



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

## MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

### **UWI Diplomatic Academy Plays a Pivotal Role in Supporting CARICOM's Climate Action Agenda**

**The UWI St. Augustine, May 9<sup>th</sup> 2025** – The UWI Institute of International Relations' (IIR) Diplomatic Academy of the Caribbean (DAOC) held a successful, five-day online training module titled *Caribbean Small States and the Diplomacies of Climate Change: Negotiations in Practice* from 28th April to 2nd May. The cohort of nine participants hailed from The Bahamas, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, and the United Kingdom, respectively. The majority of this cohort comprised staff members drawn from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Consumer Affairs of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and two British High Commissions in the Caribbean.

"This virtual training, the fourth edition of the module, was a great success. It has contributed to capacity-building efforts about the climate action agenda of Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member states, as they lay the groundwork for their participation in the forthcoming 2025 United Nations Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP 30)," said the DAOC's Manager, Dr. Nand C. Bardouille.

"By routinely delivering this training module, as well as associated institutional outputs, the DAOC is making significant strides in helping to strengthen the capacity of climate-vulnerable Caribbean countries vis-à-vis their climate action agenda at a critical moment. Of note, this moment is marked by the escalating impacts of climate change," Dr. Bardouille added.

The goal of this training was to furnish junior and mid-career professionals with a clear understanding of the UN climate process for designing and coordinating the global response to climate change. Participants were guided through the evolution of the process to date, and they were exposed to key insights into the actual negotiation dynamics at the relevant meetings in two important respects. First, the module focused on the role of Small Island Developing States and their

impact on the associated global debate. Second, the capstone of the module was the conduct of a nearly two-day negotiation simulation to validate the knowledge, insights and skills passed on in the module material.

Ms. Rueanna Haynes, an experienced international climate law and governance specialist, served as the module's facilitator. Ms. Haynes noted: "The participants in the 2025 edition of the DAOC's module on Caribbean Small States and the Diplomacies of Climate Change shared many insightful views based on their diverse areas of interest and expertise. Their existing knowledge base enriched the course material and facilitated peer-to-peer learning and exchange. A truly exceptional cohort."

Four experts in the field of climate diplomacy also served as module resource persons. They shared their perspectives and insights on the subject matter with the cohort, complementing Ms. Haynes' teaching. Three of those experts led a virtual 'Panel Discussion on Climate Diplomacy and its Interlinkages', which was held on April 30th. The panellists were as follows:

- Professor David S. Berry, Professor of International Law and Regional Integration Law, Faculty of Law, The UWI, Cave Hill Campus;
- H.E. Mr. Carlos Fuller, Permanent Representative of Belize to the United Nations;
- Dr. Ainka Granderson, Resilience Programme Manager, The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)

On May 1st, a virtual subject-specific session titled 'Caribbean States the International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion on Climate Change' was also held. Dr. Justin Sobion, the fourth expert and a Trinidad and Tobago lawyer who specialises in international environmental law, led this session.

In reflecting on the training module during feature remarks he delivered at its Closing Ceremony, Ambassador Fuller expressed satisfaction that the cohort has "a good foundation upon which to build and engage." He further noted that "CARICOM has been arguably the greatest champion for ambitious climate action in the international arena," underscoring that as this module's graduates "engage in the climate change process, [they] should continue to articulate our concerns."

The Acting IIR Director, Dr. Dave Seerattan, who delivered remarks during the module's Closing Ceremony, concluded: "This just-concluded training module is key to developing regional capacity in climate diplomacy." Dr. Seerattan also highlighted the role of this kind of capacity-building in "aligning foreign policy, environmental governance and economic strategy in a cohesive and forward-looking manner."

Mr. Lenroy Charles—the representative of the cohort and Graduate Officer I, Department of Foreign Trade, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Consumer Affairs, St. Vincent and the Grenadines—moved a vote of thanks to the DAOC. Mr. Charles said: "We greatly appreciated this course's format, particularly the opportunity to learn from experts who shared first-hand experiences and called attention to real-world examples, making the sessions exceptionally insightful. Now, we feel energised and eager to apply these lessons to the critical work ahead in addressing climate change."

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## About the Diplomatic Academy of the Caribbean

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

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

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

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

## About The University of the West Indies

The [University of the West Indies](https://www.uwi.edu) (The UWI) is the Caribbean's premier higher education institution and one of only two regional universities in the world. With five campuses across the English-speaking Caribbean and global centres in partnership with universities in North America, Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Europe, The UWI continues to be a beacon of academic excellence, research innovation, and societal impact. Consistently ranked among the world's best by [Times Higher Education](https://www.timeshighereducation.com) (THE), The UWI is a global leader in addressing critical challenges, including climate change, sustainability, and development.

As The UWI St. Augustine Campus celebrates its 65th anniversary in 2025 under the theme Beyond 65: From the Caribbean, For the World, it pays tribute to its Caribbean roots while highlighting its contributions to solving global challenges. This milestone underscores the campus's significant role in producing ground-breaking research and fostering talent that transcends regional boundaries to shape a better world. The UWI St. Augustine's researchers, academics, and graduates continue to make an international impact, exemplifying the university's mission to serve the region while influencing the world.

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