Capacity Development Webinar Series

on

“Leveraging Digital Governance & Spearheading Innovative Digital Solutions to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic in Caribbean SIDS”

Bios of Speakers

Opening Remarks:

Ms. Francesca Spatolisano, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)

Ms. Maria-Francesca Spatolisano has 33 years of experience in public service including extensive senior leadership in multilateral affairs. She has served as the European Union Ambassador to the OECD and UNESCO, Monaco and Andorra. She was a member of the EU Delegation to the United Nations, serving as the Head of its Economic and Trade Section. She covered all issues related to trade, development and environmental policies in the Second Committee and ECOSOC and was also the EC representative to the Fifth Committee.

Since 2017, she has been responsible for International Organizations and Development Dialogue with other Donors in the Commission’s Directorate General for Development Cooperation. In this capacity, she has assured the EU presence and developed EU positions on development policy in a number of international fora including the United Nations, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, OECD, G-7 and the G-20, where she represented the EU in the G-20 Development Working Group.

Ms. Spatolisano holds a Doctorate in Law (cum laude) from Florence University and is fluent in Italian, English and French. She is married with two children.

Mrs. Evelyn Wever-Croes, Prime Minister of Aruba & Minister of General Affairs, Integrity, Energy, Innovation, & Government Organization

Mrs. Evelyna Wever-Croes, LL.M. is the current Prime Minister and Minister of General Affairs, Integrity, Energy, Innovation, and Government Organization for the Dutch Caribbean island of Aruba. Aside working in the government for over 20 years and forming the first coalition with the POR and RED parties, she became the first female Prime Minister of Aruba since 2017. After assuming the role of Prime Minister of Aruba, her ambition is to create better opportunities for all citizens and build a solid foundation for the younger generations that will have the task to carry Aruba into an uncertain future and rapidly changing world. She believes taking a human-centered approach to
policymaking combined with significant investment in innovation is the only way to help build a more sustainable future for generations to come. She is an advocate for social (purpose-driven) innovation and for women in innovation and STEM.

Before assuming the role of Prime Minister of Aruba, she obtained a Bachelor of Law degree at the University of the Netherlands Antilles in 1986. And a master’s degree at the University of Leiden, specializing in tax law. Upon her return to Aruba in 1989, Mrs. Wever-Croes began her career as a tax agent at the Aruba government tax department. She served as head of the Aruba tax department since 1994 for ten years. In 2004, after a successful and fulfilling career in the public sector, Mrs. Wever-Croes took on a new challenge as a tax lawyer at the Croes Wever Tchong law firm leading many local and international corporate tax cases. In 2009, she become an official candidate for the political party MEP and a member of parliament afterwards. In 2011, she was elected as the leader of the MEP party. After eight years serving as a member of the Aruban parliament, she was sworn in on November 17, 2017, as the first female Prime Minister of Aruba. Mrs. Evelyna Wever-Croes is devoted to her family, she is married and a mother of three children. More recently she became a proud grandmother of a baby boy. Additionally, Mrs. Wever-Croes is very passionate about giving back to her community and has served as a member of the civic organization Quota International, where she served as president of the Aruba board from 2009-2010.

Mr. Mario Cimoli, Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC)

Mr. Mario Cimoli was appointed as the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) since August 1st, 2018. He is also Chief of the Division of Production, Productivity and Management and Officer-in-Charge of the Division of International Trade and Integration. He is the co-chair (along with Giovanni Dosi and Joseph Stiglitz) of two task forces (industrial policy and intellectual property right regimes for development) of the Initiative for Policy Dialogue at Columbia University in New York. Mario Cimoli obtained a PhD in economics from the University of Sussex, his research interests include development paths, economic growth and its relationship with the productive structure, and international trade. His work examines the interconnections between industrial policy, technological development and innovation. His most important publications include Learning, Technological Capabilities and Structural Dynamics (2011); Innovation and Economic Development: the Impact of Information and Communication Technologies in Latin America (2010); Industrial Policy and Development, The Political Economy of Capabilities Accumulation (with Dosi, G. and J. E. Stiglitz, 2009); and Institutions and policies in developing economies (with Dosi, G., R. R. Nelson, and J. E. Stiglitz, 2009).
Mr. Joseph Cox, Assistant Secretary General, Trade and Economic Integration (TEI), CARICOM Secretariat

