



NEWSLETTER

The Antigua and Barbuda High Commission

ISSUE No.107 February 2006



Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer with President of the United States George W Bush and Mrs Bush

Digital photo by Maurice Merchant

The United States government has pledged to work closely with Antigua and Barbuda and Regional Security System (RSS) countries to develop their security capabilities for World Cup Cricket 2007.

During a visit with Prime Minister Spencer, United States Ambassador Mrs Mary Kramer and Lieutenant General H Steven Blum outlined the areas in which the United States government will assist the countries attached to the RSS in getting them ready for the event which is expected to attract hundreds of thousands of visitors to the region.

Lieutenant General Blum, who is Chief of the National Guard Bureau in Arlington, Virginia, said that there are a number of areas that his division is prepared to work along with Antigua and Barbuda and the RSS countries.

Prime Minister Spencer who is also the Chairman of the RSS said that he is delighted that the United States is lending assistance to the region in such an important area and at such a critical time when security will be of high priority to the region.

Prime Minister Spencer also thanked Ambassador Kramer for her efforts in working to ensure that the region receives the assistance from the United States government. He also asked her to convey best wishes to President George Bush and Mrs. Bush whom he met in September last year during a reception hosted by the President at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York to celebrate the Sixtieth United Nations General Assembly.



Prime Minister Spencer in discussion with Lieutenant General Blum

Digital photo by Maurice Merchant

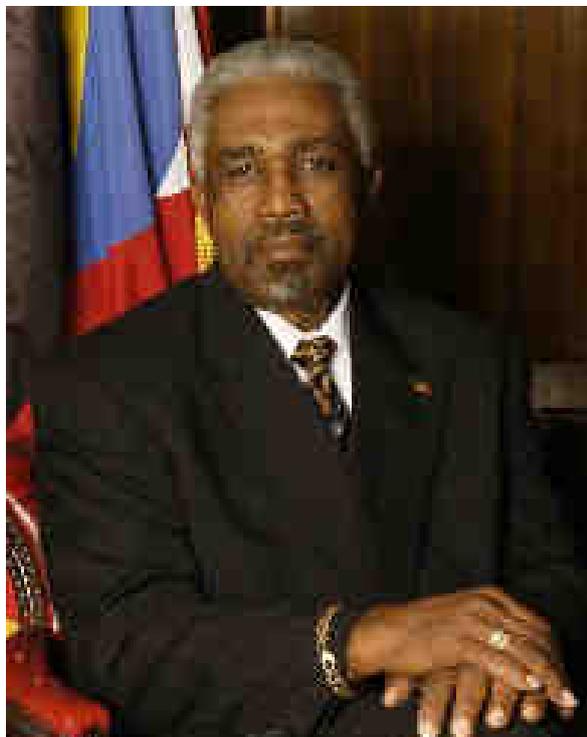
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The meeting was also attended by Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister Mrs. Maudlyn Richards, Deputy Commander Edward Croft of the ABDF and Officers of the National Guard Bureau.

During the day, Lieutenant General Blum also held talks with the hierarchy of the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force and inspected a Guard of Honour.

A MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY DR CARL ROBERTS, HIGH COMMISSIONER



Dear Readers,

I would like to take this opportunity to speak to you on a very important subject.

*I have been charged by the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda the Honourable Baldwin Spencer to meet and discuss various matters with **all** Antiguan and Barbudans domiciled in the United Kingdom.*

To this end, I will make myself available to you, wherever you are in the UK. I would suggest that within your own community if you know of other Antiguan and Barbudans living there, try and make an effort to form a group and I will meet with you at an appropriate meeting place.

Now on to other things.

As most of you realize, this year marks the 25th Anniversary of the Independence of Antigua and Barbuda. The twenty-fifth years' anniversary celebration provides a wonderful opportunity to analyse the progress we have made since 1st November 1981.

No doubt we have achieved much progress but could we have gone further? A little bit of soul searching and reflection is always useful as we develop our plans for the future.

We have much to thank God for, for though we have suffered at the hands of several hurricanes, we have managed to rebound.

Our progress has come about as a result of much sacrifice. We nonetheless cannot and must not reduce our efforts to ensure that our beloved country remains that lovely place where we will all like to live, and to encourage our friends from around the world to visit and wherever possible to invest in.

This year also will pass but the demonstration of unity and good citizenship should prevail and remain with each of us long after the celebrations have ceased. Let us heed the call of Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer to join our brothers and sisters at home to celebrate this grand occasion and in doing so show the world that we, Antiguan and Barbudans, are one, sharing a common bond and a common future.

