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SEDInews

Policy Dialogue, Technical Cooperation, Targeted Action

Unleashing the Potential of Cultural Heritage in the Caribbean

The Caribbean is home to an extraordinary mix of cultures, cuisines and historical sites, all of which evoke its unique history and constitute a rich cultural heritage. However, unleashing the potential of cultural heritage for socio-economic development poses a series of policy, social and economic challenges that need to be tackled through a multi-stakeholder approach.

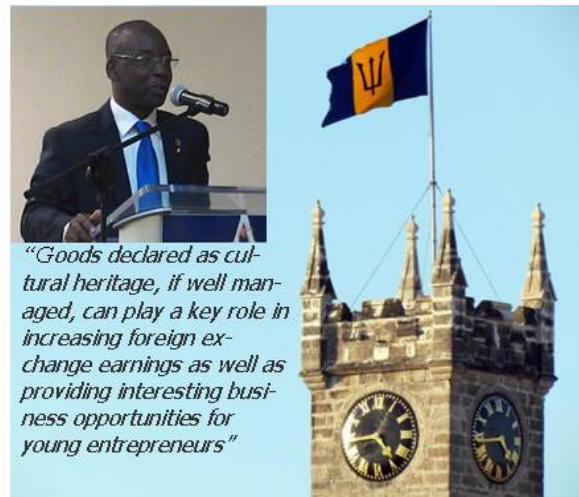
In light of these challenges and in response to a call for support made by Caribbean member states to the Organization of American States (OAS), the project “Expanding the Socio-economic potential of Cultural Heritage in the Caribbean” was designed by its Office of Education and Culture. The project seeks to follow a new multi-stakeholder approach to the protection and promotion of an expanding range of heritage types, while at the same time creating a framework in which each country’s heritage resources may be carefully managed for long-term sustainability.

To facilitate multi-sectorial stakeholder engagement in the project, a consultative meeting of experts from the Caribbean was convened May 7 -9 in Christ Church, Barbados. Experts participating in the meeting analyzed some of the most serious challenges to the effective conservation and management of the region’s cultural heritage, including: risks related to cultural heritage; the gaps between public policy and reality; and possible responses to the issue of the promotion and protection of the tangible and intangible heritage in the Caribbean region.

The event, which brought together 30 experts representing government, the cultural heritage and tourism sectors, civil society, the private sector and academia, reached important conclusions and spurred reflections that will assist with the implementation of the project, resulting in improved protection and management of the Caribbean’s cultural heritage. The meeting was convened by the OAS in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth of Barbados and support of the US Mission to the OAS.

For more information on the project visit: <http://caribberitage.org/>.

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“Goods declared as cultural heritage, if well managed, can play a key role in increasing foreign exchange earnings as well as providing interesting business opportunities for young entrepreneurs”

Hon. Stephen Lashley, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth of Barbados

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