



# The Antigua and Barbuda High Commission

Official Newsletter - Issue 132 -- March/April 2009

## Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer takes Oaths of Secrecy, Office and Allegiance administered by Governor- General Dame Louise Lake-Tack



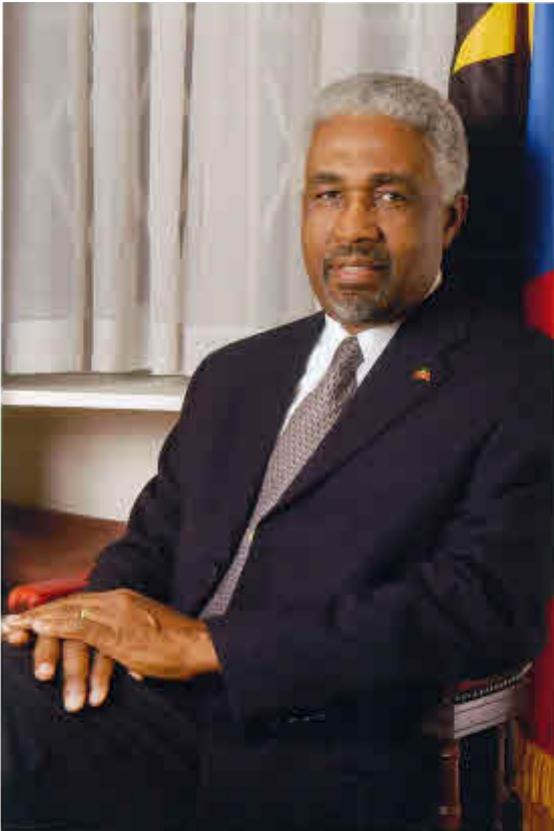
The United Progressive Party (UPP) was successful at the polls on the 12th March 2009 winning 10 of the 17 seats.

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## A MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY DR CARL ROBERTS, HIGH COMMISSIONER



### The 2009 Elections in Antigua and Barbuda (Part 1)

Upon my return to the United Kingdom since the 12<sup>th</sup> March election in Antigua and Barbuda, I have been asked on many occasions "how did the elections go back home". I have attempted to explain, not just the results but also why this election, unlike that of 2004 has evoked so much adverse reactions among the citizens and residents of the country. I therefore have decided to make this the subject of my message in the High Commission's Newsletter for March/April 2009.

The elections of 2004 were pivotal in the history of the nation of Antigua and Barbuda for it removed from office a party which had ruled the State for over forty (40) years (except for the period of 1971 to 1976). In fact,

the Antigua Labour Party has held the reins of government for the last twenty-eight (28) years. The change in 2004 was therefore met with much rejoicing, a desire for change and a release of much built-up expectation on the part of many of the inhabitants of the country.

The elections of 2009 were quite different. There has been much discussion in the media about the results; what they mean and what may have gone wrong. There have been too many accusations flying left to right and back to front accompanied by a resurgence of animosities at a time when unity and co-operation are most needed.

There were many observer missions present over the period of the elections.

Among them were the Organisation of American States (OAS) team of 31 members, the Commonwealth Secretariat Expert Team (CET) of 6 members, the Caricom Observer Team and the United Group of Church Leaders. Unfortunately I could only get my hands on the report which was released by the Commonwealth Secretariat earlier this month. The CET was in Antigua and Barbuda from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> March 2009. I will therefore use this public document to ground my own observations.

Since 2004 over nine thousand, eight hundred and twenty (9825 to be exact) first-time registrants were added to the voters list. This took place between the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2004 and the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008. These additions increased the electoral list to fifty-two thousand, one hundred and seventy-three (52,173). To put this figure into perspective, one would have to relate it to the total population figure normally used to determine

population density and GDP per capita.

In recent times figures seen in publications have ranged from 80,000 to 90,000 and sometimes even higher. I honestly believe that it is high time that we are able to say, with much more certainty, what the population of our nation *really* is. For this presentation I will use the average of the above two figures or 85,000. This would mean that approximately 61% of the population were registered to vote. From the results released by the Antigua and Barbuda Electoral Commission a total of 41,676 voters actually exercised this right yielding a voter turn out percentage of 80%. The comparative figure for 2004 is 91% and shows an overall decline of 11%. This may or may not be material but it clearly shows that a significant percentage of the voters were able to vote.

The CET which comprised of three staffers from the Commonwealth Secretariat, was chaired by the Honourable Christine Stewart (Former Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Canada), and included Ms Ruth Arleen Meighan (Chief Elections Officer, Elections and Boundaries Department, Belize) and Mr David Yhann (former Project Director, Elections Monitoring Project, Electoral Assistance Bureau, Guyana).

The elections passed peacefully. The results were somewhat of a surprise to many persons especially the failure of Dr. Errol Cort to retain his seat and the return of Former Prime Minister Lester Bird and Molwyn Joseph. Even more surprising was the defeat of Winston Williams by a relative newcomer to politics, Eustace Lake. What were some of the factors which contributed to this and what was the response of the general population? In part II, I will continue my analysis of the elections and the CET report.

H.E. Dr Carl Roberts

## UPP Retains Power

Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda the Hon. W. Baldwin Spencer, after winning the General Elections on 12th March, has named the members of his Cabinet. The Cabinet members took their Oath of Office at Government House. The members of the Cabinet are as follows:

1. The Honourable W. Baldwin Spencer, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs
2. The Honourable Justin Simon Q.C., Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs
3. The Honourable Willmoth Daniel, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Health, Social Transformation and Consumer Affairs
4. The Honourable Harold Lovell, Minister of Finance, The Economy and Public Administration
5. Senator The Honourable Dr. L. Errol Cort, Minister of National Security
6. The Honourable Hilson Baptiste, Minister of Agriculture, Lands, Housing and the Environment
7. Dr. The Honourable Jacqui Quinn-Leandro, Minister of Education, Sports, Youth and Gender Affairs
8. The Honourable John Herbert Maginley, Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation and Culture
9. The Honourable Trevor Myke Walker, Minister of Works and Transport

Additional members of the Prime Minister's Government include:

### Ministers of State

Honourable Chanlah Codrington - Minister of State attached to the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Housing and the Environment with responsibility for Marine Resources including Fisheries, Agro Industries, Environment, Development Control Authority (DCA)

Honourable Eleston Montgomery Adams - Minister of State attached to the Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation and Culture with responsibility for Culture, Independence, National Parks/Heritage Sites, Festivals including Carnival

Senator the Honourable. Dr. Edmond Mansoor - Minister of State attached to the Office of The Prime Minister with responsibility for Information, Broadcasting, Telecommunications, Science & Technology, Special Projects

Senator the Honourable Winston Vincent Williams - Minister of State attached to the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth Affairs with Responsibility for Sports, Local Government, Boys Training School, Special Projects including School Meals Project

Senator the Honourable Joanne Maureen Massiah - Minister of State attached to the Ministry of Legal Affairs with responsibility for Magistrates Court, High Court, Court of Appeal, Industrial Court, Registrar & Provost Marshall, Legal Aid Advice Centre

Senator the Honourable Elmore Charles- Minister of State attached to the Ministry of Works and Transport with responsibility for Transport Board, Procurement, Stores, Vehicular Control



Prime Minister, Attorney General and some Members of the Senate

## Seminar on Youth Crime Prevention

The Ministry of Justice and Public Safety co-sponsored a one day seminar on youth crime prevention last Friday March 20th 2009. The seminar entitled "Shared Experiences" from the juvenile justice program in Florida was coordinated jointly with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)'s Barbados office, and the Office of the US Military Southern Command.