Dr Carl Roberts
High Commissioner

Barbuda Council hosts visit of Overseas Tourism Offices

Following a three day meeting of intense discussions to co-ordinate activities in the key tourist generating markets, Directors of Tourism located in the overseas offices recently held an historical meeting with the Barbuda Council.

The meeting provided the opportunity for the Council to discuss with the top tourism marketing representatives along with the Honourable Minister of Tourism, Harold Lovell, and his Antigua based team, their vision for tourism in Barbuda and its critical role in marketing the twin island nation as a dual centre vacation spot.

Chairman of the Barbuda Council, Randolph Beazer, outlined the potential of Barbuda and emphasised the need for proper representation of Barbudans in tourism development and marketing activities in close collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism. Areas identified for immediate attention in the move towards an improved product are the improvement of basic infrastructure, particularly the roads and airport facilities, and the proper management of the yachting industry which was growing considerably in Barbuda.

Minister Trevor Walker, Member of Parliament for Barbuda, accompanied the team throughout the day which included a visit to two of the three properties on island and culminated with a visit to the Codrington House ruins and Caves at Two Foot Bay to review the potential development of these as heritage sites. "This is an exciting occasion and we look forward to continuing the dialogue. Already, we have brainstormed a number of activities which could revitalise Barbuda in the eyes of the visitor. We are extremely

happy to meet our tourism representatives overseas and develop a stronger partnership."

The need for an overall tourism plan for Barbuda was emphasised with plans to include Barbuda in the impending preparation of the tourism master plan for the country anticipated to commence later this year. An interim programme would be developed by the Barbuda Council which would assist in a greater focus on Barbuda as an integral part of the tourism product.

The Minister of Tourism stressed the importance of the meeting and his commitment to building a stronger relationship with the Barbuda Council. "We are making every effort to market Antigua and Barbuda as a unique Caribbean destination which is only attainable with a strong partnership approach with Barbuda. The many attributes and features of Barbuda complement Antigua, and together the destination provides an experience that no other destination can match". Minister Lovell continued, "This is only achievable if we have a shared vision and work very closely in seeking to achieve joint benefits."

Immediate results were attained from this momentous occasion with an understanding that space would be provided at the tourism information desk at V.C. Bird International Airport for personnel from Barbuda to utilise, and staff from the Barbuda Council working at the Ministry of Tourism to provide further exposure and training. Greater opportunities would be extended for attendance of key promotional activities by representatives of the Barbuda Council, a programme already commenced with the attendance of Ms. Therez Parker from the Barbuda Council at World Travel Market in 2004, and Mr. Linton Thomas at a recent media launch co-ordinated by the New York Office in November 2005.

Plans were already in place to utilise Barbudan Chef Reme Hamlet at the

annual CTO Caribbean Week in New York scheduled for June 2006.

The visit to Barbuda was the highlight of the first 2006 biannual meeting of overseas offices which seeks to strengthen collaboration in a more aggressive global marketing effort and ensure synergy among the marketing representatives. The meeting reviewed marketing plans and budgets and various on-island activities, particularly the hosting of travel agents and media which has been the primary thrust of marketing activities for Antigua and Barbuda.

Discussions were also held on the opportunities for embracing 2006 as the 25th Independence Anniversary in promotional activities emphasising the cultural, historical and heritage attributes of the country. Representatives of World Cup Antigua Incorporated also updated the marketing representatives on Cricket World Cup preparations. Additional meetings were held with Carnival Co-ordinator, Vaughn Walter, to ensure early promotion of Carnival in 2006 and the 50th Celebrations in 2007. Meetings were also held with the Marketing and Sales Managers of both LIAT and Caribbean Star in an effort to increase linkages with the French islands, a market researched as having major potential for Antigua and Barbuda, particularly in the summer months.

A number of major promotional activities are planned for the first half of the year with a recognition that "Antigua and Barbuda cannot be outside of the arena and seek to compete in the Olympics", with ongoing preparations for the launch of a new look and image for Antigua and Barbuda in the marketplace to be rolled out later in 2006.



Minister Maginley and the British Government Official

Digital photo by Consuela Parker

Health Minister and British Commissioner discuss cooperation

On the 13th February the new Resident British Commissioner Mr Terence Knight paid a courtesy call on the Minister of Health John Maginley.

During their brief meeting both Officials discussed the continued technical cooperation between the United Kingdom and Antigua and Barbuda.

