

Antigua and Barbuda elected chair of Caribbean Tourism Organization

Tourism Minister Charles "Max" Fernandez to lead CTO Council of Ministers as organization advances Reimagine Plan and regional supply-side agenda

GEORGETOWN, GUYANA, October 13, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Antigua and Barbuda has been elected chair of the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), with Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Transportation and Investment Charles "Max" Fernandez assuming leadership of the CTO Council of Ministers and Commissioners of Tourism as the organization advances its tourism development agenda.

Following last week's Annual General Meeting, Fernandez succeeds Barbados Minister of Tourism and International Transport Ian Gooding-Edghill, whose two-year chairmanship helped advance CTO's Reimagine Plan and strengthen collaboration among member countries, industry partners and regional stakeholders.

At the Board of Directors level, Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority CEO Colin James will assume the chairmanship, succeeding Andrea Franklin, CEO of Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc.

The Board also elected vice chairs representing CTO's subregions. The United States Virgin Islands will represent the U.S. territories; the British Virgin Islands will represent the British overseas territories; Saint-Martin will represent the French-speaking territories; and St. Kitts and



CTO Secretary-General and CEO Dona Regis-Prosper congratulates Antigua and Barbuda Minister of Tourism Charles "Max" Fernandez following his election as chairman of the CTO Council of Ministers and Commissioners of Tourism in Georgetown, Guyana.

Nevis and The Bahamas were elected to represent CARICOM countries. Selection of a representative for the Dutch-speaking territories was deferred until the next meeting.

The six subregional vice chair positions, together with the Board chairman, comprise the Executive Committee of the CTO Board of Directors.

During Barbados' tenure, CTO continued implementation of its Reimagine Plan, centered on five strategic pillars: advocacy, market competitiveness, tourism intelligence, sustainable and regenerative tourism, and people development.

The organization also expanded its focus on strengthening the tourism supply side, including workforce development, local supplier integration, infrastructure, logistics, technology and stronger linkages between tourism and sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing and the creative industries.

Gooding-Edghill consistently emphasized regional collaboration and the importance of the Caribbean speaking with a stronger collective voice while sharing knowledge, expertise and common priorities.

CTO Secretary-General and CEO Dona Regis-Prosper thanked Barbados for its leadership and welcomed Antigua and Barbuda to the chairmanship as the organization moves forward with the continued implementation of its strategic priorities.

"We extend our sincere appreciation to Minister Gooding-Edghill and CEO Andrea Franklin for their stewardship, commitment to regional collaboration and the leadership they have provided



Outgoing CTO Chairman Ian Gooding-Edghill presides over the CTO Annual General Meeting in Georgetown, Guyana, alongside CTO Secretary-General and CEO Dona Regis-Prosper and Andrea Franklin, CEO of Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc.



Members of CTO's Ministerial Council gather in Georgetown, Guyana, during meetings held ahead of the opening of the State of the Tourism Industry Conference (SOTIC) 2026.

as CTO advanced the Reimagine Plan,” said Regis-Prosper. “We welcome Minister Fernandez and CEO James as they take on their respective roles at an important point in CTO’s evolution as we continue translating our strategy into meaningful action and greater value for our members and the wider Caribbean tourism sector.”

The election took place ahead of Wednesday’s opening of the State of the Tourism Industry Conference (SOTIC) 2026.

Held under the theme “Tourism Futures: Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive,”

SOTIC is CTO’s principal forum for bringing together tourism ministers, commissioners and directors of tourism, private-sector executives, regional and international partners, academics, media, young people and other industry stakeholders to examine the issues shaping Caribbean tourism.

SOTIC is supported by official conference partners Amadeus and the Inter-American Development Bank, Tourism Intelligence Awards sponsor ASM Global Route Development, contributing sponsors the Association of Value Airlines, Digicel Business and Atlantic Suites Hotel, Youth Congress sponsor Carnival Corporation, and official airline partner interCaribbean Airways.

About the Caribbean Tourism Organization

The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), headquartered in Barbados, is the Caribbean’s tourism development agency, comprising membership of the region’s finest countries and territories, including Dutch-, English- and French-speaking, as well as a range of private-sector allied members. CTO’s vision is to position the Caribbean as the most desirable, year-round, warm-weather destination, and its purpose is Leading Sustainable Tourism — One Sea, One Voice, One Caribbean.

Among the benefits to its members, the organization provides specialized support and technical assistance in sustainable tourism development, marketing, communications, advocacy, human resource development, event planning and execution, and research and information technology.

CTO’s headquarters is located at Baobab Tower, Warrens, St. Michael, Barbados BB 22026.

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For more information about the Caribbean Tourism Organization, visit www.OneCaribbean.org and follow the CTO on Facebook, X, Instagram and LinkedIn to be part of the conversation.

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