Chairman Underscores Pivotal Role of CROSQ

Going forward, the region will face new challenges and opportunities provided through various multilateral and bilateral agreements and the CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ) has a pivotal role to play in the process.

So says CROSQ Chairman, Ezra D. Ledger as he delivered an address during a ceremony to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the organisation.

The Chairman told the Directors and other specially invited guests that in going forward, CROSQ must continually strive to be a leader in the promotion of quality in products, services, processes and practices, while also exploring opportunities that promote financial stability and implement programmes which best utilise limited regional resources.

"CROSQ’s Mission today is simple: to re-define and enhance the direction of the Quality Infrastructure in the CARICOM and set the pace for its re-alignment to the global realities for the benefit of CARICOM,” he said.

Ledger told the audience that since its establishment, CROSQ has been positioning itself to be recognised as the premier CARICOM organisation for the development and promotion of an internationally recognised regional quality infrastructure. “What we have come to realise is that, CROSQ has emerged as a fundamental platform in supporting the full implementation of the CARICOM

(continued on page 2)

Strengthened Relations for Regional Quality

Caribbean laboratories and other institutions which issue certificates will no longer have to look overseas for their accreditation.

The signing of a Statement of Technical Cooperation on April 27 in Barbados between the region’s two national accreditation bodies (NABs) – the Jamaica National Agency for Accreditation (JANAAC) and the Trinidad and Tobago Laboratory Accreditation Service (TTLABS) – signals the growth of the coordinating mechanisms within the region for accreditation and conformity assessment. According to Mrs. Marguerite Domville, Chief Executive Officer of JANAAC, “the main objective of such an agreement is the mutual benefit in the development of accreditation in the Caribbean region and individual benefits in the respective countries.”

The aim of the Technical Cooperation is to facilitate the incorporation of a regional accreditation mechanism known as the Caribbean Cooperation for Accreditation (CCA) and the need to foster national, regional, inter-regional and international schemes for operation and recognition of reliable accreditation bodies. The CCA Scheme is being coordinated by the CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ) and will enable focal points within each CARICOM Member State to form a region-wide network of expert accreditation services to industry and commerce.

“With the introduction of this Scheme, laboratories within the region would no longer be required to seek accreditation from an

(continued on page 3)
CROSQ’s Pivotal Role (cont.)

Single Market and Economy (CSME) as well as being the region’s custodian of standards and quality.”

“Accordingly, CROSQ has over the past decade established and enhanced relationships with numerous recognised regional and international Standards and quality organisations, and has put the necessary structures and systems in place so as to substantially fulfill its mandate and to be a viable and relevant organisation.”

The Chairman stated that CROSQ has also assisted and facilitated the development and improvement of the national quality infrastructures in all CARICOM member states. “This has translated into the enhancement of the national capacities in becoming quality competitive as well as improving the quality of lives for its people.”

While CROSQ has significantly helped to put the issues of internationally accepted Quality Infrastructure on the regional agenda, he remarked that it is still championing the cause for the promotion and development of standards and standards-related activities to facilitate international competitiveness and sustainable production of goods and services within the CARICOM Single Market Economy for the enhancement of social and economic development.

He used the opportunity to thank CROSQ's pioneers, the past chairpersons, CEOs, staff and project officials, whom he said have carried with dedication the baton of the Quality Infrastructure through the years.

“Optimistically, let us as the contemporary champions of CROSQ's mandate commit to keeping the fire of quality burning and progressively charter the best way forward in order to ensure that our people enjoy continual improvement in their quality of life,” he said.

- Adapted from the Barbados Advocate, 30 April 2012

Strengthened Relations (cont.)

independent body overseas or to look outside the region for assessors through costly and logistically frustrating processes”, pointed out Mrs. Domville. “Through the coordinated mechanism, accreditation services would be provided cost-effectively to regional laboratories in countries that do not have national accreditation bodies.”

Mr. Deryck Omar, Executive Director of the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards which has responsibility for TTLABS noted that “the original focus of the NABs was on the need to accredit laboratories in the medical field; however, the focus has broadened towards laboratories that certify food safety, thus enabling exporters to soon access accredited laboratories to ensure their products are certified and will therefore be accepted overseas without costly additional inspection and testing.” Mr. Omar highlighted that “in the near future, the CCA Scheme will also turn to providing accreditation to inspection bodies, organizations that perform inspections in the key areas of tourism, construction, food and the environment.”

The signing was undertaken during the Tenth Anniversary Ceremony of CROSQ where Mrs. Domville spoke to attending guests on the benefits that would be derived from the strengthened partnership under the CCA Scheme. She highlighted the hard work that was required to bring about the Cooperation, thanking her staff and the staff of TTLABS for their dedication and commitment to ensuring that the mechanisms for the Scheme were in place. Mrs. Domville and Mr. Omar represented JANAAC and TTLABS respectively during the signing, which was witnessed by Senator the Honourable Haynesley Benn, Minister of Trade and Commerce in Barbados and Mr. Ezra D. Ledger, Executive Director of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Bureau of Standards and Chairman of CROSQ.

The Jamaica National Agency for Accreditation (JANAAC) is an agency of the Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce in Jamaica, incorporated in March 2007, to provide accreditation services to Conformity Assessment Bodies, (CABs) such as Laboratories, Certification and Inspection Bodies.

The Trinidad and Tobago Laboratory Accreditation Service (TTLABS) operates as the sole national laboratory accrediting body for testing and calibration laboratories and is a fully owned government organization fulfilling its mandate under the authority of the Standards Act No. 18 of 1997 of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

The CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ) is an Inter-Governmental Organisation among the fifteen Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and is the regional centre for promoting efficiency and competitive production in goods and services, through the process of standardization and the verification of quality.

