

CTO Chairman: 'An Exciting Time' as Caribbean Week 2025 Wraps with Strong Momentum

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, June 10, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Caribbean Week in New York (CWN 2025) concluded on Thursday with high praise from Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) Chairman Ian Gooding-Edghill, who declared the 2025 edition a powerful testament to regional unity, strategic vision, and forward-thinking leadership.

"This is my first Caribbean Week as Chairman of the CTO and based on all the feedback we received, it went extremely well," said Gooding-Edghill, who also serves as Minister of Tourism and International Transport for Barbados. "We are certainly delighted that we've had so many participants (over 200) registered. It also tells us that the organization is going in the right direction."

Held under the theme "Caribbean Resilience: Crafting Tomorrow's Tourism", the week brought together tourism leaders, cultural influencers and media stakeholders for a series of high-level discussions, workshops, and networking events focused on shaping the region's tourism future.

One of the event's highlights was the Council of Ministers and Commissioners Meeting. "We were in the session for just over four hours, which speaks to the value of the contributions at that



Ian Gooding-Edghill, CTO Chairman and Barbados Minister of Tourism and International Transport



meeting. We've also specifically laid out additional work that the CTO will have to undertake on (behalf of members)," said Minister Gooding-Edghill. Andrea Franklin, CEO of Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc., presided over the Board of Directors meeting as Chairman of the CTO Board.

Gooding-Edghill emphasized the importance of robust research and data in strategic planning. "Research plays a significant role in our day-to-day business ... and we discussed how we can finetune and get additional data and metrics ... and plan strategically to advance the Caribbean's interests."

Caribbean Week also marked the launch of the CTO's Reimagine Plan (2025-2027), which seeks to provide CTO's strategic direction for the next three years. It is anchored by five key pillars: advocacy, market competitiveness, tourism intelligence, sustainable and regenerative tourism, and people development.

"We will continue to focus on the Reimagine program. It's an exciting time for us as CTO ... ever so often you have to look back and you have to look internally and see where you are and where you want to go ... and that is the Reimagine plan for us," said Chairman Gooding-Edghill.

The CTO Chairman also highlighted the increasing engagement of CTO's Allied Members, emphasizing their crucial role in promoting destinations and supporting the broader Caribbean tourism sector. He commended their contributions during the dedicated forum "Beyond Borders: Positioning the Caribbean Tourism Industry in a Shifting Travel Landscape", noting that the discussions were insightful and highly relevant to the industry's current challenges.

The Chairman also addressed intra-regional travel, acknowledging progress and the work ahead. "Connectivity within the Caribbean continues to be a challenge ... we have to ensure that we improve connectivity and there is a CTO Airlift Committee ... tasked with not only bringing solutions to the table, but also making recommendations so we can advance greater connectivity."

Looking ahead to the 2025 State of the Tourism Industry Conference (SOTIC) in Barbados, slated for the Fall, Gooding-Edghill signaled that connectivity, tourism growth, and economic linkages will be central to discussions. "The only way you can grow your tourism business is by increasing spend or by driving additional traffic to the destination, and we believe in both," he said. "And of course, ensuring that we have a strong linkages program with the agriculture, manufacturing sectors within the Caribbean so that we can retain more of the foreign exchange that is spent within the Caribbean."

Reflecting on the broader impact of the week, the Chairman noted that one of the key takeaways was the opportunity for professionals across the industry to connect and exchange ideas. He emphasized that beyond networking, the event offered valuable insights into emerging trends, with the diversity of panelists and speakers highlighting CTO's forward-looking vision.

"I extend heartfelt thanks to Minister Ian Gooding-Edghill and CEO Andrea Franklin for their outstanding leadership throughout Caribbean Week in New York," stated CTO Secretary-General & CEO Dona Regis-Prosper. "Their vision, energy and commitment to advancing regional collaboration and sustainable growth were evident in every aspect of this year's event. We are charting a bold and inclusive path forward for Caribbean tourism, and the success of Caribbean Week 2025 reflects the strength of that direction."

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PHOTO CAPTION: CTO Secretary-General Dona Regis-Prosper (center, in white) with senior tourism officials in New York last week.

Back row (left to right): Carlos James, Minister of Tourism (St. Vincent and the Grenadines); Ian Gooding-Edghill, Minister of Tourism and International Transport (Barbados); Tashia Burris, Secretary of Tourism (Tobago); Zhavargo Jolly, Minister of Tourism (Turks and Caicos Islands); Edmund Bartlett, Minister of Tourism (Jamaica); Dr. Ernest Hilaire, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Tourism (Saint Lucia); Latia Duncombe, Director General of Tourism (The Bahamas); Rosa Harris, Director of Tourism (Cayman Islands); Luce Hodge-Smith, Junior Minister of Tourism (British Virgin Islands); and Adrian Thomas, Minister of Tourism (Grenada).

Front row (left to right): Marsha Henderson, Minister of Tourism (St. Kitts and Nevis); Cardigan Connor, Minister of Tourism (Anguilla); Zulaika Mook, Director of Economic Development (Curaçao); Valérie Damaseau, Commissioner of Tourism and Culture (Saint-Martin); Owen Darrell, Minister of Tourism (Bermuda); Joseph Boschulte, Commissioner of Tourism (U.S. Virgin Islands); and Charles "Max" Fernandez, Minister of Tourism (Antigua and Barbuda).

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