



EDITORIAL

Editorial

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Welcome to the second issue of the *Caribbean Journal of International Relations & Diplomacy*. The launch of the journal three months ago was an important moment in the history of our respective institutions, the Institute of International Relations (IIR) and the Trinidad & Tobago (T&T) Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was also the start of something exciting regarding the development of our region, through the creation of a new outlet for the timely dissemination of accessible and interesting research. The journal has been extremely well received so far, and those of us who are involved in its production are optimistic about what the future holds in terms of the platform it offers to contribute to regional and global debates on international relations (IR).

These are exciting times in T&T, the Caribbean and the wider hemisphere. In just the past month, the government in Port of Spain has hosted visits by US Vice-President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping. It is hard to imagine a more visible reflection of the changing realities of the distribution of global power - something we might dub 'hegemonic transitions' - than that with which we were faced right here in Trinidad. The Americas more broadly are also in a state of flux. It is no accident that the intensified diplomatic engagement that we have seen on the part of Washington and Beijing comes soon after the death of Hugo Chavez in Venezuela, and with it questions about the sustainability of the Bolivarian Republic's own 'hegemonic' designs on the Caribbean. It also precedes T&T's assumption of the Chair of CARICOM for the first time in many years, the beginning of a period in which

Caribbean countries as a whole face a wide range of diplomatic challenges, from the 'SIDS+20' conference in Samoa in 2014, to the thorny negotiations at the United Nations over how the successor agreement to the Millennium Development Goals will take shape post-2015. Moreover, history moves forward at a striking pace: as I write this, both Turkey and Brazil, two countries which have long been cited as exemplars of the rapidly-developing parts of the Global South, have erupted into assertive and widespread anti-state protests.

So, where does this journal fit into this evolving picture? Our main aim, of course, is to publish interesting work which seeks to make sense of these rapid and disconcerting processes of global change. In this particular issue we offer you a number of thoughtful and insightful articles. Following their foreword in the launch of our first issue, the Chairs of the journal's editorial board take the opportunity to flesh out some of their ideas further. Winston Dookeran develops a detailed and expansive discussion of the notion of 'Caribbean Convergence', a theme about which he has spoken in many recent speeches as Minister of Foreign Affairs, and which represents a distinctive attempt to reframe and reconceptualise the faltering Caribbean integration process.¹ Andy Knight questions whether, indeed, a new theory of international relations might be ready to emerge; building on a critical review of the major extant theories of IR, he proposes a number of themes with which any new way of understanding the field – and therefore of practising it, too – must grapple in today's complex world.

Following these two longer research papers, we have a 'forum' on the future of the non-independent Caribbean. Emilio Pantojas-García, who writes about the vexed status question in Puerto Rico, and Peter Clegg, who discusses the future of the UK Overseas Territories, are both stalwarts of a group of researchers who have long had an interest in understanding the challenges faced by the remaining fragments of empire in the region and beyond. This was reflected in their well-received edited book *Governance in the Non-Independent Caribbean: Challenges and Opportunities* which remains the go-to study of the parts of the region which still retain often ambiguous links to the metropolitan centres.² Wrapping up the forum, IIR's own Michele Reis who, having lived in Martinique for many years, is herself an expert on the French Overseas *Départements* and *Territoires*, provides an incisive discussion of the challenges faced by them as they cope with the fallout from the

Eurozone crisis by seeking to orient themselves closer to their independent Caribbean neighbours.

We are honoured, in the remainder of this issue, to carry some interventions by some extremely eminent observers of the region. First, former Jamaican Prime Minister, PJ Patterson gives his own 'cri de coeur for CARICOM', where he laments the perceived crisis in which the institution – and with it the prognosis for regional integration more broadly – has recently found itself. Second, Gerard Greene, who is a senior official in the T&T Ministry of Foreign Affairs and also one of the journal's managing editors, offers his analysis of the recent intensification of the process of integration between the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), something with which he has been intimately involved at the technical and policy level. Finally, rounding off this issue, Rudy Insanally, one of the region's most celebrated diplomatic voices, offers a thoughtful and timely reflection on the significance of diplomacy in small states.

Looking forward, we already have a series of exciting plans in the pipeline for future volumes of the journal. Continuing the approach taken in this issue, we will be publishing similar fora on the SIDS+20 issue (to coincide with the planning for Samoa 2014), the future of the G20, the post-MDGs settlement, and the future of Caribbean regional integration. We are also issuing a call for papers for a special issue on the nexus between crime, drugs, the state and the private security industry in the Americas. This fits with an emerging strand of research here at IIR which we have undertaken in conjunction with a Canadian NGO, Project Ploughshares, and the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC) which seeks to map the private security industry in the Caribbean, something which is, at present, poorly understood.

We are also pleased to announce that Dr Tavis Jules, of Loyola University in Chicago, has come on board as our new book reviews editor. He will be responsible for soliciting reviews of books which discuss the wide range of themes in which we are interested, and we hope to start carrying them towards the end of 2013. Please feel free to send us any ideas that you might have for upcoming publications which we can review here.³ More broadly, we welcome all submissions, of longer academic research articles and shorter policy papers alike, proposals for fora and special issues, and suggestions about controversies and issues that our readership would like us to tackle. Full guidelines for authors can be found at

our website, along with electronic versions of all issues and articles.⁴

Finally, I hope that you enjoy reading this, our second issue of the *Caribbean Journal of International Relations and Diplomacy*. We are keen to instigate a dialogue with our readership. So please feel free to send us your feedback and join with us as we celebrate the ongoing development of a publication which is as much yours as it is ours. We look forward to continuing the discussion with you.

NOTES

- ¹ See also a forthcoming chapter where I discuss this in greater depth: Bishop, M. L. (2013) 'Whither CARICOM?' in Knight, A., Castro-Rea, J., and H. Ghany (eds) *Remapping the Americas: Trends in Region-Making* (London: Ashgate).
- ² Clegg, P. and E. Pantojas-García (2009) (eds) *Governance in the Non-Independent Caribbean: Challenges and Opportunities* (Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle).
- ³ For book reviews, please contact Tavis directly at tjules@luc.edu and for all other queries and suggestions, write to the IIR editors at CJIRD@sta.uwi.edu.
- ⁴ See <http://journals.sta.uwi.edu/iir/>