

Finance Administrative Building, Pointe Seraphine, Castries, Saint Lucia

Contact: Mr. Glen Simon, Communications Specialist – NCPC

E: glen.simon@govt.lc, T: 1(758) 468-5560 or 720-7548

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COTA to hold its Annual General Assembly for Tax Administrators in Saint Lucia

Lead: Saint Lucia has been selected as the host country for the Annual General Assembly of the Caribbean Organization of Tax Administrators (COTA). Established in 1971, COTA aims to improve tax administration within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM); promote regional tax cooperation and harmonization, as well as foster closer collaboration with other tax organisations within the region and the rest of the world.

More in this report from Glen Simon

The Executive Council of the Caribbean Organization of Tax Administrators (COTA) met in Saint Lucia to discuss plans for their Annual General Assembly and technical conference scheduled for July 2024. Evelyn Wayne, Director for Economic Policy and Development at the CARICOM Secretariat and Executive Secretary of COTA said issues and solutions relating to the impact of the international tax agenda on Caribbean jurisdictions will feature at the conference. COTA is a regional organization whose membership comprise twenty (20) tax administrations from CARICOM member states with Saint Martin being the only observer within the grouping.

“The purpose of COTA is to improve the efficiency of Tax Administrators within the community. At this point in time when member states are encountering considerable problems with fiscal space, the issue of revenue generation is high on our agenda. So, our role is to collaborate with each other to ensure that we share our experiences and for the betterment of tax administration within the Caribbean Community.”

The aim of the recent executive meeting in Saint Lucia was to discuss COTA’s strategic priorities and work programme for 2024 in addition to planning for Annual General Assembly. Chinnel Andrews is the President of COTA’s Executive Council and Deputy Commissioner of Revenue for the Turks and Caicos Islands.

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“Each country would have to implement their own individual measures outside of the tax administration but of course, revenue is key to any country. The more revenue we collect the better government will be able to provide services to the people of that specific country. So, once we can discuss ways that we can effectively and in an efficient manner implement revenue measures that can better enable the collection process for the country as well as do not put a burden on the taxpayers.”

Marcia Vite, Comptroller for Inland Revenue in Saint Lucia is pleased that Saint Lucia will host COTA’s Annual General Assembly in July 2024.

“Countries would volunteer to host the meeting. It’s always good when you can be the host, you can show off your island and you get the opportunity to invite some of your other teammates to the meeting to listen to all of the discussions. At these meetings, you will get more comptrollers and heads of departments coming in and making their contributions at that meeting. So it will be at that level with many speakers coming on. Speakers will range around the world. So whether it be UN Speakers, OECD but more on the Caribbean and the Caribbean Experience.”

The Executive Council Meeting was held at the Finance Administrative Centre, in Seraphine, Castries.

For the National Competitiveness and Productivity Council, Glen Simon reporting.