



XXXIII MODEL OAS GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY FOR UNIVERSITIES OF  
THE HEMISPHERE  
ST. KITTS MARRIOTT RESORT  
BASSETERRE, ST. KITTS  
FROM 24-26 MARCH, 2015

# SKN Insider

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Moas skn

## MOAS 2015 BEGINS

More than 100 participants from 9 countries in 16 delegations participating in the assembly model for universities.



*MOAS Authorities take their seat at the head table*



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## Opening Ceremony of MOAS 2015



The 33<sup>rd</sup> Model OAS General Assembly held in St. Kitts and Nevis was attended by His Excellency Sir Edmund Lawrence, Governor-General of the Federation, Hon. Shawn Richards, Minister of Youth and Sports, Hon. Mark Brantley, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and other high-ranking government officials.

Hon. Brantley gave a brief overview of the Federation, its history and constitution. He went on to highlight the pillars of the local constitution pointing out that they parallel those of the OAS as a body. He then made mention of the Ambassador of St. Kitts & Nevis to the OAS, Mrs Jacinth Henry-Martin who rallied for the MOAS to be held in St. Kitts. The event is a first for the Federation and is also the first time being hosted by an English speaking Caribbean country.

Ambassador Albert Ramdin, Assistant General Secretary of the OAS highlighted the fact that the Americas has a mainly youthful population, hence this sector must be developed as it includes the future working population and leaders of the Americas. He outlined strategies to develop the sector including but not limited to, mentoring and internship programs and increased availability of scholarships. He also emphasized peace and stability among OAS members despite linguistic, cultural, political and religious limits and barriers.

The speakers urged other English speaking countries to follow the Federation's example in hosting the model. They all thanked faculty, staff, volunteers and other locals for effecting the staging of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Model in St. Kitts. Speakers highlighted international donors such as the government of Mexico and China and also local donors such as Carib Brewery Ltd, Delta Petroleum, Yu Lounge and the St. Kitts Marriott Resort who have all played a pivotal role in making the event a reality. Finally, speakers encouraged participants to take full advantage of the cultural exchange, networking possibilities and the learning experiences displayed in the model.



## Flags of 35 States Presented to Minister of Foreign Affairs



As is the tradition, a presentation of the 35 flags of the OAS member countries was made by Ambassador Ramdin to the Hon. Mark Brantley.

The Ambassador, Governor General the Hon. Edmund Lawrence and other dignitaries on stage then shook hands with the Chief Delegates of each represented country, as well as other members of the audience and invited guests, before taking their seats below the stage.

The MOAS authorities then took their places at the head table.

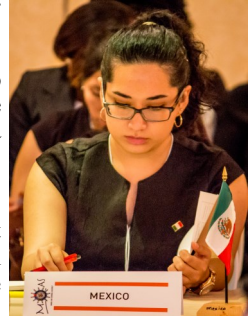


## Opening Session of the MOAS Preparatory Committee



The opening session of the MOAS Preparatory Committee began with welcoming remarks from MOAS Secretary General Kerissa Roberts and opening remarks from MOAS President Lauren Lee. Both MOAS authorities gave a brief overview of the topics to be discussed and encouraged delegates to work towards consensus.

The first session of the Preparatory Committee was called to order with sixteen (16) university delegations present. The Order of Precedence was chosen by lot starting with Jamaica and ending with Guyana.



Before general statements by the Chief Delegates were given, the delegates from Mexico rose to propose that an amendment be made to the five (5) signature requirement as per Article 81 to three (3). The delegates from St. Kitts and Nevis also rose to ask that a moment of silence be observed for the victims of the German Plane crash that occurred recently. Both motions were approved and the session was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

## Faculty members share their views on the MOAS

*How did you find the MOAS preparation process?*

**Sherry Gibbs (Galen University, Belize):** It was a learning experience. In Belize, the issues of risk management and youth migration are extremely relevant, and I look forward to hearing the positions of other countries.

*What are you most looking forward to seeing during the MOAS?*

**Debbie Mohammed (Institute of International Relations, Trinidad and Tobago):** I am confident that the young people will put forward dynamic suggestions. I am eager to see how they are able to reach consensus, using their knowledge and fresh perspectives.

*What do you hope to see as a result of the MOAS?*

**Damian Greaves (St. Georges University, Grenada):** This is a golden opportunity for CARICOM to emulate the OAS model, and to host a similar regional event that enables our students to be directly exposed to high-level decision-making processes.



*Left: Debbie Mohammed, Center: Sherry Gibbs and Right: Damian Greaves*

## MOAS Coordinator Nelly Robinson Orients Participants



Before the official opening of the 33<sup>rd</sup> MOAS, program coordinator Mrs Nelly Robinson gave a hearty welcome to all participants. More than 100 hundred students are participating in the event. Delegates are representing Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, the United States, Guyana, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela and host country St. Kitts and Nevis.

