generated an impressive list of stellar achievements," said Ambassador Sutton. "I have observed the extraordinary accomplishments of Ambassador Gregoire, including his efforts to construct the UN Slavery Memorial at the United Nations Headquarters."

Special arrangements were made for Ambassador Gregoire to meet with prominent figures in entertainment and business, including multi-Grammy Award-winning musician Larry Dunn of Earth, Wind & Fire, and Bruce Langer, President of Langers Juice Company.

The Diplomats Diversity Gala continues to serve as a platform for recognizing global leaders who champion diversity, diplomacy, and humanitarian efforts. (Dominica News Online)

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NEW RESEARCH ADDS TO PRESSURE ON BRITISH MONARCHY OVER HISTORICAL TIES TO SLAVERY



British Monarch King Charles

By Catarina Demony (Reuters) - New research shows that Britain's King George IV, who ruled for a decade until 1830, personally profited from enslaved labour on Grenadian plantations, a finding that experts say heightens pressure on the monarchy to confront its historical links to slavery.

Independent scholar Desirée Baptiste uncovered a 1823-24 document at the National Archives in London revealing a 1,000-pound (\$1,330.60) payment - equivalent to around 103,132 pounds

today - from two Crown-owned estates in Grenada where hundreds of enslaved people laboured in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The funds were paid into King George IV's private coffers, and contributed to his "lavish lifestyle", said Baptiste, a researcher on colonialism and transatlantic slavery who has roots in Grenada and shared her findings with Reuters.

Baptiste's research was verified by University of Manchester professor Edmond Smith and Dr. Nick Draper, founder of

University College London's Legacies of British Slave-ownership project.

Smith, who is supervising a PhD study on the royal family's role in slavery, said as more evidence is uncovered the monarchy's profits from slavery will become clearer. He said this payment "might well just be the tip of the iceberg".

Buckingham Palace did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

King Charles has backed the study led by Smith, following a 2023 Guardian report revealing that in 1689 King William III

received 1,000 pounds in shares in the Royal African Company, which trafficked thousands of enslaved Africans to the Americas.

"This evidence fits with long-term patterns of colonial exploitation by the British royal family, including repeated efforts to find novel income streams from colonies in the Caribbean," Smith said.

King Charles expressed sorrow over slavery in a speech to Commonwealth leaders in 2022. But Baptiste said no British monarch has publicly acknowledged the Crown once owned and profited from enslaved people in the Caribbean.

Baptiste's research, from her independent study 'Slaves the Property of His Majesty: George IV and Grenada', comes amid growing global momentum for reparations for slavery, especially across the Caribbean and Africa. However, some European leaders have been accused of being opposed to even opening the conversation.

China fights mosquito-borne chikungunya virus with drones, fines and nets as thousands fall ill



Chinese authorities are using nets, spraying insecticide and even deploying drones to fight the mosquito-borne chikungunya virus, which has infected thousands of people.

Authorities had reported more than 7,000 cases of the virus as of Wednesday, mostly in the southern Chinese manufacturing hub of Foshan, some 170 kilometres (105 miles) from Hong Kong.

The number of new cases appears to be dropping slowly, according to authorities.

It appears to be the largest chikungunya outbreak ever documented in China, according to Cesar Lopez-Camacho of the University of Oxford.

The virus is transmitted by infected mosquitoes and can cause fever and joint pain.

“What makes this event notable is that chikungunya has never been established in mainland China before,” Lopez-Camacho said in a statement.

This suggests that most of the population had no preexisting immunity, making it easier for the virus to spread quickly.”

Chinese state television has shown workers spraying insecticide around city streets, residential areas, construction sites and other areas where people may come into contact with mosquitoes. Workers sprayed some places before entering office buildings.

Unusually heavy rains and high temperatures have worsened the crisis in China, and authorities are using drones to try to find standing water, where mosquitoes lay eggs.

Authorities also have threatened to fine people who don't empty water from outdoor receptacles. Residents can be subject to fines of up to 10,000 yuan (\$1,400) and have their electricity cut off.

Because of the virus, the US has issued a travel advisory suggesting that Americans take extra precautions when visiting China's Guangdong

province, where Foshan is located, as well as Bolivia and some island nations in the Indian Ocean.

Since the 2003 SARS outbreak, China has used strict measures to fight the spread of viruses, including hard-line tactics during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This time, patients are being forced to stay in hospital in Foshan for at least one week and authorities briefly enforced a two-week home quarantine, which was dropped because the disease cannot be transmitted between people.

Reports also have emerged of attempts to stop the spread of chikungunya with fish that eat mosquito larvae and even larger mosquitoes to eat the insects carrying the virus.