They also spoke about the upcoming Cricket World Cup 2007, and the touring Antigua team which went to England last year. The country's health services and sports in general were also discussed.

Mr Knight took up his appointment on January 1, 2006 upon the retirement of Ms Jean Sharp.

The British Government has assisted the Government of Antigua and Barbuda in its health care services, by providing funding for the Browne's Avenue Health Centre, Clare Hall Health Centre, Pigotts Clinic and the All Saints

Health Centre. The strengthening of co-operation will continue between both countries.

Ministry receives tangible donation towards the development of the Fort James Beach

On 13th February Minister of Tourism Harold Lovell was presented with an EC\$5000 cheque for the development of the Fort James Beach as a Heritage Tourism site.

The funds which will be directed towards the first phase of the project, mainly the construction of change rooms and rest rooms within the area, were presented by Philbert Mason on behalf of MSM Industries Ltd, responsible for building a Best Western Property in Antigua in time for the 2007 ICC Cricket World Cup.

In accepting the funds on behalf of his Ministry, Mr Lovell expressed his thanks for the gesture noting that it will go a long way in securing the commencement of the first phase of the project.

"I am indeed happy that Best Western has sought to hold confidence in the national economy as it stands and in

times to come," Minister Lovell noted. He continued, "It is also a firm demonstration of good corporate relations".

While giving a brief overview of the project, Heritage Tourism Officer, Bert Lindsay mentioned that a proposal is being drafted for the designation of the area as a national park. The proposed extent of the site covers an area with Fort James as the centre; extending on the Northern side to Sand Haven (Fort Hamilton); moving south along the road east of Dry Hill; onto Bay Street then on to Dickenson Bay Street; down to Rat Island.

Mr. Mason relayed that as CEO and Manager of MSM he is pleased to be attempting to place on the shores of Antigua and Barbuda a 104 room five star hotel, and it is a privilege to work with the government on the initial stages of the Fort James project as its aim is to enhance the Dickenson Bay area.

Mason also informed the Minister of his company's intention to donate *two complimentary three night stays* at any Best Western property around the world. These prizes will be given to the winners of the 2006 Carnival Queen competition and the Calypso Monarch competition.



(left) Minister accepts cheque from Philbert Mason

Digital photo by Samoya Kirby

PM Spencer congratulates Rene Preval on election victory in Haiti

Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer has congratulated the leader of the L'Espwa (The Hope) Party, Rene Preval, on his victory at the polls in Haiti.

Mr. Preval, a former ally of deposed President Jean Bertrand Aristide, was declared the winner of the presidential elections having won by an overwhelming majority of the votes.

Prime Minister Spencer also joined his CARICOM colleagues in issuing an official message calling the Haitian elections as a wonderful moment and declaring that French nation now has a democratic government which could sit down with CARICOM and discuss its re-entry into the regional grouping.

CARICOM suspended Haiti's membership after the ousting of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide two years ago.

In his letter Prime Minister Spencer said:

"I present my compliments and have the honour to offer you the congratulations and best wishes of the Government and people of Antigua and Barbuda on the great victory by your party at the polls on 7th February.

I take special pleasure in congratulating you on your election to the office of President of the Republic.

In my view, the elections of 7th February were a special opportunity to resolve the difficulties of the past and to put Haiti upon a new path that will lead to growth and development.

While there are many challenges ahead, I am comforted by the personal qualities and experience that you bring to your office; and with the goodwill and support of the people of the Caribbean and the international community, the people of Haiti, who so overwhelmingly supported your vision of hope, can now be placed at the centre of all development efforts.

I look forward to working with you, both at the regional and bilateral levels, in ensuring that the people we represent in our respective countries will have a bright Caribbean future."



Prime Minister Spencer and Ambassador Kato

Digital photo by Maurice F. Merchant



Japan's Ambassador pays farewell call on Prime Minister Spencer

On 20th February, Japanese Ambassador Shigenobu Kato paid his farewell call on senior Government officials in Antigua and Barbuda.

Ambassador Kato, who is based in Port-of-Spain Trinidad, called on Governor General Sir James Carlisle and Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer.

Ambassador Kato thanked the Prime Minister for his government's

support on many international issues of importance to Japan. He pointed out that since arriving in the region, this was his tenth visit to Antigua and Barbuda, and it was an indication of how much the relationship has grown.

Prime Minister Spencer thanked the Ambassador for his country's interest in Antigua and Barbuda and the support given to the development efforts. He hoped that Ambassador Kato's successor would build on the efforts made and take Antigua and Barbuda/Japan relations to a new level.