Robinson explained the lofty goal ahead of the delegates who would be condensing into a three day proceeding what usually happens over the course of five months at the OAS in Washington D.C.

She expressed her hopes that delegates would engage in rich debates and present creative resolutions to the proposed topics. She gave a brief overview of the proceedings and introduced the authorities and the experts assisting in the committee sessions.

Ms Kaye Bass, the Federation's local MOAS coordinator, provided an overview of the logistical arrangements during the MOAS and wished the participants a successful event. She also encouraged everyone to explore the Federation on the tours that had been organised for their enjoyment.



## First Session of Committee responsible for drafting the Declaration



The subcommittee charged with writing the Declaration of the MOAS began the brainstorming process after migration expert, Maria Moreno offered a summary of the issue and general guidance on how it might be framed. Moreno stressed that migration was a reality facing the hemisphere and world at large rather than a negative situation to be prevented. She pointed out that “more people are on the move today than any other time in history” and global remittance accounts for billions in currency exchange. Some factors driving this migration include aging populations and the unavailability of jobs.

A discussion immediately began regarding the wording of the Declaration that would address the reality of migration. The Bolivian representative hesitated to eliminate language that would mitigate emigration, which takes away from the agricultural workforce. In addition, other delegates made proposals to promote human development within member states whether through job creation or education programs.

The delegates showed strong support for the engagement of the diaspora through investment within member countries in return for the ability to exercise rights as citizens living abroad. There was also support for the strengthening of the work

already being done in the sub-region, and it was agreed that attention would have to be paid to combatting human trafficking and smuggling by addressing corruption.

## Delegates excited at start of MOAS

**“I Feel very excited. I am not too nervous. I am very excited to be here participating in the 33rd MOAS”**

A sense of excitement filled the air of the Antigua Room at the St. Kitts Marriott Resort as delegates registered and socialized before the start of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Model OAS (MOAS) General Assembly for Universities in the Hemisphere.

Catherine Cabera Céspedes and Yuliana Suarez Morales, both students at the Universidad EASN, expressed their excitement in attending the function and said they see it as an honour and a great opportunity to be in attendance.

Both ladies highlighted the importance of the MOAS and touched on the benefits. For Yuliana, it centered more on the workings of the processes that guide the OAS. Catherine was intrigued by the experience of learning about different cultures as well as the democratic values that govern OAS member states.

Students from the Trinidad-based St. Augustine Campus of the University of the West Indies (UWI) are participating for the first time. Kurba-Marie Questelles and Shilohna Philanders are students in the Institute of International Relations.



They shared similar sentiments of enthusiasm in attending the MOAS. The annual event is being held in the Caribbean, this time in a member country of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) of which Trinidad and Tobago is also a part.

“It says that they think of CARICOM as important, the region itself as having some importance on the world stage,” Kurba-Marie stressed. Shilohna added that it was an excellent forum “for us to show what we can present on the various topics.”

Beau Morales of the University of the Incarnate Word in the United States is one of six American delegates. His University has been represented for many years although this is his personal debut. He expressed his pride at being able to represent his institution.

“Traditions are something that Universities strive (for) their students to uphold,” he stated, adding that he was honoured to have been selected to attend the three-day conference in St. Kitts and Nevis.





## Third Committee Preparatory Session



The expert for the Third Committee, Mr. Pablo Gonzales, opened the discussion by giving some brief remarks on the topic of risk management in a changing climate. He explained some basic concepts in disaster management which include the vulnerability and capacity of the member states along with measures involving mitigation as opposed to adaptation. Delegates were made aware that disasters are inevitable.

Mr. Gonzales hastened to point out that as development within member states increases, so do the disasters. He then pointed out that democratic institutions hold differing views on the issue of climate change. He added that in recent times there has been an encouraging change as there is a noticeable trend in institutions moving towards more preventative measures.



After hearing the expert's view, delegates then presented their general statements. Most of the delegates were of the view that creating effective policies and measures would be the best way to support communities that are deemed vulnerable. Other delegates presented views pertaining to financial aid, environmental protection and increased communication as additional strategies in supporting vulnerable communities.

## Delegates Brainstorming

Delegates were next immersed in a brainstorming process where a number of perspectives were generated. This process resulted in a heated exchange among the participants after which a vote was taken. The following emerged as possible initiatives:

- ◆ *Management and education in creating proper networking and co-operation for efficient and international disaster responses.*
- ◆ *Development, management and the strengthening of national, regional and international preparedness and response systems along with integral management of assistance and communication.*
- ◆ *Gender perspective as being key aspect in achieving real prevention.*
- ◆ *Promoting an inclusive government along with a structured set of efficient legislature for building codes and guidelines governing the hemisphere in an effort to protect and promote reliable infrastructure for different member states.*

Delegates were then divided into working groups based on the order of precedence. The working groups will spend all day Wednesday drafting a resolution to be debated in their committees.





# MOAS 2015 in Images