Officials have held meetings and adopted protocols at the national level in a sign of China's determination to eliminate the outbreak and avoid public and international criticism. (AP)

Helicopter crash in Ghana kills eight people including defence and environment ministers



The crash of a military helicopter in Ghana on Wednesday killed all eight people aboard including the West African country's defence and environment ministers and other top officials, the government said.

The Ghanaian military said the helicopter took off in the morning from the capital, Accra, and was heading northwest into the interior toward the gold-mining area of Obuasi in the Ashanti region when it went off the radar. The wreckage was later found in the Adansi area of Ashanti.

The cause of the crash was not immediately known, and the military said an investigation was under way.

Defence Minister Edward Omane Boamah and Environment Minister Ibrahim Murtala Muhammed were killed alongside the vice-chair of the National Democratic Congress rul-

ing party, a top national security adviser, and crew members.

Mourners gathered at the Boamah's residence as well as at the party's headquarters, and Ghana's government described the crash as a "national tragedy."

State media reported that the aircraft was a Z-9 helicopter that is often used for transport and medical evacuation.

An online video of the crash site shows debris on fire in a forest as some citizens circle around to help.

Wednesday's crash was one of Ghana's worst air disasters in more than a decade. In May 2014, a service helicopter crashed off the coast, killing at least three people. In 2012, a cargo plane overran the runway in Accra and crashed into a bus full of passengers, killing at least 10 people. (AP)



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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY

Trump and Putin to meet in coming days, Kremlin says



US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin have agreed to meet in the “coming days”, the Kremlin has said.

It follows Trump saying there was a “good chance” he could meet his Russian and Ukrainian counterparts together in person “very soon” to discuss ending the war in Ukraine.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky indicated support for that idea, while Putin said he was not against meeting Zelensky but he was “very far” from it happening.

Trump’s deadline for Russia to agree a ceasefire in Ukraine or face more sweeping sanctions is due to expire on Friday.

A meeting between Trump and Putin would follow US envoy Steve Witkoff holding talks with the Russian president on Wednesday.

Witkoff has travelled to Moscow four times previously, visits followed by optimism from Trump but ultimately no major breakthrough in peace talks.

Speaking on Thursday, Putin said the United Arab Emirates could host his

meeting with Trump, potentially as early as next week.

He said he was “very far” from a meeting with Zelensky because “conditions” had not been met and there was “still a long haul ahead for creation of such conditions”.

Previously, Putin said he would only meet Zelensky during a final phase of negotiations. Kyiv and its Western partners reject Moscow’s demands for ending the war.

Zelensky indicated his support for a summit, acknowledging that various formats of meetings had been discussed - “two bilateral and one trilateral” - and added that Europe “must be a participant” in any talks.

He wrote on X: “Ukraine is not afraid of meetings and expects the same brave approach from the Russian side.”

When asked at a White House briefing on Wednesday night whether Zelensky and Putin had agreed to a three-way summit, Trump had said there was a “very good prospect”.

Last month, Trump admitted to the BBC that after all four

of Witkoff’s previous visits, Putin had disappointed him after talks had initially led to optimism.

The US President is now striking a more cautious tone, telling reporters on Wednesday: “I don’t call it a breakthrough...we have been working at this for a long time. There are thousands of young people dying... I’m here to get the thing over with.”

On Wednesday, the Kremlin released a vague statement about Witkoff’s visit, calling the discussions “constructive” and noting that both sides had exchanged “signals”.

Zelensky meanwhile said he had spoken to Trump about Witkoff’s visit, with European leaders also on the call.

The Ukrainian president has been warning that Russia would only make serious moves towards peace if it began to run out of money.

Expectations are muted for a settlement by Friday - when Trump’s deadline expires - and Russia has continued its large-scale air attacks on Ukraine despite the US threat of sanctions.

As pressure builds, Trump on Wednesday signed an executive order imposing a 25% tariff on Indian imports over its continued purchase of Russian oil.

Before taking office in January, Trump said he would be able to end the war between Russia and Ukraine in a day. The conflict has raged on and his rhetoric towards Moscow has since

hardened.

Three rounds of talks between Ukraine and Russia in Istanbul have failed to bring the war closer to an end, three-and-a-half years after Moscow launched its full-invasion.

Moscow’s military and political preconditions for peace remain unacceptable to Kyiv and to its Western partners.

Russian demands include Ukraine becoming a neutral state, dramatically reducing its military and abandoning its Nato aspirations.

It also wants Ukrainian military withdrawal from its four partly occupied regions in the south-east, and the demobilisation of its soldiers.

Russia also demands international recognition of Ukraine’s Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, as well as the annexed Crimea.

Other conditions include a ban on Ukraine’s membership in any military alliances, a limit on the size of the Ukrainian army, Russian as an official language, and the lifting of international sanctions on Russia.

The Kremlin has also repeatedly turned down Kyiv’s requests for a meeting between Zelensky and Putin.