Promoting a Regional Culture of Quality
Minister of Trade Stresses Importance of Standards and Standardization

Regional manufacturers and service providers must be sensitive to the increased quality awareness of consumers and prepare to respond accordingly.

This is the belief of Minister of Commerce and Trade, Haynesley Benn, as he delivered featured remarks at a function held to recognise and celebrate the 10th anniversary of the CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality reception (CROSQ) on Friday night.

According to Minister Benn, “CROSQ has a pivotal role to play in this process by realigning itself, widening its scope of operation and developing its capacity to help regional businesses move from a strategy of price competitiveness to one of quality competitiveness.”

The Minister stated that he is aware that CROSQ is implementing a number of developmental projects to improve the capacity of the National Standards Bodies in member States.

“This initiative is welcomed since the Government is currently implanting the Modernisation of the Barbados National Standards System Project, co-financed by the Inter-American Development Bank. The main beneficiary of the project is the Barbados National Standards Institution which is the member body of CROSQ in Barbados.”

He remarked that CROSQ’s current developmental thrust will help consolidate key expertise within BNSI and strengthen its capacity to respond to the needs of the national Stakeholders.

Minister Benn recognised that member states of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) have signed a number of trade agreements that provide new and unique opportunities for the export of goods and services.

“The implementation of these various agreements and the reduction or removal of trade barriers over time will result in Caribbean producers being required to meet international requirements for their goods and services as they seek to penetrate these markets. Standardisation and the other activities within the quality infrastructure address the critical need for quality assurance across all levels of the production and a service chain.”

The Minister revealed that the CROSQ Secretariat, which is located in Barbados under the Headquarters’ Agreement, will shortly be moving to more spacious accommodation in Warrens.

“This is just another indication of the importance that the Government has placed on standardisation and other activities that define the quality infrastructure both at home and in the region.”

Acknowledging the challenging economic environment facing the region, he urged attendees to encourage their respective Ministers and Finance or Prime Ministers in countries in arrears, not to renege on their support to regional organisations.

- Adapted from the Barbados Advocate, 30 April 2012

ISO Workshop on Marketing and Promotion of International Standards

The International Organization for Standardization conducted a course on the marketing and promotion of international standards on 16-18 April 2012 in Vieux Fort, Saint Lucia.

Facilitated by Mr. Nicholas Fleury and Mr. Régis Brinster, the workshop had as objectives the introduction and practical training for the marketing and sales of international standards and other ISO deliverables, as well as to cover the ISO intellectual property rights and commercial policies.

Aimed at countries in Latin America and the Caribbean who were members of ISO, support for attendance for non-ISO Members was provided by PTB through the CROSQ/PTB RQI-3 Project.

The workshop also provided insightful ideas with which countries could market their own national standards and provided further collaboration opportunities for developing countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.
CROSQ’S VISION

The premier CARICOM organisation for the development and promotion of an Internationally Recognized Regional Quality Infrastructure

CROSQ’S MISSION

The promotion and development of standards and standards related activities to facilitate international competitiveness and the sustainable production of goods and services within the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) for the enhancement of social and economic development

For further information, please contact:

CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ)
2nd Floor Baobab Towers, Warrens
St. Michael, Barbados
Tel: 246.622.7670 | Fax: 246.622.7678
Email: crosq.caricom@crosq.org

Please visit our website: www.crosq.org
Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/crosq.caricom

2012 Calendar of Events (April – December)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 16-18</td>
<td>ISO Regional Workshop on Marketing and Promotion</td>
<td>St. Lucia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 24-25</td>
<td>CROSQ Strategic Planning Workshop</td>
<td>Barbados</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 26-27</td>
<td>Twentieth Meeting of the CROSQ Council</td>
<td>Barbados</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 27</td>
<td>CROSQ Tenth Anniversary Ceremony and Reception</td>
<td>Barbados</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 25</td>
<td>Launch of the 10th EDF-CRIP Programme Technical Barriers to Trade Component</td>
<td>Barbados</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 25</td>
<td>First Meeting of the Technical Oversight Committee of the 10th EDF-CRIP Programme Technical Barriers to Trade Component</td>
<td>Barbados</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 10-14</td>
<td>Workshop on Calibration of Weighing Instruments</td>
<td>St. Lucia</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 16-17</td>
<td>46th Meeting of DEVCO</td>
<td>California, USA</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 18-22</td>
<td>ISO General Assembly</td>
<td>California, USA</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 24-28</td>
<td>Training in e-Learning Course in Basic Metrology</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 27</td>
<td>Launch of PAHO/CDC/CROSQ Laboratory Quality Management Systems – SIP Programme</td>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 1-5</td>
<td>Workshop on Calibration of Weighing Instruments</td>
<td>Antigua</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 21-27</td>
<td>Twenty-first Meeting of the CROSQ Council</td>
<td>Guyana</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 21-28</td>
<td>International Code Council 2012 Annual Conference</td>
<td>Oregon, USA</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 29-November 2</td>
<td>WTO TBT Enquiry Points Strengthening Workshop and Summit of the Americas</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 5-9</td>
<td>SIM General Assembly and First Meeting of the Technical Implementation Group for Metrology</td>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 5-10</td>
<td>Thirty-third Meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development</td>
<td>Guyana</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 19-23</td>
<td>Project Implementation Unit Meeting for the 10th EDF-CRIP Programme Technical Barriers to Trade Component</td>
<td>Barbados</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 26-27</td>
<td>Workshop on Knowledge Management</td>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 26-27</td>
<td>First Meeting of the Technical Implementation Group for Standardisation</td>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 28-29</td>
<td>First Meeting of the Technical Implementation Group for Awareness/ICT</td>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 3-7</td>
<td>First Meeting of the Technical Implementation Group for Accreditation</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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