Joseph Cox assumed duties as the Assistant Secretary-General, Trade and Economic Integration at the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat since 1 September 2015. Prior to this, he was the Managing Partner for the Centre for Growth and Development in Jamaica, doubled as the Executive Director, Growth Secretariat, at the Planning Institute of Jamaica, and provided oversight for the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)/Government of Jamaica’s national (GOJ) Competitiveness Enhancement Programme. In acknowledging his great contributions, he received the Prime Minister’s Medal of Appreciation for Service to Jamaica in 2012. In October 2014, Mr. Cox conceptualized and led a demand side access to finance intervention, in which some J$1.9 B (US$174 million) in financing was obtained for the Jamaican business community.

Besides, he is the President of Trafalgar Council, former Director of Economic Research and Business Development at the Private Sector Organization of Jamaica (PSOJ), and Group Director of Corporate Development at Island Life. He is also the former Editor of the Financial Journal. A Jamaican national hold both a bachelor and master’s degree in Economics from the University of the West Indies.

Moderator for Panel session:

Mr. Vincenzo Aquaro, Chief, Digital Government Branch, DPIDG, UN DESA

Vincenzo Aquaro is currently the Chief of the Digital Government Branch which publishes the UN E-Government Survey, a UNDESA flagship publication that offers a snapshot of trends in the development of e-government in countries across the globe. In the last 23 years, he has been engaged at national and international level in issues related to ICT in public policy and governance. He is also in charge of the Data Assessment and Data Management of the UN E-Government Survey. Before joining the United Nations, he worked for 10 years as President and CEO of Formit Servizi SpA, a leading Italian advisory company in the field of e-governance.

He also served as Member of the Scientific Committee of the NGO Formit Foundation and as President and CEO of CARMA Scientific Research Consortium, a Public and Private Partnership spin-off on ICT products and e-services in Agricultural and Agro-industrial fields, co-financed by European Commission for innovative and advanced capacity-building research program in south of Italy. In collaboration with the University of Rome 3 he also established the first Master on eGovernment for PA and served for two editions as Member of the Master Executive Board. Prior to that, he worked at EIS SpA (a ICT system integration company now incorporated into Telecom Italia Group) as software analyst and developer, project manager and senior marketing manager. He holds a Master’s Degree (Laurea Magistrale) in Electronic Engineering from the University of Bari, Italy.
Panelists:

Mr. Nigel Cassimire, Acting Secretary General, Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU)

Mr. Nigel Cassimire is currently serving as the Acting Secretary General of the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU). Mr. Cassimire is a telecommunications engineer with over thirty years of experience in the technical, operational and executive management of telecommunications systems and services. He has practical experience in network and service planning, operations management and domestic and international telecommunications policy development. In his previous working experience, Mr. Cassimire has functioned as a Consulting Telecommunications Specialist since July 2005 and has worked extensively with the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) Secretariat in Port of Spain developing and promoting harmonised Caribbean positions in the areas of spectrum management, Internet governance and ICT policy. He has also successfully conducted consultancies for several of the member governments of the CTU.

Ms. Jennifer L. Britton, Deputy Programme Manager, ICT for Development (ICT4D), Caribbean Community (CARICOM Secretariat)

Ms. Jennifer L. Britton has over 20 years of experience in the Information Technology. This includes: Local and wide area networking (LAN/WAN), systems analysis, business process re-engineering, project management and policy formulation. Regional Coordinator and Lead Technical Adviser on ICT for Development (ICT4D) for/at the CARICOM Secretariat. Responsibilities include: Regional Policy formulation and oversight of implementation, technical assistance – related to ICT4D and the Information Society; Development of the CARICOM Single ICT space; Focal point for the CARICOM Girls in ICT partnership; Initiating programmes for strengthened coordination and interaction among Member States and associated members, Regional and International Agencies with respect to ICT/Information Society; Proposal writing for presentation to International Development partners. Ms. Britton earned the Master of Science degree in Electrical Engineering with a minor in Computer Science.
Mrs. Teresa Wankin, Secretary General, CANTO, Caribbean