Meanwhile, the US approved \$200m (£150m) in additional military aid to Ukraine on Tuesday, including support for drone production. (BBC News)

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WE ARE GETTING STRONGER

Third annual Parham Super League kicks off this weekend



The Pigotts Bullets celebrate after retaining their title as champions of the Parham Super League at the Parham playing field on Saturday, September 14, 2024. (File Photo)

The third annual Parham Super League (PSL) football competition, which is organized by Eastboys Promotions in partnership with Parham Football Club, will commence on Saturday.

Unlike last year when 12 teams participated, the 2025 edition of the PSL will revert to the eight-team format that was used in the inaugural tournament in 2023.

The eight teams will compete in two zones in this year's competition, which will take place at the Par-

ham football field.

Back-to-back champions Pigotts Sports Club (Bullets) will go in pursuit of a hat trick of titles after winning the inaugural competition in 2023 and making a successful defence of their crown last year.

The reigning champions will be among the participating teams in this year's competition that will offer a grand prize of EC\$3,000, with the \$1,000 going to the runners-up.

The Pigotts Bullets will

be one of the four teams that will compete in Group A. The other teams are last year's losing finalist Freemans Village, Garden Stars, and Parham.

Contesting Group B will be Potters Tigers and Willikies Warriors along with newcomers Swetes and East Furlong.

The top two teams from each group will advance to the semi-finals after the preliminary rounds. Thereafter, the winners of the semi-finals will advance to the final

to determine the champion.

The registration fee is EC\$600 per team, which can register any amount of players without additional cost.

The competition will commence with a double-header at the Parham football field on Saturday.

Parham will take on Freemans Village in the opening encounter at 6:30 pm, and the Pigotts Bullets will begin their title defence against Garden Stars in the second match of the tournament at 8 pm.

In Sunday's double-header, the Potters Tigers will face East Furlong at 5 pm, and the Willikies Warriors will clash with Swetes FC at 6:30 pm.

The matches in this year's competition will be played on Saturdays and Sundays for a period of four weeks.

The league was created to produce a preseason football experience that will equip teams for the upcoming Premier League competition.

It is an opportunity for Premier League teams to test themselves against tough opponents they will meet in the Antigua and Barbuda Football Association's (ABFA) national domestic competitions.

It also gives teams an opportunity to discover prospective talents that will add value.

Antiguans get second spot in Group E at CONCACAF Boys U-15 Championship



Players of the Antigua and Barbuda national under-15 football team on arrival at the airport in Aruba on Sunday, August 3, 2025. (Photo courtesy ABFA)

Antigua and Barbuda clinched a second-place spot in Group E of League B at the CONCACAF (Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football) Boys Under-15 Championship, which is taking place in Aruba from August 2 to 10.

The young Antiguan Benna Boys achieved the feat with a three-nil win over Barbados in the last round-robin match in Group E at Stadion Centro Deportivo José Wever in Savaneta, Aruba, on Wednesday.

The Antiguanans got the opening goal in the 23rd minute off a throw-in as Robert Jeffery knocked a bouncing ball past the keeper.

Antigua and Barbuda extended their lead in the 47th minute when Jamil Thomas used some nifty footwork in the box to smash in the second goal of the game.

The dagger came in the 67th minute off a penalty kick strike from Kharique Joseph that was initially blocked, but the young Antiguan was able to make amends by putting away the rebound.

The result allows Antigua and Barbuda to play for a final placing spot in their last match on Friday (today) before the team returns home on Monday.

Trinidad and Tobago locked up the top spot in Group E with a 2-nil win over Bermuda on Wednesday.

The opening score came just seven minutes into the match as Adasa Richardson sent a header to the back of the net. The Trinidadians got the second goal off a great set-piece header for Jeremai Nanton in the 51st minute to finish off the job.

Antigua and Barbuda lost 2-0 to Trinidad and Tobago in their second

match and fought to a goalless draw with Bermuda in their opening Group E of League B encounter.

The fifth edition of the competition is featuring a record 38 CONCACAF member associations, as well as one guest participant, Saudi Arabia. Team distribution across the leagues is based on the CONCACAF Men's Under-17 Rankings.

Three member associations, Aruba, Costa Rica, and Curaçao, are hosting the 2025 CONCACAF Boys' Under-15 Championship. The tournament's matches are being held simultaneously in three countries. League A matches are taking place in Costa Rica, League B in Aruba, and League C in Curaçao.

League A comprised the eight highest-ranked national teams and the guest team, Saudi Arabia. League B consists of the 16 next best-ranked national teams. They are divided into four groups.

Group C comprised Puerto Rico, Cuba, Guyana, and the Cayman Islands, while Group D features Jamaica, Curaçao, Aruba, and Belize.

Group E consists of Bermuda, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, and Antigua and Barbuda, while Group F comprises the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, the British Virgin Islands, and St. Kitts and Nevis.