Ambassador Kato indicated that he was being transferred to be the Ambassador in Jordan, and that his successor would be arriving in the region in mid-March.

Both men reviewed various project and elements in the relationship including the next phase in fisheries project development envisaged for the sister island of Barbuda.



Antigua and Barbuda protests U.S. Anti-Gambling Legislation

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda has sent a letter to Rob Portman, the United States Trade Representative, in response to recent legislation introduced in the United States Congress regarding Internet gambling.

In 2005, Antigua won a case against the United States in the World Trade Organization over the US prohibition on Internet gambling services offered to American consumers from Antigua, and under WTO procedures the United States was given until 3 April 2006 to bring its laws into compliance with the WTO decision.

However, the only legislation introduced into the Congress to date have been bills sponsored by Congressmen Jim Leach (R-Iowa) and Bob Goodlatte (R-Virginia), both of whom seek to impose further restrictions on Internet gambling. In his letter of 16 February 2006 to Ambassador Portman, the Antiguan Ambassador to the WTO Dr. John W. Ashe notes that both pieces of legislation are in a number of respects directly contrary to the ruling of the WTO in the gambling dispute.

"As of today," noted Ambassador Ashe, "with less than two months remaining on an 11 month and two week compliance period, to our knowledge no legislation has been introduced into the Congress that would seek to bring the United States into compliance with the [WTO] recommendations. Further, your government has given no indication to Antigua and Barbuda as to how the United States intends to effect such compliance. The only legislative efforts

so far, the Goodlatte Bill and the Leach Bill, are baldly contrary to the rulings and recommendations of the [WTO]. We can only assume that this legislation was neither sponsored by nor enjoys the support of the USTR (US Trade Representative) and the current American administration."

Mark Mendel, lead counsel representing Antigua in the WTO case, observed that the exceptions to the Internet gambling prohibition contained in both of the Bills highlight the discriminatory trade effect of the United States prohibition on the cross-border provision of gambling and betting services into the US. "By creating carve-outs for certain domestic remote gambling opportunities, including in particular wholly-intrastate remote gambling, both of these pieces of legislation fly directly in the face of the WTO ruling. The economic basis of the US restrictions simply cannot be more obvious."

Ambassador Ashe further expressed his country's commitment to the case, noting "Antigua and Barbuda stands prepared to ensure that our people reap the benefits of this historic decision. We will use the avenues open to us at the WTO and otherwise to see that the United States complies with the decision in a timely and comprehensive manner. As always however, we encourage the United States government to engage with Antigua and Barbuda directly to craft a workable solution to our dispute that addresses the concerns of both nations."

Korean Ambassador says farewell

On 21st February, Korean Ambassador Lee Joon-il paid a farewell call on Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer and Governor General Sir James Carlisle. Ambassador Lee, who is based in the Dominican Republic, is expected to be



Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer and Ambassador Lee Joon-il

Digital photo by Maurice F. Merchant

re-assigned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Korean Capital of Seoul.

During his meeting with Prime Minister Spencer, Ambassador Lee spoke of Antigua and Barbuda's valuable support for a diplomatic solution to the nuclear problem on the Korean peninsula with the 6-party talks. Ambassador Lee pointed out that the diplomatic process was moving very slowly.

Prime Minister Spencer wished Ambassador Lee every success in his new posting and assured him that his administration will continue building the relations with his country. The Republic of Korea has assisted Antigua and Barbuda in several areas including hospital equipment, computers, dental equipment and vehicles.

Ambassador Lee also reminded Prime Minister Spencer of the Republic of Korea's candidacy for the Secretary-Generalship of the United Nations. Mr. Kofi Annan will demit office in December of 2006, and the Republic of Korea Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon is considered a frontrunner for the position.



Minister Maginley in conversation with South African High Commissioner Designate Faith Radebe and African Union Ambassador Designate Bruce Goodwin

Digital photo by Maurice F. Merchant

South African Cricketing Delegation discusses World Cup Cricket 2007 with Antiguan officials

On the request of the Government of Prime Minister Spencer, a six member South African cricket delegation headed by High Commissioner Designate Her Excellency Faith Radebe visited Antigua and Barbuda and held meetings with officials of the Antigua Cricket World Cup.

Antigua and Barbuda made good on an offer by the Government of South Africa to provide technical assistance for the staging of World Cup Cricket 2007. Present on the South African delegation were the Assistant Commissioner of the South African Police Services and the Chief Director of the South African Department of Sports.