The event, funded through the Florida National Guard's State Partnership

Program (SPP), featured presentations from the Florida Youth Challenge Academy, the Seminole County Sheriff's Office, the Jacksonville Police Athletic League, and the State Attorney's Office in Jacksonville—Florida.

At the conclusion of the seminar, the Barbados' office USAID made sizeable educational and sports-related equipment donations to the following institutions: The Ministry of Education, Sports, Youth and Gender Affairs; The Boy's Training School Correctional Facility; Her Majesty's Prison; the Sunshine Home for Girls; and the Ministry of Sports. Those included: 1 digital camera; 2 printers;

2 flip charts; 1 projector and screen; 2 easels; 24 dictionaries; 12 calculators; 2 desktop computers; 2 laptops; 3 cases exercise books; 5 netballs and net; 7 basketballs and 2 nets; 4 sets cricket gloves; 4 wicketkeeper gloves; and 4 sets cricket pads.

Senior personnel from the Ministry of Justice received the gifts on behalf of the above-mentioned youth organizations; then thanked representatives from USAID, and the Florida National Guard, who travelled to Antigua and Barbuda for the seminar.

The Ministry of Justice and Public Safety is now under the umbrella of the Ministry of National Security.

# 43rd Antigua and Barbuda Sports Fishing Tournament - Catamaran - Falmouth Harbour 29th May to 1st June

## Prime Minister Spencer secures more Scholarships for Antiguan and Barbudans

On the 6th March Prime Minister the Hon. W. Baldwin Spencer signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Grambling State University to bring into effect the granting of fifty partial scholarships and five full scholarships to qualified Antiguan and Barbudans.

Prime Minister Spencer outlined that he signed the MOU with the Associate Vice President and Executive Director for the Centre for International Affairs and Programmes Dr. Mahmoud Lamadanie who was visiting Antigua and Barbuda to hold discussions with Ministry of Education officials and prospective students.

"This is another demonstration of the United Progressive Party administration that we are committed to ensuring that the majority of young Antiguan and Barbudans are given the opportunity to advance themselves by pursuing degree studies in some of the finest universities around the world," said Prime Minister Spencer.

The agreement with Grambling State University in the United States also facilitates the exchange of faculty for the purposes of research, service, consulting and teaching.

During his visit to Antigua Dr. Mahmoud Lamadanie paid a courtesy call on Her Excellency Dame Louise Lake Tack, Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda and held discussions with the then Education Minister Bertrand Joseph and Chief Education Officer Mrs. Jacintha Pringle.

A constituent member of the [University of Louisiana System](#), Grambling State University is fully accredited by the [Southern Association of Colleges and Schools](#) (SACS). Its instructional programs are delivered through a School of Graduate Studies and Research and four undergraduate colleges: Arts and Sciences, Business, Education and Professional Studies.

The university offers 64 programmes, leading to certification, [associate's](#), [bachelor's](#), [master's](#) and [doctoral](#) degrees. The university also offers the only doctorate in developmental education in the United States.



## The Music Society of Antigua and Barbuda

On 18th November 2007 the Music Society of Antigua and Barbuda came into being when a small group of 8 persons all having an interest in the love of music met to try to fill the need for an organisation which could promote music of all genres locally. An interim Executive Committee comprised of 8 members was duly elected.

The objectives of the Society as stated in its Constitution are as follows:

- (1) to give support to Music Education and developing musicians;
- (2) to become supporting partners with philanthropist and donor agencies through which funding may be directed;
- (3) to provide musicians with performing experience – especially young musicians;
- (4) to assist in projects such as the building of a Music Resource

Centre, the main purpose for which is to provide a permanent home for the Antigua and Barbuda Symphony Orchestra, and which will include an auditorium for performances of all the arts and management of the Centre.

With regard to the last objective, the Society has been extremely fortunate in that we already have a benefactor who will provide it with funds for the construction of the Centre. The Government is considering a parcel of land to be donated for this purpose.

The first fundraising recital was held on February 8th 2008 at the St John's Cathedral. A flautist from the United Kingdom – Gabrielle Byam-Grounds, Director of English Serenata, and a young professional pianist from St Vincent, Sean Sutherland performed works by Bach, Fauré, Liszt, Elgar and others. Since then, the Society has held two other recitals; one in September 2008 by a visiting American pianist Roman Rudnytsky, and the most recent held on March 22nd, by two Antiguan musicians–

Gordon Edwards pianist, and organist/accompanist Veronica Dyde together with a Guyanese baritone, Paul Cort, who is currently living and teaching in Antigua.. It also held a Panel Discussion at the Museum, the topic for discussion being "The Role of Music in a Developing Society."

The Society now has as one of its priorities, the widening of its membership in Antigua and abroad, and to this end anyone interested in becoming a member should complete the enclosed application form and forward it together with a cheque/postal order to:  
The Music Society of Antigua and Barbuda,  
c/o Antigua and Barbuda High Commission  
2nd Floor, 45 Crawford Place,  
London W1H 4LP

The annual membership subscription is as follows:

**Students under the age of 18 £7.00**  
**Adults £14.00**

## Early Childhood Associate's Degree Being Formulated for Antiguan and Barbudan Teachers

Discussions aimed at developing early childhood education through teacher training have begun in the Ministry of Education.

Local education officials and representatives of the Joint Board of Teacher Education of Jamaica, along with Shortwood Teachers' College are meeting in Antigua this week, engaging in dialogue that will lead to the development of an Associate's Degree for Antiguan and Barbudan teachers, desirous of specializing in early childhood education.

Drs. Rose Davies, Marcia Stewart and Christopher Clarke held three days of meetings, with Ministry of Education personnel, discussing the feasibility of the degree, examining critical components of an Early Childhood teacher programme, developing an associate degree in Early Childhood

Education, using the critical important ornamental model, and a model for establishing and monitoring of the programme. The development of the early childhood associate degree programme has been fully endorsed by education minister Dr. the Hon. Jacqui Quinn-Leandro.

"What it is going to do is to continue strengthening the foundation, on which our children and young people will build their education. We have a passion in this ministry for the early childhood programme. We want to build it as one of the foundations for higher quality education in Antigua and Barbuda," Dr. Leandro stated. Chief Education Officer Jacintha Pringle, while sanctioning the Early Childhood degree, commented "if persons were going to respect teachers, they must be qualified."

She said presently, primary and secondary school teachers are trained via the joint board of teacher education eastern zone (UWI Cave Hill), but provisions were never made for teachers of pre-school, kindergarten and grades one to two. However, that is about to change.

"What we want to do is to find a way to train our early childhood teachers. It is important we do that, so that the teaching population is properly qualified.

"Early childhood is very important and is also the most important area in the entire life of a child. Once you have formed that solid foundation, then everyone after will be able to build on it," Mrs. Pringle noted.

The programme will be introduced in a pilot phase, and will be taught during evening classes for three years.

Earla Esdaille, education officer in charge of early childhood education, says the degree courses will be administered jointly by Shortwood Teachers' Training College, UWI Mona and Cave Hill campuses, through the Antigua State College.

Esdaille, while admitting that completing the initial phase will be challenging, is predicting that discussions will conclude in time for the launch of the degree in September, 2009.

# Prime Minister The Hon. W. Baldwin Spencer Address To The Nation Sunday March 22, 2009

## **Fellow Citizens and Residents of Antigua and Barbuda:**

I consider it my duty to speak candidly with you about issues which are of concern to a majority of the viewers and listeners to this broadcast.

In discharge of the new mandate which the Antiguan and Barbudan people gave to the United Progressive Party ten days ago, I have restructured the Government of Antigua and Barbuda to ensure maximum optimization of the resources available to the Government. I now lead a Cabinet which I have reduced to Nine Ministers; the Prime Minister and the Attorney General, included.

