



Opening Remarks by Therese Turner-Jones, Programme Coordinator

CARTAC-IMF International Investment Statistics Seminar December 7-11, 2009

I am pleased to welcome you all on behalf of CARTAC to this seminar on international investment statistics. I extend a warm welcome to our colleagues from the IMF Statistics Department, Mr. Ralph Kozlow, Division Chief, and Ms. Alicia Hierro, Economist, both of whom are from the Balance of Payments Division. CARTAC's national accounts statistics advisor, Paul Austin will join Ralph and Alicia in conducting this seminar. We are also delighted to have participants from the central banks of Aruba and the Netherland Antilles.

Training activities such as these, are an important part of CARTAC's work in strengthening specific aspects of economic and financial governance in the Caribbean. In the areas of **economic and financial statistics**, CARTAC assists countries in improving the quality of their macroeconomic statistics by helping to establish and maintain underlying basic data collection; guiding in the use of concepts and internationally accepted methodologies; developing compilation procedures, including data preparation, verification and computerization; and advising on the dissemination of data in line with best practices.

This seminar aims to promote the development of International Investment Position (IIP) statistics; and strengthen regional awareness of—and participation in—the Coordinated Portfolio Investment Survey (CPIS) and the Coordinated Direct Investment Survey (CDIS) by demonstrating how the data from these surveys can be used in enhancing the scope of the IIP and other external sector statistics. These surveys would also contribute to enhancing the quality of regional statistics and to reducing global asymmetries in international investment data.

The IMF conducts an annual CPIS which collects information on the stock of cross-border holdings of securities—equity securities and long- and short-term debt securities with geographical distribution. More than seventy economies currently participate in the CPIS, and data are available annually since 2001.

The IMF is also conducting the 2009 CDIS in conjunction with its interagency partners. To date, more than 130 economies have indicated interest in participating in the CDIS, including virtually every major FDI investing and FDI receiving economy. The purpose of the CDIS is to improve the quality of direct investment position statistics in the IIP and by immediate counterpart economy, by collecting comprehensive and harmonized data, with geographic detail, on direct investment positions. The measurement date is end-2009.

These surveys, and more generally, the broader topic that will engage your attention in the next few days—**international investment statistics**—are of particular importance to the Caribbean region. The gaps in measuring external assets and liabilities, particularly in the nonbank financial sector have clearly become more evident in the context of recent events in the insurance sector across the region, and of the spillover effects on other sectors, including

on pension funds. In other areas of the world, the CPIS is recognized as a useful instrument for monetary, economic and financial stability-related analysis, and we hope that greater Caribbean participation in the CPIS would strengthen the scope of financial stability analysis, and enhance evidenced-based decision making in the regional financial sector.

Across the region, the basis for collecting data on foreign direct investment (FDI) continues to be weak, with collection methods ranging from surveys, approvals data and media reports. FDI surveys, where they exist, generally suffer from poor response rates. We hope that your agencies would consider the CDIS as a renewed opportunity for improving the scope of FDI statistics. The potential wealth of information, not least the geographical breakdowns, would provide a platform for robust analytics on important regional issues, such as the level of intraregional investment across the Caribbean Community.

In conclusion, I am hopeful that this seminar brings new momentum to the compilation of international investment statistics in your central banks and statistical offices, and we hope that more Caribbean economies can join the growing list of countries compiling IIP statistics.

Again, allow me to welcome you to Barbados, the home of CARTAC, and to wish you a fruitful seminar and an enjoyable visit.

Thank You.