Each of the three leagues will feature a group stage followed by a single-elimination knockout round, with a champion crowned in each league.

RUSH Sports to broadcast CPL and WCPL matches



2024 Caribbean Premier League champions St. Lucia Kings

RUSH Sports has been confirmed as the official Caribbean broadcaster of the 2025 Republic Bank Caribbean Premier League (CPL) and the Massy Women's Caribbean Premier League (WCPL).

This year's CPL will feature 34 electrifying matches from August 14 to September 21, showcasing world-class cricket across the Caribbean. The WCPL will bring even more

excitement with seven high-stakes clashes scheduled between September 6 and 17.

Fans can look forward to seeing some of the biggest stars in world cricket in action across iconic Caribbean venues in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Guyana, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago.

The men's tournament boasts a stellar lineup,

including Quinton de Kock, Andre Russell, Nicholas Pooran, Mohammad Amir, Imad Wasim, and Rovman Powell, promising top-tier competition at the Biggest Party in Sport.

On the women's side, Hayley Matthews, the world's premier all-rounder, will aim to lead the Barbados Royals to a third consecutive title. She'll face tough competition from

stars such as Deandra Dottin and Shabnim Ismail, ensuring fierce battles on the field.

As the Caribbean's premier destination for sports, RUSH Sports brings fans closer to the action through its two 24/7 linear channels -- available across the region on all major pay-tv platforms and through affiliate TV Everywhere services.

Holder confident Windies can show up for Pakistan ODIs



Jason Holder

All-rounder Jason Holder believes the West Indies can turn their fortunes around in the upcoming three-match One-Day International series against Pakistan beginning at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy on Friday.

The regional side have had a tough last two weeks in the T20I format, being swept 5-0 by Australia before losing 2-1 to Pakistan.

“I think it’s a combination of a few things,” Holder said when asked on Wednesday about the reason for the team’s struggles lately.

“We’ve not played well in the last

couple of weeks. We haven’t had momentum; we haven’t had luck. But, having said that, I think we can turn things around. We need confidence. When we play, we probably lack a little bit of that, and I think that goes along with momentum,” he added.

Despite the losses, the hosts have had some good moments. The key is now to put together a complete performance. Holder issued those same sentiments.

“If we can get some momentum going now, even into the ODIs, it would put us in good stead. It’s not rocket science, we haven’t played well, and

we know we need to improve. But I still think we’re doing a lot of things well. We just need to put together a complete game, be more confident, and more expressive,” he said.

Holder dismissed suggestions that the West Indies lack the firepower to compete, pointing to injuries as a key factor in their recent struggles.

“We lost some key players due to injury who would have been playing here. There are a lot of factors that haven’t gone our way. But we’ve got the adequate personnel to beat Pakistan, it’s just about making the most of what we have,” Holder said.

Antiguan volleyballers to contest Senior Men's Pan American Cup



The Antigua and Barbuda team celebrate with their trophies after retaining the ECVA Men's Championship at the indoor volleyball stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex on Sunday, October 27, 2024. (File photo)

The Antigua and Barbuda national team will be contesting the 18th Senior Men's Pan American Cup in Leon, Guanajuato, Mexico, from August 24 to September 1.

A 25-member national training squad has been preparing for the event since May under the guidance of coach Augusto Sabbatini of Brazil and assistant coach Carl Williams.

The coaches are expect-

ed to select a squad of 14 players to travel to Mexico. Sabbatini, who arrived in Antigua on February 15, has previously been working with junior and senior beach volleyball players in preparations for several tournaments.

Antigua and Barbuda qualified for the Senior Men's Pan American Cup by winning the Eastern Caribbean Volleyball Association's (ECVA) for the past two years.

The Men's Pan-American Volleyball Cup is a men's volleyball tournament organized by NORCECA. Initially, only NORCECA teams participated, but South American Volleyball Confederation (CSV) teams have been invited since 2010.

Twelve teams, including defending champions Canada, will be contesting this year's tournament. The teams have been divided into three groups to compete in the round-ro-

in preliminary stage.

Antigua and Barbuda will contest Group A along with the United States of America (USA), Venezuela, and Cuba. Canada, Colombia, Puerto Rico, and Guatemala will compete in Group B, while Chile, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Suriname will contest Group C.

The event served as a qualifier for the World League and the America's Cup. Now, the event serves as an America qualifier for the Pan American Games classification. The women have their own equivalent of the tournament, the Women's Pan-American Cup.

Meanwhile, the Antigua and Barbuda Amateur Volleyball Association (ABAVA) will host two ECVA tournaments in September.

The ABAVA will host the ECVA Men's Final Four from September 19 to 21 and the ECVA Women's Final Four from September 26 to 28 at the indoor stadium at the YMCA Sports Complex in St. John's.