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Item 14 (b) of the provisional agenda

**Designation of intergovernmental bodies for the purposes
of rule 76 of the rules of procedure of the Board**

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Board**

**Application from the Organization of Eastern Caribbean
States**

Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

The UNCTAD secretariat has received an application from the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States requesting the Trade and Development Board to grant it observer status under rule 76 of the rules of procedure of the Board.

Some information regarding the history, aims and structure of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States is annexed.

Annex

Background information on the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States

History

1. The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) came into being on 18 June 1981, when seven Eastern Caribbean countries signed a treaty agreeing to cooperate with each other and promote unity and solidarity among the members. The treaty became known as the Treaty of Basseterre, so named in honour of the capital city of Saint Kitts and Nevis where it was signed. Following the collapse of the West Indies Federation and prior to the signing of the Treaty of Basseterre, two caretaker bodies were created: the West Indies Associated States Council of Ministers (WISA) in 1966 and the Eastern Caribbean Common Market (ECCM) in 1968. As the islands gained their independence from the United Kingdom it became evident that there was a need for a more formal arrangement to assist with their development efforts, and so the OECS was established. The WISA Secretariat became the central secretariat of the OECS and the ECCM, the Economic Affairs Secretariat. In mid-1997, as a result of the restructuring of the organization, the Economic Affairs Secretariat was merged into and became a division of the OECS Secretariat in Saint Lucia.

Aims and objectives

2. The aim of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States is to be a major regional institution contributing to the sustainable development of the OECS member States by assisting them in maximizing the benefits from their collective space by facilitating their intelligent integration with the global economy; contributing to policy and programme formulation and execution with respect to regional and international issues; and facilitating bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

Membership

3. The OECS is a nine-member grouping comprising Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands are associate members of the OECS.

Structure

4. The principal institutions through which the OECS accomplishes its entrusted functions are:

- (a) The Central Secretariat headed by a Director General who is responsible for the general direction and control of the organization. He is appointed by the Authority to serve in that capacity for four years and is eligible for re-appointment;
- (b) The Authority of Heads of Governments of the Member States;
- (c) The Foreign Affairs Committee;

- (d) The Defense and Security Committee;
- (e) The Economic Affairs Committee.

Financial resources

5. The secretariat is funded by the nine members of the OECS. Each member's contribution is determined by the relative population size, gross domestic product and the extent to which the member chooses to participate in the funding of overseas offices. The secretariat also administers several donor-funded projects from organizations including the European Union; the World Bank; the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA); the United States Agency for International Development (USAID); the Organization of American States (OAS); the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); the Commonwealth Secretariat; and the Brazilian, French and Libyan Governments.

6. The secretariat's budget for the last two years expressed in Eastern Caribbean Dollars (XCD) is as follows: (as at 15 June 2009 the exchange rate was 1 USD = 2.61010 XCD)

	2007	2008
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	7 899 370	9 052 927
Trade and other receivables	11 796 648	12 585 922
Property and equipment	1 402 363	1 473 047
Total assets	21 098 381	23 111 896
Total liabilities	7 949 287	8 202 099
Total reserves	13 100 820	14 909 797

Relations with other international organizations

7. The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States has observer status with the United Nations General Assembly.

Publications

8. The organization publishes meeting reports, conference papers and annual reports that can be accessed through the OECS documentation centre at <http://www.oecs.org/library.html>.

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Working language

9. The working language of the OECS is English.
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