Had the UPP won more seats in the General Election, I would also have opted for a reduction to a nine-member Cabinet.

This reduced Cabinet signals recognition of the need for belt-tightening at the highest executive level.

Current and foreseeable national and international economic imperatives dictate new frugality, new austerity in the governments of nations large as well as small; industrialised as well as emerging economies.

The reduction in the size of the Cabinet will make for timelier decision making and implementation in the delivery of the greatest good to the greatest number of the Antiguan and Barbudan people.

Ministers of State who are attached to certain Ministries, may, from time to time, be invited to be in attendance at Cabinet for discussions on specific matters for which they have assigned responsibilities.

Every Minister in my nine-member Cabinet, and the majority of the Ministers of State assigned to various Ministries, has five solid years of government experience.

That experience includes central involvement in the transformation from a failed state to five years of unbroken economic growth since 2004.

The experience I have mobilised in the new UPP administration includes leadership in the transformation from decades of fiefdom to a new culture of governance, which, for the first time, holds elected officials to legally defined codes of transparency, accountability, morality and integrity in public affairs.

## **Fellow Citizens and Residents of Antigua and Barbuda:**

Though we are fortunate in having continuity in government, I again stress that it will not be business as usual.

This has application in the composition of state boards and statutory authorities.

I do not expect that directors of state boards and commissioners of statutory authorities to ignore the convention which dictates that they should voluntarily offer their resignations so that the Cabinet and Ministers with new portfolios will have all options open for reconstituting the state entities.

In a wrenchingly changing world, business as usual is simply not an option.

This was tellingly demonstrated in my Administration's involvement in formulating and implementing the strategy for the protection of depositors in the Bank of Antigua and its employees.

This was also tellingly demonstrated in our bold and swift action in reconvening parliament after its dissolution, in order to secure a resolution authorising the Government of Antigua and Barbuda to acquire hundreds of acres of prime lands which the previous administration had transferred to Alan Stanford for next to nothing.

As the country, the region and the world is facing a sustained economic crisis that has triggered the wholesale collapse of businesses, job losses in the millions and bleak forecasts of negative growth, business as usual is not an option.

It is our good fortune that over the past five years, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda has won the respect of the international investment community and donor countries and institutions.

We have developed alliances with strong nations which have contributed significantly to our country's social and economic development.

Under my administration, Antigua and Barbuda has earned the trust and goodwill of countries which are willing to assist in the continuing development of our nation.

In this context, I know you will be pleased to learn that my Administration already has a firm commitment for the funding of the University of Antigua and Barbuda.

I expect that in very short order, we will formalise the necessary arrangements for the commencement of work on the University of Antigua and Barbuda.

The establishment of the University of Antigua and Barbuda will be a giant step on the path to my vision of universal free tertiary education for young Antiguan and Barbudans.

**Fellow Citizens and Residents of Antigua and Barbuda:**

As the United Progressive Party Administration proceeds with its mandate to move the nation forward, members of the rejected regime that held a stranglehold on power in this country for decades appear bent on inciting anarchy.

On this point, I reaffirm that my Administration stands firm in our pledged determination to defend the nation against external forces which threaten our economy and the integrity of our financial system.

I strongly reaffirm that the UPP also stands firm in defending the nation against those internal forces whose patent agenda is to destroy that which they cannot control.

These concerns are of sharp relevance following the recent threat of blood on the streets from an ALP MP.

They are of direct relevance following other inflammatory utterances from ALP spokespersons during the election campaign and since.

The many disturbing developments involving the leadership and candidates of the defeated Antigua Labour Party paint a profoundly ominous portrait of a group with an unconcealed agenda for anarchy.

The ALP agenda is manifestly bent on making Antigua and Barbuda ungovernable, following the Opposition party's repeat rejection by the majority of the Antiguan and Barbudan electorate.

You might already be aware of some of those developments.

Last Thursday night, an ALP spokesperson leveled the most outrageous, dangerous and utterly baseless allegations of electoral improprieties against the Prime Minister.

There was not a shred of truth to those scurrilous allegations.

That was also the case with accusations from ALP spokespersons

who sought to link the UPP with fires at two ALP constituency offices during the campaign.

Over the last few days, a defeated ALP election candidate was true to the character of his party's leadership in falsely accusing the UPP of setting fire to two of his motor vehicles.

The matter involving a break-in at the home of the defeated ALP candidate for St. John's Rural North is very instructive.

That incident, too, was falsely imputed to the UPP.

Lo and behold, when effective police investigation led to the apprehension of the guilty party, the rejected ALP candidate promptly intervened to interrupt the course of justice.

His stated position was, inter alia, that he did not want to press charges against the burglar, with whom his family was acquainted.

You might wish to ponder upon that.

The nation is left to wonder what response is to be expected from other purported ALP victims of highly publicized fires if increasingly potent police investigative skills should lead to the arrest of perpetrators of other unlawful incidents in which ALP activists have been cast as victims.

**Fellow Citizens and Residents of Antigua and Barbuda:**

The untoward incidents in which ALP operatives have been involved are not isolated.

They faithfully reflect the flawed collective character of the current ALP leadership and must be viewed in the context of the ALP Leader's fearful declaration, *"If we lose this election, Crapaud smoke our pipe."*

That declaration, as is widely known was in acknowledgment of the implications of the documentation of the misdeeds of the entire ALP frontline leadership while holding high public office.

Since losing the Election, the ALP has embarked on a campaign to discredit

the election results and to challenge the legitimacy of the Government.

**Fellow Citizens and Residents of Antigua and Barbuda:**

Underlining the hypocrisy of their challenge to the legitimacy of the Government, it is widely reported that immediately after polling day, members of the leadership of the ALP began offering staggering sums of money to a number of United Progressive Party Members of Parliament as inducement for them to withdraw support from the UPP administration.

In one case, members of the ALP leadership presented a UPP MP with a substantial offer of money; together with a written declaration signed by the ALP members of Parliament, in which they pledged their support for him to become Prime Minister.

Having sold out the government, the people's patrimony, and the nation's sovereignty for next to nothing when they were in government, the same ALP frontline players are now attempting to bribe their way to another chance at government.

I am proud to say that that every candidate of the UPP whom the Antiguan and Barbudan people elected to the House of Parliament told the ALP leaders "Get thee, hence!"

Not for one moment did any of the UPP MPs who were importuned by the ALP give any thought to betraying the trust of the people who voted for the UPP ticket.

It is inherent to their involvement in politics through the United Progressive Party that our MPs are steadfast in their pledge to put the people and our country first.

Those who have been offering large sums of money as inducements for elected UPP parliamentarians to betray their party and the people are guilty of serious crimes.

That level of venality is without precedent and without parallel in our region.

They have shamed our nation.

They continue to bring our country into international disrepute with a flood of fictions in the regional media and on the Internet, such as the prevarication that voter turnout in the St. John's Rural West constituency was in excess of 98 percent.

**Fellow Citizens and Residents of Antigua and Barbuda:**

I expect that the Ministry of National Security will consider the ongoing impact of incitements on Hate Radio and other ALP political platforms which may have the effect of creating public mischief, and which may incite civil disorder.

The need for and the duty of Defending the Nation, the Government's dominant campaign theme and the title of the UPP's Agenda for the Second Term, is crystalised and given focused effect in the newly created Ministry of National Security.

The essential functions of the Ministry of National Security are not unlike those of the Department of Homeland Security in the United States, which was established after the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon.

The Ministry of National Security has responsibility for public peace and safety; protecting property, preventing, investigating and prosecuting crime, including narcotics and money

laundering; citizenship; immigration; work permits; and maintaining the security of our borders.