According to Chairman of the meeting the Minister of Sports, John Maginley, technical assistance from the South Africans will be in the areas of security, grounds preparation, event management and marketing.

“These priority areas are not only specific to Antigua and Barbuda but are relevant areas of need for the other Caribbean countries hosting World Cup Cricket 2007. South Africa, having already hosted numerous world class events has expertise from which the Caribbean can draw upon,” said Minister Maginley.



Registrar and Deputy Registrar appointed to the High Court

Newly appointed Registrar and Deputy Registrar of the High Court of Antigua and Barbuda were formally introduced at a press conference in the Ministry of Justice, presided over by Minister of Justice Senator Colin Derrick and Permanent Secretary, Mrs. Barbara Belle.

The position of Registrar was filled by Dominican national, Ms Sandra

Julien, while Mr. Charlesworth Tabor, an Antiguan was appointed as Deputy Registrar, both pledging to do all that was possible to ensure the efficient running of the High Court.

Ms Julien, a graduate of the University of the West Indies, was admitted as Barrister-at-Law and Solicitor of the High Court, Commonwealth of Dominica in November, 2001 has brought a wealth of knowledge of Civil Service Rules and Regulations to her new position. As a result of her experience and knowledge of the operations and workings of the High Court Registry in Dominica, Ms Julien was appointed to the Office of Deputy Registrar (qualified) in October, 2003.

Prior to this appointment, she served as State Attorney in the Attorney General’s Office, also in her native Dominica, and had acted in the office of Registrar, Registrar General and Provost Marshall on a number of occasions.

Ms Julien replaces Attorney-at-Law, Mrs. Laurie Freeland Roberts, who acted in the post for a number of years, while at the same time officiating in her substantive post as Registrar of the Intellectual Property and Commerce Office.

Mr. Tabor worked as an Employment Officer in the Labour Department in Antigua and Barbuda from 1974 to 1978, before pursuing his Bachelors Degree in Economics at St. Mary’s University, Halifax Canada, and his Masters Degree in Agricultural Economics, from the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada.

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(l to r) Mr Charlesworth Tabor, Ms. Sandra Julien, Minister of Justice Senator Colin Derrick and Permanent Secretary Mrs Barbara Belle

The Moravian Church Antigua will celebrate 250 years of work and witness for the Lord in 2006. From its humble beginnings on the 1st April, 1756 under Samuel Isles, the Church has impacted and affected the Antiguan community in a real way. Our church has played a tremendous role in the development of our Antiguan people spiritually, educationally, socially, economically and generally in every sphere of life. We are proud of our heritage and thank God for having brought us thus far. To mark this momentous occasion, we are inviting all Moravians to celebrate with us in a week of celebrations from 31st March to 6th April

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday 31st March, 2006 -

We will have a Recognition Banquet, at which we will recognize all Moravian Ministers who served in Antigua and specially highlight the Antiguans. The cost of the Banquet is US\$50.00 and will take place at the Grand Royal Antiguan Hotel. Tickets are limited to 400 persons and is on a first come, first served basis.

Saturday 1st April 2006 (Anniversary Date) -

Pan Festival, including all the Steelbands in the Moravian Church Antigua, with Cable and Wireless Hellsgate and West Indies Oil Gemonites as guest. Since this is the actual Anniversary date, we will have a forty-five minute service in all our congregations from 6:00 am. The exact service will be done in all of our congregations.

Sunday 2nd April 2006 -

Anniversary Thanksgiving Service

Monday 3rd April 2006 -

Spring Gardens night

Tuesday 4th April 2006 -

Official Government Reception to mark the event to which all Overseas Guests will be invited.

Wednesday 5th April 2006 -

Anniversary Programme/
Moravian Hymns and their stories.

Thursday 6th April -

Youth Explosion

Friday 7th April -

A Deeper Life Service of Recommitment - An Anniversary March will take place from 5:30 pm to Spring Gardens and the service will begin at 7:00 pm.

An Exhibition of Moravian work and things Moravian will run for 6 months from 3rd April at the National Archives.

The General Post Office will launch a set of commemorative Stamps on the 3rd April on the Moravian Church, which each Moravian needs to get.

A Commemorative Magazine is being produced for the event.

There will be lots of Souvenir items available. Please come and be with us. I implore you to communicate as often as possible with us so that we can be on top of things.

- Can you help help?