Ms. Teresa Wankin is the holder of a BSc (Hons) in Information Technology and Computing from the University of Greenwich, England, Graduate Diplomas in Management of Information Systems, a Applications Programming and a Mini MBA in Telecoms and Business from Informa Telecoms and Media. She is also a graduate of the Institute of Information Technology Managers and the Karrass Negotiating Leaders. Teresa currently holds the position of Secretary General at CANTO, a regional association of telecommunication operators and service providers with 111 members in 32 countries; that is headquartered in Trinidad and Tobago. As Secretary General, Ms. Wankin oversees the operations of the association, manages the capacity building initiatives in the region and oversees the planning, implementation and delivery of multi-national development programs. Prior to being employed with CANTO she was employed as an Information Systems Specialist with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. Driven to promote social and economic growth and development through the use of ICTs, Mrs Wankin has a passion for bringing together all stakeholders to work together to develop a culture of innovation and collaboration in the region.

Ms. Carol Roach, Acting Director, Department of Transformation and Digitization, Government of the Bahamas

Ms. Carol Roach is currently the Acting Director of the Department of Transformation and Digitization, Office of The Prime Minister; the Central Information, Communications, and Technology agency for Government. She is a dedicated Public Servant for over 28 years. Her Public Service career has been in Policy and Strategy Development, Project Management, Business Analysis, Training, Process Development, and ICT Implementations and Deployments. Carol earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science at the University of The West Indies, Cavehill, Barbados. She obtained a Master of Science degree in Internet Technology for e-Commerce at Pace University, New York City, USA. In addition, she is a Certified Project Management Professional, and has completed formal training for Business Analyst Professional and Scrum Master.
Mr. Devon Rowe, Executive Director, Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD) and Member of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA)

Mr. Devon Rowe is the Executive Director at Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD), where he leads a dynamic team of professionals working towards continuously improving the administrative capabilities of the 17 Member States served by CARICAD, to advance economic and social transformation. Prior to serving at CARICAD, he was a career public servant in the Government of Jamaica. He has been well represented the Jamaican government at various levels. He served in several senior positions and his final appointment position was Financial Secretary at the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service. In 2014, Mr. Rowe was acknowledged for his work and outstanding contribution to public service by the Government of Jamaica and received the Order of Distinction, Commander Rank. In addition, he is also a member of the United Nations Committee of the Experts on Public Administration (CEPA)

Mr. Dr. Spencer Thomas, Chairman, Board of Commissioners for the National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NTRC) of Grenada

Dr. Spencer Thomas, is Grenada’s Ambassador and Special Envoy for Multilateral Agreements and Chairman of the National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission and the National Public Utilities Regulatory Commission. He is a former Financial Secretary and Economic Policy Adviser in the Minister of Finance, Grenada. Dr Thomas holds a doctorate in Energy Economics, master’s and bachelor’s degrees in Economics and a post-doctoral master’s degree in Telecommunications Regulation and Policy.

Mr. Kirk Henry, Chief Executive Officer, National Information and Communication Technology Company Ltd., (iGovTT), Ministry of Public Administration and Digital Transformation (MPADT), Trinidad and Tobago

Kirk Henry is the CEO of the National Information and Communication Technology Company Limited, branded iGovTT. He has a proven executive management track record with over 20 years of experience in the financial industry designing and building ICT systems to solve business challenges. In February 2019, Kirk was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago where he currently chairs the bank’s IT Committee.

Kirk holds a Bachelor and a Master of Science degree in Computer Science from the University of the West Indies. He also earned a Master of Science degree in International Finance from the Arthur Lok Jack Global School of Business.
has received recognition from the well-known leading information security association ISACA, where he was awarded their Worldwide Achievement Award for Information Security Management (CISM) in 2016. He is an ISACA certified IT governance professional and has been published in their well-respected peer reviewed international journal.