I expect the relevant agencies of the government to investigate the matters I have raised with you this evening, and to bring to justice those who are attempting to undermine the will of the voters and subvert our parliamentary system, which is the bedrock of our democracy.

**Fellow Citizens and Residents of Antigua and Barbuda:**

I think it is fitting to conclude with the pledges sworn by the candidates of the United Progressive Party when we began the year with the Big Blue Wave on Nevis Street on Sunday January 4th.

Sixteen strong and united in voice and in purpose we pledged, and I quote:

- To be the servants of the people, always putting the people first;
- To so conscientiously manage the resources of our nation, that we will leave no one behind;
- To give all citizens a voice in shaping decisions that will affect their lives;
- To hold transparency, accountability and integrity as our watchwords;

- To defend and strengthen our country's institutions of democracy;
- To respect the law and to work to ensure equal justice for all.

We pledged to work to make Antigua and Barbuda a land blessed with peace and security;

With prosperity and opportunity for all; A land where there are no second class citizens;

Where all Antigua and Barbuda's sons and daughters, native born and immigrant, embrace one another as One Family.

The General Election might have temporarily rent that family asunder.

It is time for all of Antigua and Barbuda's sons and daughters to become involved in bringing the nation together again as one family.

We must not let the self-serving agendas of a few destroy our nation.

May God bring us together and keep us together as one family.

May God bless Antigua and Barbuda.

Thank you

**Antigua and Barbuda Romantic Rhythms Music Festival postponed until 2010**

On the 14<sup>th</sup> April 2009 the Hon. Eleston Adams, Minister of State in The Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation and Culture today announced the postponement of The Second Annual Antigua and Barbuda Romantic Rhythms International Music Festival 2009.

The rescheduling of the event has been attributed to the worsening global economic crisis.

Last year, the event was held from June 12 - 15 at The Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, where the stadium was transformed into a

haven of romance with world renowned international artistes performing to capacity crowds. Breathtaking performances by Lionel Richie, Kenny Rogers, Brian McKnight, and Keyshia Cole alongside other first class regional and local artistes set the benchmark for future festivals.

The festival received extensive coverage via a range of international and regional media organizations.

Minister Adams indicated that many options were considered prior to taking the final decision to postpone the festival.

Scaling back the number of artists, reducing the number of days, using only regional performers were some of the options put on the table for consideration. Ultimately, it was decided that to alter the standard would only serve to damage the Romantic Rhythms brand.

"It was a very difficult decision to postpone Romantic Rhythms 2009 but given the current economic crisis we feel it is the prudent thing to do. We set a very high standard for our first year. Significant resources were put into marketing the event and establishing the Romantic Rhythms brand. Since we do not have the resources this year to match or better that standard set in 2008, we feel that the event should be postponed. This will allow us to maintain the brand equity that was built last year and give us an opportunity to focus our resources on planning for an even more spectacular event in 2010," said Adams.

Negotiations are already in progress to secure the best international performers for 2010. The new dates and line-up will be announced in the near future.

## LIGHTHOUSE BAY RESORT, BARBUDA, OFFERS UP-CLOSE EXPERIENCE AT WORLD'S LARGEST FRIGATE BIRD SANCTUARY REACHABLE ONLY BY BOAT

Lighthouse Bay Resort, an exclusive private island getaway in Barbuda, just a 15-minute flight from Antigua, provides its guests with an up close and personal encounter with the world's largest frigate bird sanctuary. Reachable only by boat and just 15 minutes from Lighthouse Bay, the nesting grounds are home to more than 5,000 frigate birds and 170 other bird species. The one-hour excursion is priced at \$54 for two people and \$10 for each additional person.

In mating season, from September to April, the male frigate bird displays a huge red breast to attract a female mate. They lay on one egg on a nest built precariously in the mangroves. Frigate birds cannot walk or swim. They soar high in the clouds, live solely on fish and often steal fish from other birds.

Lighthouse Bay Resort features nine luxuriously-appointed ocean-front guest rooms and suites with private balconies, highly personalized service from a staff of 25, resident gourmet chef and masseuse, 24-hour concierge, roof-top restaurant with 360-degree ocean views and 14 miles of pristine white and pink sand beach.

All elegant and spacious guest rooms and suites include lavish leather and mahogany furnishings, flat screen TV with satellite reception, iPod compatible surround-sound stereo, wireless Internet and in-room laptop, personal safe, bathrobes, illuminated make-up mirror, hair dryer, original watercolour paintings from local artist Stephen Murphy, daily housekeeping and evening turn-down service.

Guests dine on locally prepared dishes using fresh Caribbean produce and catches from the sea. Three meals, plus snacks, and drinks are all included. The resort was recently recognized by Islands Magazine as among The Top Seven Spots That Promise A True Escape From Everything and by The New York Times as Number 3 of 39 Reasons To Go To the Caribbean in 2009.

Lighthouse Bay Resort is base camp to explore Barbuda's tranquility and signature activities of sailing, diving, snorkeling, kayaking, lobster fishing, exploring hidden caves and bays, shell hunting and horseback riding. Tours are available to the world renowned Frigate Bird Sanctuary, Spanish Point, Two Foot Bay and Darby Caves.

## **CARIBBANA** MAY 28TH TO JUNE 1ST **BARBUDA**

### Barbuda's Pink Sand Beach rated one of the Best Remote Beaches in the World

Our sister isle, Barbuda, has once again been recognized for its spectacular un-spoilt beaches.

According to travel website, [Trave.AOL.com](http://Trave.AOL.com), Pink Beach, located in Barbuda, is considered one of the "Best Remote Beaches Around The World".

The [website's](#) feature on hidden beaches in warm weather destinations had this to say: "Essentially one huge sandbar, this flamingo-hued swath extends eight miles from Palmetto Point towards Spanish Point, at the southern end. About the only people who stroll Pink Beach are guests from

the handful of small hotels that sit on it."

"We are quite pleased to receive this industry recognition," said CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, Colin C. James, who also noted that this particular beach had received numerous commendations in the past, such as placing amongst Condé Nast Traveler's listing of the [World's Best Beaches](#).

"It proves beyond a doubt that our beaches are the unique selling proposition that attract visitors to select Antigua and Barbuda as their vacation destination. Our job is to make sure that everyone knows about the breathtaking beauty that nature has blest us with and that we combine this gift with unsurpassed hospitality that will make our visitors return time and time again."

Barbuda was the only Caribbean Island named, amongst the 12 other worldwide destination. Antigua and Barbuda boasts of 365 beaches, one

for every day of the year, with a wide array of facilities and activities to suit the needs of any beach-goer. The country is recognized throughout the world as one of the best beach destinations



## COMMONWEALTH DAY

**MONDAY 9 MARCH 2009**

### **A Message from Her Majesty The Queen, Head of the Commonwealth**

This year the Commonwealth commemorates its foundation sixty years ago. The London Declaration of 1949 was the start of a new era in which our member countries committed themselves to work together, in partnership and as equals, towards a shared future.

We can rightly celebrate the fact that the founding members' vision of the future has become a reality. The Commonwealth has evolved out of all recognition from its beginning. It has helped give birth to modern nations, and the eight original countries have become fifty-three. We are now home to nearly two billion people: a third of the world's population. Across continents and oceans, we have come to represent all the rich diversity of humankind.

Yet despite its size and scale, the Commonwealth to me has been sustained during all this change by the continuity of our mutual values and goals. Our beliefs in freedom, democracy and human rights; equality and equity; development and prosperity mean as much today as they did more than half a century ago.