As part of the celebrations, an exhibition of the work of the Church in Antigua is being planned. The Exhibition Committee is requesting the assistance of persons who have photographs, documents and other mementos in their possession either loan or donate

such items for display at the Antigua and Barbuda National Archives. All items will be promptly returned.

- Recognition Banquet - The Banquet is scheduled to be held at the Grand Royal Antiguan Hotel. The contribution for the Banquet is US\$50.00 or EC\$135.00 and will be sold on a first come, first serve basis.

- 250 Club - As part of the celebrations, we have launched the 250 Club. We invite you to join the Club as a sign of your pledge and commitment to the continued development and advancement of the Moravian Church. In order to join this Club, persons will pay EC\$250.00. One dollar for each year the Moravian Church has been in existence in Antigua. Each member of the Club will receive a special 250th Commemorative PIN.

Rev. Dr. Cortroy Jarvis
Chair of the Anniversary
Committee

PAHO Officials to conduct survey of HIV/AIDS Impact on Antigua and Barbuda

A team of consultants from the United Nations Development Programme are in Antigua to conduct a one-month socio-economic assessment on HIV/AIDS in the country.

The team which is headed by Professor Desmond Cohen will assist the government to identify the existing and likely impacts of HIV/AIDS on the society and economy and implications for sustainable human development.

From an initial discussion with AIDS Programme Manager Janet Weston and Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health Clara Emmanuel, Professor Cohen said his team will be reviewing the existing epidemiological and other data on HIV/AIDS for the region and specifically for Antigua, projections of HIV prevalence for Antigua and any demographic and other implications.

The professor noted that these reviews of known data and information will be important for setting both the context of the current problem and for making projections of the economic impact of HIV/AIDS on Antigua.

Mr. Cohen added that the team will undertake key informant discussions with all of the key stakeholders with the aim of collecting data and information relevant to the report. These discussions will be with essential parts of the public sector such as Ministries of Tourism and Agriculture.

Mr. Cohen also indicated that discussions will be held with the private sector where the objective will be to gather data and elicit support for workplace programmes that help to sustain human resources capacity.

In all discussions with Government the focus will be on how best to sustain human resources capacity, which is threatened by HIV/AIDS and how to strengthen the workplace programmes that are comprehensive (addressing HIV prevention, care and support and treatment).

The study, he said, will therefore serve to strengthen the national response to HIV/AIDS in Antigua and Barbuda and to raise awareness and understanding amongst key stakeholders. The objective of the study is to review the existing enabling environment including public, political, private and governmental and the effort required to constrain the diseases.

It will also identify the practical activities that are feasible in the country, and which are needed if the socioeconomic aspects of the epidemic are to be addressed in a timely and effective manner.

The other United Nations Development Programme members are Programme Manager of Poverty Reduction, Leisa Perch and Programme Associate - HIV/AIDS and Poverty Reduction, Letitia Nicholas.

Antigua and Barbuda attends OECS Task Force discussions on Economic Union

Antigua and Barbuda was represented at a meeting of the Task Force established by OECS Heads of Government to examine recommendations on the question of OECS economic union.

At the 34th meeting of the OECS Authority in Dominica in July 2001, the Heads of Government endorsed proposals for the deepening of the sub-regional



Ambassador Colin Murdoch

Digital photo by Maurice F. Merchant

economic integration process with the goal of creating an economic union. They created a Task Force charged with the responsibility of charting the course for the OECS member states to achieve economic union.

The Task Force meeting in St. Kitts on February 23 met under the chairmanship of Sir K. Dwight Venner, governor of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank and reviewed the draft treaty for the establishment of the OECS Economic Union. The working draft of the treaty had been on the agenda of the OECS Authority meeting in November 2005. At that meeting, the heads of government directed that further work be done.

Antigua and Barbuda's representative on the Task Force which comprises senior officials from OECS member states is Ambassador Colin Murdoch, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ambassador Murdoch said that an economic union represents the highest form of economic integration and it involves the

(continues on page 10)



Miss Lorraine Headley, Director-General of Tourism

Government is responsible for managing and developing the industry, however the majority of the assets that comprise the industry are owned by the private sector. A strong partnership between the public and private sectors is vital for the future development of tourism in Antigua and Barbuda,” Headley said.

Miss Headley continued “I am honoured to lead the technical team of the Ministry as we seek to improve standards and develop a culture of excellence throughout the industry. We have a lot of work to do, and we are committed to making a tangible difference.”