These values come from a common responsibility exercised by our governments and peoples. It is this which makes the Commonwealth a family of nations and peoples, at ease with being together. As a result, I believe we are inspired to do our best to meet people's most pressing needs, and to develop a truly global perspective. That is why the modern Commonwealth has stood the test of time.

But as we reflect upon our long association, we should recognize the challenges that lie ahead. Nearly one billion people of today's Commonwealth are under 25 years of age. These are the people that this association must continue to serve in the future. It is they who can help shape the Commonwealth of today, and whose children will inherit the Commonwealth of tomorrow. To help them make the best of their opportunities, our young men and women therefore need the opportunity to become active and responsible members of the communities in which they live. I am pleased that the Commonwealth recognizes this, and is determined to continue to put young people at its centre.

The call that brought the Commonwealth together in 1949 remains the same today. Then we joined together in a collective spirit – built on lasting principles, wisdom, energy and creativity – to meet the great tasks of our times. As the Commonwealth celebrates its sixtieth birthday, its governments, communities and we as individuals should welcome that achievement. Together, we should continue to work hard to deal with today's challenges so that the young people of today's Commonwealth can realize their aspirations. In that way, we can look to the future with confidence.

**ELIZABETH R**  
9 March 2009

## COMMONWEALTH DAY

**MONDAY 9 MARCH 2009**

### **A Message from Commonwealth Secretary- General Kamallesh Sharma**

In 2009, we celebrate the fact that the modern Commonwealth is 60 years old. Its antecedence is much longer, stretching back to the 1870s. Its future can be longer still, if it is true to its theme for 2009: *thecommonwealth@60 – serving a new generation*.

The Commonwealth has stood the test of time. It stands tall as an organisation of shared values, dedicated to protecting and advancing its principles. It has been flexible and dynamic in meeting the changing challenges of its times, and sensitive to the needs of its smaller and weaker members. It has always been a part of the wider global community. As a champion of democracy, development and diversity, the Commonwealth has a powerful story to tell. It is bonded together as a community both of governments and of peoples.

The London Declaration of 1949, which brought us into being, saw the far-sightedness of eight countries constituting themselves anew. In so doing, they made the Commonwealth the first real example of an international community representing a collective, consultative, mutually respectful approach to international relations. Nehru put it this way: 'if you approach another country in a friendly way, with goodwill and generosity, you will be paid back in the same coin, and probably in even larger measure'. Of such vision was the Commonwealth born.

Yet our greater task this year is to look straight ahead – and ask how we can continue serving a new generation in 2009 and beyond.

What sort of 21st Century will our young people inherit? Will they know greater peace and prosperity than their parents? Will they exercise their most basic entitlements to food and education, health-care, a vote?

The Commonwealth has always had an eye on the people and the tasks of tomorrow. Now, it must be prescient again in safeguarding and promoting the guarantors of the best hopes for its future: its young people.

At the international level, the Commonwealth can argue that young people be both seen and heard at the global decision-making table, and that the planet itself must be preserved for their use. At the national level, the views of young people must be heard and acted upon in every corner of public life, and the contributions of the young should be embraced. At the community level, we should continue to instil in young people a sense of shared responsibility. At the level of individual young people, we must continue to build both skills and a sense of self-belief. These pressing tasks share the urgency of the times.

The Commonwealth's diamond anniversary year is about celebrating, reflecting – and *serving a new generation*.

## Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority appoints Hilary Modeste as new Director of Tourism for UK and Europe

The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority has appointed Peter Hilary Modeste as the new Director of Tourism for the UK & Europe. He will be taking over from Carol Hay who will be joining the Caribbean Tourism Organisation as European Marketing Director. Modeste is highly qualified for the position with fifteen years experience in the tourism industry having most recently worked as Director of Marketing Worldwide for Jolly Beach Resort & Spa in Antigua.

After serving as the Executive Vice President of the St. Lucia Hotel and Tourism Association, Modeste joined the St. Lucia Tourist Board as Director of Tourism for St Lucia, working for over nine years, making him the longest serving Director for the island.

Modeste assumes his responsibilities on 1 April 2009 and brings extensive marketing experience and business acumen to the role.

His key responsibilities will be to develop and implement all marketing, advertising and public relations strategies in order to strengthen Antigua and Barbuda's position and brand in the UK and Europe. In

addition, he will maintain effective relationships with airlines, tour operators, travel agents and stakeholders, organise and participate in trade and consumer events throughout the UK and Europe plus coordinate familiarisation tours and press trips to Antigua and Barbuda, whilst leading a dynamic team of professional staff.

Peter Hilary Modeste's distinguished career also includes roles as Executive Producer of St. Lucia Jazz. While serving as Executive Vice President of the St. Lucia Hotel and Tourism Association, he was elected Chairperson of the Caribbean Hotel Association Executives for the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA). Modeste has also held many positions within the St. Lucia Government throughout his established career including Director of the St. Lucia Marketing Board and President of the St. Lucia Teachers Union.

Modeste comments; "I am looking forward to this new position with the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, and to working closely with the UK and European partners, including the airlines, tour operators

and hoteliers, in order to promote Antigua and Barbuda. I am confident that with their support and together with various new initiatives, Antigua and Barbuda will remain one of the top Caribbean destinations for UK and European visitors."

Modeste will report directly to the CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, Mr. Colin C. James, who adds, "Mr. Modeste brings a unique wealth of experience in Caribbean tourism marketing, and a wide network of industry contacts, which are vital ingredients to the Antigua and Barbuda's efforts to effectively combat the difficulties that we now face in the industry. He has a strong track-record of delivering quick results which is exactly what is required right now. I also look forward to working with Hilary to build the capacity of our UK & European offices which is necessary to take the marketing and promotion of Antigua and Barbuda to the next level."

Modeste holds an Honours Degree in Economics from the University of Wales, Cardiff.

## Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority appoints new Tourism Officer for the UK

The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority has announced the appointment of Mr. Joel Henry as Tourism Officer for the UK.

Henry previously worked as Administration Assistant for the Stanford Development Company where he developed strong administration skills, alongside

accountancy and organisational knowledge.

Previous roles include Flight Operations Officer for Caribbean Star Airlines, where he coordinated flight plans as well as serving as a Customer Service Agent at the same organisation.

Henry upholds a high standard of customer service, having received extensive airline training which he can bring to his new role at the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority in the UK.

As a Tourism Officer, Henry will assist both the Marketing & Administration Manager, Miss

Cherrie Osborne and Antigua and Barbuda's Director of Tourism for UK & Europe, Hilary Modeste.

Colin C. James, Chief Executive Officer of the new Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, commented on the appointments: "I am extremely pleased with the appointment of Joel Henry who will undoubtedly add tremendous value to the operations of the UK office. It demonstrates that the new Tourism Authority is serious about providing the resources required to effectively market and promote our twin island destination. I wish Joel every success in his new role."



Tributes to the late Dr. Ivor Heath  
and  
Senator the Hon. Lionel Gomes  
by  
The Hon. W. Baldwin Spencer  
Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda



“On behalf of the Government and People of Antigua and Barbuda and on the behalf of my wife Jackie and myself, I extend deep sympathies to the families of the late Dr. Keithley Ivor MacDonald Heath and Senator the Hon. Lionel Gomes.

Both distinguished sons of the soil have demonstrated throughout their lifetime an unwavering desire to build a solid foundation for the young nation of Antigua and Barbuda.

On Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April, the Nation of Antigua and Barbuda accorded these men the honour they deserve in two separate Official Funerals at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and the Spring Gardens Moravian Church.

Dr. Keithley Ivor MacDonald Heath has served the nation of Antigua and Barbuda for over thirty years in the medical profession and later the political movement in Antigua and Barbuda. His contributions to the nation in advocating the rights of women through the planned parenthood movement, is also commendable.

Dr. Ivor Heath’s service in the medical profession, serving as Chief Surgeon

at Holberton Hospital, founder of the Adelin Clinic and President and Medical Director of the Antigua Planned Parenthood Association, contributed significantly to the development of health care in Antigua and Barbuda and the nation as a whole.

His love and passion for the nation were highly demonstrated in his private, political and medical life. As a politician and founding member of the UNDP of which I was also part, Dr. Heath was always dedicated to serving his fellow Antiguans and Barbudans. He has always demonstrated a strong commitment to the cause of putting the people’s interest first.

He will always remain one of Antigua and Barbuda’s brightest and patriotic sons.

Senator the Hon. Lionel Gomes was always a tower of strength within the political movement of Antigua and Barbuda.

His days within the trade union movement and later in the political arena are highlighted by a sense of love of country and others before self.

His work can be characterized as one based on trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, courage, caring and citizenship, founded deeply in the principle that God must be central to one’s actions.

Because of his tireless efforts, the Antigua and Barbuda Workers Union, the United Progressive Party and our nation are all the better today.

The phrase “Wicked Set of People” which originated with Senator Gomes, was not just a catch phrase for him, it was what he truly believed and travelled the length and breadth of this country to making sure that it was heard and understood by all.

He believed firmly that wrongs committed on a nation and its people must be depicted as evil acts, hence his constant refrain of wicked set of people.

Our nation has lost a dedicated and honest son – Senator Lionel Gomes will surely be missed.

May the souls of our departed brothers Dr. Ivor Heath and Senator the Hon. Lionel Gomes rest in eternal peace.”

## NOTICE

**Due to circumstances beyond our control the Antigua and Barbuda High Commission will not participate at the International Social Services Fair (ISS) on the 12th and 13th May 2009. See you at the Commonwealth Countries League (CCL) Fair on the 17th October 2009 at the Kensington Town Hall.**

## Panel Discussions on The Reform of International Institutions

Ladies and gentlemen, today's topic is one which is of tremendous interest to each citizen of the developing world, more so the "Bottom Billion". There are events which are happening over which the citizens of Small Developing States have little chance to influence but whose impact can wipe out many decades of development and improvements in our standard of living.

The world today is a very different place to five years ago. Nonetheless many of the International Institutions have structures and policies whose framework relate to a timeframe beyond that period. Four institutions should come under the spotlight during any review. These are the United Nations (UN), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

In the short time allowed, I would not be able to spend as much time as I would have liked on each institution individually. Let me before reviewing each of the above institution, however, make several observations which can and should be used to determine the effectiveness and fit for purpose of each of these bodies.

The world has become a tightly linked eco-system. Each component of this network being affected and at the same time influencing its surrounding linked parts. The interdependence of the respective components is clearly demonstrated in the speed by which the current financial crisis spread within each region and across the world.

The campaign for change in any one of these institutions is not to discard the fact that some organisations have adjusted over the years. In fact at the UN, there have been over twenty (20) attempts at reforming the workings of various aspects of the UN operations over the last sixteen years. In the 1992-94 period, the Blue-Ribbon Commission on Global Governance reflected a concern "that the major institutions (and especially the UN) must be strengthened". I ask strengthened to achieve what?

When we talk of reform, what really are our intentions? Are we requesting an

examination of the management of that institution? There is clear evidence that much concern exist about the cost, staffing, selection of key personnel and other resource factors. Why then, we ask, should the Head of the IMF or WB be restricted to the citizen of a select group of member territories? Are we being guided by the oft invisibly inscribed tenet that he who pays the lion share can demand the greater pound of flesh?

The attack in Iraq in defiance of the Security Council raises many questions of the mandate of the UN as a safeguard of the fundamental rights of the sovereignty of nations, and the institution to which any member state can make its appeal if aggrieved. There that member must be assured of a fair hearing and a speedy resolution of its grievance with its neighbour. To whom do the citizens of the world appeal when their rights and even their lives are trampled upon by leaders who ignore fundamental principles of good governance? Why do these institutions appear powerless to enforce fairness and safe-guard basic human rights?

In some of these institutions, the debate focuses on who should be in the inner circle and who should be on the periphery. Any reform should therefore result in the creation of new rules of engagement developed in an atmosphere of open and inclusive dialogue.

The critical test of any modern international institution should include the following:

- How it improves the quality of life of the people of the world
- How it guarantees security, health and education for all
- How it reduces poverty and increase self-esteem among all classes of people
- How it is funded and governed
- How to keep fundamental human rights at the heart of its raison d'être
- How it ensures the protection of the environment and finally
- How relevant and current is that institution. (By this I mean how fairly



**HE Dr Carl Roberts at the Panel Discussions organised by the Commonwealth Policy Studies Union (CPSU)**

does it reflect the make-up of today's world).

Let me now set the framework through which I will deal with the topic before me. I will be forced to use the term small states and developing states or countries interchangeably.

Small Developing States today participate in many fora. They are members of the G77, the Commonwealth, as well as integral members of many regional grouping of sovereign states. The islands in the Caribbean Sea form two groupings, the smaller being the Organisation of eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and its larger grouping the Caribbean Community (Caricom). The population of these states range from 45,000 for St. Kitts and Nevis to 2.2 million for Jamaica, with my own country of Antigua and Barbuda having a population of just 80,000.

The principal reason for coming together to form larger blocs is inherent with the desire to survive in the wider arena. The old saying hold true here as well as anywhere else: "there is strength in numbers". It is really sad to realise that in spite of this coming together, the ability to influence the global paradigm is not assured.

President Olusegun Obasanjo of the Republic of Nigeria had this to say about the G77 "The formation of this Group was in response to the challenges of poverty, underdevelopment, poor coordination among developing countries in the face of the general trend to be excluded from the march of progress as primarily determined by the more affluent nations of the North, all

*Continue on page 17*

## Stanford International Bank Limited placed into Liquidation

Nigel Hamilton-Smith and Peter Wastell, Client Partners at Vantis Business Recovery Services, a division of Vantis, the UK accounting, tax and business advisory group, were appointed as joint liquidators for Stanford International Bank Limited (SIB or 'the Bank') on 15 April 2009 by an Order of the High Court of Antigua and Barbuda. Stanford Trust Company Limited remains in receivership and the receiver's continue with their investigations.

The liquidation proceedings have commenced following the receivership

of SIB, during which time the receivers concluded that it had become clear that the Bank's assets were significantly less than its liabilities. Commenting, Nigel Hamilton-Smith said: "It quickly became apparent that there were a large number of investors seeking to withdraw funds and the Bank's cash reserves were wholly inadequate. It is also now apparent, that the assets of SIB are insufficient to meet the level of liabilities."

At this time the liquidators are unable to forecast the extent of the deficiency, but it is likely to be substantial. The liquidator's role is to continue to identify and realise the assets of SIB, agree the claims of the creditors and investors and, in due course, effect a distribution of realised assets.

Hamilton-Smith continues: "We appreciate this is a difficult time for SIB investors. Unfortunately, to ensure the fair distribution of assets, it is crucial all SIB accounts remain frozen while we continue in our efforts to locate and realise the assets of SIB, which are held in numerous jurisdictions worldwide. This is an extremely complex task and we regret that it is very unlikely that any distribution of SIB assets will be made in the determinable future."

Further communications will be issued when practicable.

**For further information investors and creditors should visit [www.vantisplc.com/Stanford](http://www.vantisplc.com/Stanford) or email [stanfordenquiries@vantisplc.com](mailto:stanfordenquiries@vantisplc.com)**

## UWI Officials Pay Courtesy Call On Education Minister

On Wednesday 15th April, two officials from the University of the West Indies School of Continuing Education paid a courtesy call on Education Minister Dr.