Miss Headley began her career in the Government service in 1990 in the then Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce as Co-ordinator of Industrial Development. From 1992 she worked for the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States as Tourism Economist where she played a technical role in the evaluation and policy planning of tourism and related sectors in the eight islands comprising the OECS, and provided management support for the three year European Union OECS Tourism Development Programme.

Following a short period at the Antigua Commercial Bank as Research and Development Officer when the OECS Antigua Office closed in 1997, Miss Headley returned to tourism as Product Development Officer at the Ministry of Tourism in 1999.

In 2000, she was seconded to the Antigua Hotels & Tourist Association as Project Manager of the three year Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Development Programme which focused on improving research capacity, providing training in technical skills and customer service, and

developing proposals to enhance small businesses in the tourism sector.

In 2003 Miss Headley was part of the team that developed a successful bid for Antigua and Barbuda hosting matches in the Cricket World Cup 2007. She returned to the Ministry of Tourism in August 2004 as Director of Product Development.

Born in England of Antiguan parentage, Miss Headley obtained a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Mathematics and Economics from Cambridge University, and following her graduation in 1990, she relocated to Antigua. Miss Headley also completed a Masters Degree in Business Administration from the University of the West Indies in 1997



Government announces the appointment of Director General of Tourism

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda has appointed Miss Lorraine Headley as the Director General of Tourism.

“Miss Headley brings a wealth of experience to the post, having worked in the local and regional tourism industry. We are pleased to have her at the helm of the technical team,” said Tourism Minister expressing satisfaction with the appointment.

Miss Headley who joined the Ministry of Tourism in 1999 has worked closely with the private sector having undertaken a three year secondment to the Antigua Hotels and Tourist Association. She believes that this understanding of the needs of the private sector will assist in the strengthening of the relationship with stakeholders.

“The tourism industry is recognized as unique in that the

(continued from page 9)
creation of a single or internal market and requires high degree of harmonization of member States’ national policies.

“An OECS economic union assumes greater importance and urgency given the imperatives of the CSME,” stated Ambassador Murdoch. “OECS countries should always have a higher degree of integration than CARICOM. We are therefore seeking to create an economic space without internal frontiers in which free movement of goods, services persons and capital is ensured.”

It is expected that the final proposals of the Task Force, together with the draft treaty, will go before the OECS Authority and the individual cabinets of member states for ratification.

Week of Government's Securities Road Show Presentations in the Region culminates in Dominica

During the week which culminated on 24th February, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda Road Show team travelled to several Caribbean countries to promote Treasury Bills and a long term Bond programme through which the Government will issue EC\$151 million in securities on the Regional Government Securities Market (RGSM).

The team, headed by the Minister of Finance Dr. Errol Cort, held discussions with potential investors in Antigua, St. Kitts, Trinidad, Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia and on Friday 24th February, investors in Dominica received the opportunity to interact with the team.

Mrs Rosamund Edwards, Financial Secretary in the Ministry of Finance in Dominica, opened the proceedings with welcoming remarks to the team and the participants and wished the Government of Antigua and Barbuda every success with its treasury bills and bond programme. Following these welcoming remarks, Dr. Cort presented an overview of the economic prospects for Antigua and Barbuda and stressed that there were many ongoing programmes aimed at generating increased efficiency, accountability and transparency in public sector operations.

The Minister indicated that the positive outlook for the economy of Antigua and Barbuda further strengthens the position that investment in these securities would be sound, safe and profitable. Dr. Cort also emphasized that the Government's willingness and capacity to pay and indicated that arrangements have been put in place to ensure interest and maturity payments would be made when they become due.

Presentations were also made on the roles and functions of the Regional Government Securities Market and the Eastern Caribbean Securities Exchange (ECSE) in the process. Further, the Manager of the ABI Bank Limited, Investment Department, delivered a presentation on the role of the Bank as Arranger of the Treasury Bills and Bond issue. He reiterated that the Government and the Bank had payment mechanisms in place and pointed out that the ABI Bank Ltd. was very confident that this critical initiative would be very successful.

The presentation made by the Financial Secretary of Antigua and Barbuda focused on the importance of the RGSM to the Government as it provides an alternative and lower cost source of financing for the governments of the Eastern Caribbean. He also outlined the structure and details of the Treasury bills and the long term bond.

During the question and answer session, it was pointed out that the efforts undertaken to date by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda were very impressive. The Minister was encouraged to continue to provide updates on activities to enhance economic performance in Antigua and Barbuda to the general public across the region. This, it was pointed out, would be essential in generating investor interest in the Government's securities and in promoting a change in the perception of Antigua and Barbuda. Participants indicated that they would support the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and were willing to collaborate with the Government to ensure a successful initiative. Further, it was indicated that the interest rates on the securities being offered by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda were more attractive than what currently exists on the market.