*(l to r) Education Minister Dr. the Hon. Jacqui Quinn-Leandro, Mr. Ian Benn Head of UWI EMD Antigua and Programme Officer Allison Hull of UWI*

the Hon. Jacqui Quinn-Leandro. Head of the University Centre Antigua Ian Benn and Programme Officer for UWI Open Campus Allison Hull, updated Dr. Leandro on the current work of the open campus, their plans for the upcoming academic year, and the challenges they encounter. There was

also discussion on plans for the university to play a more prominent role in campus education services in the region.

Dr. Leandro said government's vision for the establishment of the University of Antigua and Barbuda will be shared with UWI's Vice Chancellor Professor E. Nigel Harris, when he visits sometime in the future.

The University of Antigua and Barbuda is a campaign promise by the UPP administration, as outlined in the "Defending the Nation" manifesto. It will be established in collaboration with the University of the West Indies, with existing tertiary-level institutions providing the initial platform.

The Education Minister noted that as a member of the Alumni of the University of the West Indies, she is more than happy to assist in whatever way she can in her capacity as Education Minister to advance the cause of the institution.



*Education Minister accepts gift from Mr. Ian Benn of the UWI Extra Mural Department*

She pointed out that building the country's human resource capacity is of paramount importance, hence the need to improve the level of service offered by the university to the public.

The meeting was described as successful, as Dr. Leandro continues to familiarize herself with the workings in the education system.



**Statement by  
Honourable Harold  
Lovell  
Minister of Finance, the  
Economy and Public  
Administration**

**April 23, 2009.....** Upon assuming the reins of Government in March 2004, the United Progressive Party Administration was cognizant of the fact that the fiscal situation was dire and unsustainable. Consequently a process of fiscal transformation was instituted, commencing with Revenue Reform which included a reform of our tax structure and of our revenue administration.

We have, for the most part, completed our tax reforms with the re-introduction of the Personal Income Tax, the introduction of the Antigua and Barbuda Sales Tax, and a reformulation of the Property Tax. Institutional strengthening initiatives with respect to our Revenue Administration agencies remain ongoing.

It was the intention of the UPP administration that its next five years in office would be dedicated to reform on the expenditure side of the fiscal equation; however, given the global economic crisis and the attendant effect on our fiscal situation, it has become imperative that we move with purpose and with urgency to effect the necessary reforms and adjustments that are required at this time, in order to return us to a sustainable path.

These are indeed unprecedented times. The global recession is severely affecting our major trading partners, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Continental Europe and our CARICOM Countries, with a harsh and relentless impact on our economy and by extension the revenue streams derived from our major earner, Tourism. In combating this very hostile economic environment, the options available at this time to Antigua and Barbuda are limited. In this regard, we are unable to rely on the good will and generosity of

friendly countries, who themselves are undergoing severe fiscal challenges and constraints. In addition, financial institutions that, in the past, have been a source of financing for the Government are themselves experiencing liquidity issues.

It was in this context that, under my directive, and with full authority under the Finance Administration Act, the Financial Secretary issued a Circular to Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments, outlining a number of critical measures that must be implemented without delay. The implementation of the measures outlined has received the full blessing of the Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda and is an initial step in the development of a fiscal consolidation programme. The Ministry of Finance presented a menu of options that would form part of the fiscal consolidation programme for the consideration of Cabinet. These include measures to address procurement practices, the management of government vehicles, the utility of rental quarters and the consumption of energy. Over the medium term the process of Public Sector Transformation will have to be embarked upon with the aim of having in place an efficient, cost-effective, client-oriented Public Service. However, at this point, the Government is not contemplating any reduction in the public sector except for the normal attrition. It is our expectation that the fiscal consolidation measures will lead to some level of stability towards the end of 2009 and going into 2010 as long as the global situation does not deteriorate further.

The Government intends to unfold for consultation a broader plan to be called the National Economic and Social Transformation (NEST) Plan. The four major components of this plan are the fiscal consolidation programme, an economic stimulus package, financial sector stability, and a comprehensive social safety net.

The objective of the NEST Plan would be to strategically address our fiscal and socio-economic concerns, fully



**Honourable Harold Lovell  
Minister of Finance, the Economy and  
Public Administration**

cognizant that we, as a small and open economy, have limited policy options.

In this connection, the NEST Plan will be refined through widespread consultation with the general public, including Non-governmental organizations, Community based organizations, Private Sector organizations, and with Regional and Sub-regional partners, as well as with bi-lateral and multilateral stakeholders. At this moment, the Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda is putting the necessary mechanisms in place in order to facilitate the development and implementation of the NEST Plan once we would have completed consultations.

The economic conundrum that confronts us requires that the solution be grounded in a national response. There are those who will view the current circumstances simply as an opportunity for political posturing and partisanship, rather than an occasion for accord and consensus. The Government however, shall remain focused and committed to the goal of national economic, social and fiscal transformation, and in this regard, and with the constructive assistance of all stakeholders, shall lead the effort in achieving this goal.

*Continued from page 14*  
 within an environment devastated by the Cold War and confrontation between the two Blocs, as they were. It is a sad reflection indeed that the challenges then remain by and large the same challenges of today, albeit in an environment without Cold War but one with proliferation of inter- and intra-state conflicts and engulfed in a globalization process that is marginalizing the South."

I will first focus on the UN for a short while. The UN today comprises some 192 member states with most of them achieving member status on attaining independence or shortly thereafter. Antigua and Barbuda joined the UN on the 11th November 1981 shortly after achieving full independence on the 1st November 1981.

Small Developing States look to the UN and attach significant priority and importance to the following:-

- To solve the developmental objectives of developing countries
- To promote international cooperation for economic and social development
- To the General Assembly to provide leadership to ensure fulfilment of social and economic goals enunciated in the Charter of the UN
- For transparency and democracy in the relations between the nations of the world
- To protect human rights and the dignity of mankind

Areas of suggested reform include:

1. Human Rights Council
2. Peacebuilding Commission
3. Secretariat/Management reform
4. Development/ECOSOC reform
5. Security Council Reform
6. System-Wide Coherence
7. General Assembly Revitalization
8. HIV/AIDS
9. UN Democracy Fund
10. Central Emergency Response Fund
11. UNCTAD

The Human Rights Council was revamped in March of 2006 and the Peacebuilding Commission in December 2005.

The Secretary-General of the UN sums up the desire of many citizens of the world in his statement of UN reform: "Every day we are reminded of the need for a strengthened United Nations, as we face a growing array of new challenges, including humanitarian crises, human rights violations, armed conflicts and important health and

environmental concerns. Seldom has the United Nations been called upon to do so much for so many. I am determined to breathe new life and inject renewed confidence into a strengthened United Nations firmly anchored in the twenty-first century, and which is effective, efficient, coherent and accountable."

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

We all should fully accept this statement and ask the questions what changes should we expect, how will they be implemented and when will we see the requisite changes. For the longer this is in coming, the more disastrous will be the consequence for many of the peoples of this world. I am fully aware that progress is being made for earlier this year, the Secretary-General signed performance pacts with his chief operating officers to improve transparency and accountability. This is happening while efforts continue to make the institution more cost effective.

The World Bank is one of the vital sources of financial and technical assistance to developing countries. According to the details on its website its mission is to help developing countries and their people reach the development goals by working with its partners to alleviate poverty. It addresses global challenges in ways that advance an inclusive and sustainable globalization—that overcome poverty, enhance growth with care for the environment, and create individual opportunity and hope.