In closing, the Minister indicated that the Government of Antigua and Barbuda was following other governments of the ECCU region in issuing securities on the RGSM. He indicated that this provided

an opportunity for investors in the region to support the further expansion and development of the RGSM and the ECSE. Dr. Cort further noted that in supporting the development of these regional mechanisms, the people of the region would also be instrumental in facilitating economic development of the countries of the region. The Minister stressed that this is just another element of regional integration as it allows the people of Antigua and Barbuda to invest in securities issued by other regional governments and likewise the people of the region to invest in securities issued by Antigua and Barbuda.

The Government is working in collaboration with the ABI Bank Ltd. to raise EC\$51 million on the RGSM via the ECSE. The securities will be in the form of a ninety-one (91) day Treasury Bill issue and will be issued in three tranches of EC\$17 Million. The first tranche of EC\$17 million will be issued on March 15th 2006 and the remaining tranches will be issued in the consecutive months. Later in the year the Government is expected to float an EC\$100 million Bond. The ABI Bank Ltd. will act on behalf of the Government as Arranger of these securities.

Dr. Cort and his team will next travel to New York and Toronto where presentations on the economic prospect of Antigua and Barbuda will be made.

Individuals and institutions who wish to receive additional information on the Government's Treasury Bills and Bond programme are encouraged to contact the Road Show team on email antigua.tbills@gmail.com





Prime Minister Spencer (centre) Secretary-General Carrington and Ivor Carryl (right) Minister of Finance and Economy Dr Cort and Ambassador Colin Murdoch (left)

Digital photo by Maurice F. Merchant

CARICOM Secretary General visits with PM Spencer on CSME Matters

On the 27th February, Secretary General of CARICOM Dr. Edwin Carrington made a special visit to Antigua and Barbuda to meet with senior government officials.

Secretary General Carrington stated that he came to St. John's to clarify a few matters relating to CSME and to provide whatever support Antigua and Barbuda may require in meeting the 30 June date for CSME implementation.

Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer hosted Secretary General Carrington in a meeting in the Cabinet Secretariat which included Finance and Economy Minister Dr. L. Errol Cort; Ambassador Colin Murdoch, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Mr. Cordell Weston, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance and Economy; Ambassador Dr. Clarence Henry, Director of Trade and head of the

CSME Unit in the Ministry of Finance and Economy; Mr. Lebrecht Hesse, Solicitor General in the Ministry of Legal Affairs, and other staff members of the CSME Unit.

Secretary General Carrington was accompanied by Mr. Ivor Carryl, Programme Manager at the Secretariat responsible for CSME technical assistance.

During the four hour meeting, Secretary General Carrington undertook to commit whatever resources were required to make Antigua and Barbuda CSME ready, and said that he would identify technical resources which Antigua and Barbuda may require.

On the invitation of Prime Minister Spencer, Finance and Economy Minister Dr. Errol Cort outlined government's programme for launching of CSME in Antigua and Barbuda and identified areas where CARICOM could work in support of the national programme.

The question of legislation to implement the CSME was also discussed and government gave the assurance that

the Ministry of Legal Affairs had sufficient capacity to deal with the situation. It was also agreed that there would be a role for the CARICOM Secretariat in this process.

Certain aspects of the Regional Development Fund were also ventilated with a view to clarifying how Antigua and Barbuda could access the Fund. Also on the meeting's agenda was the issue of the merger of the CARICOM and CARIFORUM Secretariats and the concerns of certain CARICOM member states were set out.



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Mr. Tabor was then employed by the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), from 1988 to 2000, first as Agriculture Officer in Antigua and Barbuda for a number of years, then as an Economist at the OECS Agricultural Diversification Co-ordinating Unit, in Dominica.

He left to pursue studies in law, at the University of London, graduating in 2003. He received his Legal Education Certificate from the Norman Manley Law School, University of the West Indies and was called to the bar in October 2005. Mr. Tabor replaces Attorney-at-Law, Mr. Conliffe Clarke who acted as Deputy Registrar for a period of time.

The Minister, in his presentation stated that 'the filling of these posts by these two capable persons, is an indication to the public that this administration is serious about improving the justice system and indeed, trying to strive for a very high standard of efficiency in the administration of justice in Antigua and Barbuda.'