The three institutions of the World Bank that Small States become members of are the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) with 185 members, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) with 181 members and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) with 173. Most Caribbean states joined the IBRD after independence with Jamaica being the first in 1963 having obtained independence in 1962 and finally St. Kitts and Nevis in 1984. Antigua and Barbuda joined the IBRD in 1983, the IFC in 1987 and the MIGA in 2005. Each of the countries in the Caribbean region except Guyana was deemed a middle-income state and did not qualify for assistance with debt relief.

The Challenge which is faced by the WB is that Middle-income countries are still home to most of the world's poor people, often with a heavy concentration in

specific regions or ethnic groups. These countries are generally creditworthy and have some access to financial markets, but they face constraints in mobilizing the funds they need to invest in infrastructure and essential services. They also need help to reform policies and institutions in ways that improve the investment climate.

The World Bank Group claims that it is working to meet middle-income countries' specific needs with tailored assistance that draws on an array of competitive financial products and knowledge and learning services. These countries are also increasingly important partners in its work to address critical cross-border and global issues, such as clean energy, trade integration, environmental protection, international financial stability, and the fight against infectious diseases.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an organization of 185 countries, working to foster global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth, and reduce poverty around the world. The IMF's fundamental mission is to help ensure stability in the international system. It does so in three ways: keeping track of the global economy and the economies of member countries; lending to countries with balance of payments difficulties; and giving practical help to members.

To assist mainly low- and middle-income countries in effectively managing their economies, the IMF provides practical guidance and training on how to upgrade institutions, and design appropriate macroeconomic, financial, and structural policies.

The concerted opinion of the G77 is that the way in which "the WB and the IMF are managed is also inimical to bringing about productive change (i.e. reform). Rarely does management in the IMF and WB aim at achieving a genuine and effective service orientation on the part of staff towards their clients and shareholders. Their performance is measured by effort rather than outcome. When the outcomes are opposite to those expected, that is invariably the fault of incompetent, insincere, unprincipled and politically supine governments; never the fault of the IFIs in designing and advocating the wrong (occasionally lethal) prescriptions.

*Continue on page 19*

## PM Spencer Meets with Integration Project Team

In pursuit of their mandate to develop a comprehensive report on the project on the establishment of a single economy and appropriate political integration between Trinidad and Tobago and Eastern Caribbean States, the integration project team led by Dr Vaughan Lewis arrived in Antigua yesterday for consultations with the Prime Minister and other senior officials.

The project team assigned to Antigua and Barbuda comprised Ambassador Cuthbert Joseph of Trinidad and Tobago and Ambassador Earl Huntley of St Lucia, apart from Dr Lewis himself. The full project team also included Dr Wayne Sandiford, Dr Velma Newton, and Dr Carl Mitchell.

Dr Lewis explained that his team had come to examine the prospects and constraints on the development of a single economy between the countries of the eastern Caribbean, including appropriate arrangements for the metropolitan overseas territories in the single space such as Guadeloupe and Martinique. In his presentation Dr Lewis emphasized that the integration project was intended to work in tandem with current arrangements, including CSME, OECS economic union and CARIFORUM obligations.

The team is expected to look at issues relating to monetary cooperation; current migration patterns; human resource requirements; social security viability; air and maritime transportation, including utilization of maritime spaces for fisheries, energy and environmental uses; as well as the security, political, constitutional and international



**Prime Minister Spencer and the Integration Team at the Office of the Prime Minister**

*Digital photo compliments Ambassador Colin Murdoch*

relations configurations necessary for success.

Prime Minister Spencer welcomed such a distinguished team to Antigua and Barbuda and recalled the public service given by the team members in various capacities in the past. He stated that while Antigua and Barbuda endorsed the concept of the regional integration project, he cautioned the team that particular attention had to be paid to the current global economic crisis and its effects on the region in order to truly assess the project's viability.

Mr Spencer spoke of the OECS economic union project, which has been launched already in several of the OECS member states. He confirmed that there was much work to be done under that project with the current deadline of December 2009. In addition, the Prime Minister drew attention to the fact that many aspects of the CSME

commitments remained still to be implemented, and that completing all the legal, administrative and financial actions required was proving a challenge, especially for some of the smaller administrations in the grouping.

The meeting engaged in a wide-ranging discussion which addressed the challenges of the current OECS and CSME arrangements especially the regional institutions.

The meeting was also attended by Ambassadors Colin Murdoch and Clarence Henry of the Ministry of Finance.

After the engaging exchanges, Dr Lewis committed to returning with his team to Antigua and Barbuda soon in order to advance the consultations even further.

### DR. CORT DELIVERS TO CLARE HALL CLINIC!

On Wednesday April 22nd Dr. Errol Cort, UPP's candidate for St. John's Rural East, delivered on one more of his promises to assist the Clare Hall Clinic with a fully loaded computer for their record-keeping department. Dr. Cort also used the occasion to inform the staff that he

has already sourced an ambulance (in keeping with his promise to keep upgrading the facility so that the elderly can get to and from the clinic and/or Mt. St. John's Hospital quickly) in the event of any emergencies.

Dr. Maria Pereira accepted the computer on behalf of the clinic and thanked Dr. Cort for his tireless contributions to the community.



**Senator the Honourable Dr Errol L. Cort, Minister of National Security**

**Continued from page 17**

This attitude is not difficult to understand when the IFIs have fallen into the unfortunate habit of acting as a higher tier of supra-national discipline with the power of sanctions over the governments to which they lend and whose performance they monitor.

The nature of these barriers to reform makes it difficult to challenge the presumption of reform being essential. To the contrary they make a powerful case for how urgently it is needed. No one seems to be arguing these days that the IFIs do NOT need reforming. Yet, though the need for reform is widely acknowledged, the case for reform is more muddled. Precisely what such reforms should embrace, and how they should be brought about, still eludes adequate definition, leave alone commanding wide consensus. Often talked about, whether grandiosely or incrementally, the shape of IFI reform is still perceived in a vague, ephemeral silhouette. It is discussed in generalities without concrete shape or form.

More often than not, whenever calls for reform -- of the IFIs, or the functioning of the international financial system, or of its architecture -- are made, the case is ineptly argued; even by the so-called experts. There is as yet no solid theoretical underpinning, political or economic, which is rigorously argued to provide an acceptable intellectual basis for significant reform. There has been no unifying theme behind the calls for reform which have been made recently, except that the world is now facing a series of financial crises with contagion effects which we do not seem to be able to anticipate or cope with properly. And, therefore, the IMF and WB must be reformed to do something about it."

There is much support for many of the above positions by members of the Caribbean Community. Often the statement is made that in our region the example of overreaching pressures by the above institutions and failures to realise the negative social impact of the consequences of their recommendations can be seen in Jamaica and Guyana. It is also felt that Jamaica has never recovered from fully adopting the recommendations of the

IMF during its period of difficulties in the 1970s.

The WTO began life on 1 January 1995, but its trading system is half a century older. Since 1948, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) had provided the rules for the system. (The second WTO ministerial meeting, held in Geneva in May 1998, included a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the system.)

The last and largest GATT round, was the Uruguay Round which lasted from 1986 to 1994 and led to the WTO's creation. Whereas GATT had mainly dealt with trade in goods, the WTO and its agreements now cover trade in services, and in traded inventions, creations and designs (intellectual property).

Antigua and Barbuda has been a member of this institution of 153 members since the 1st January 1995. Since the operation of this institution hinges on negotiation, in its current format size and economic influence matter significantly. Though there are provisions for developing and least-developing member states, the process of participation is costly and at times very demanding. If unable to resolve differences through negotiations, members resort to dispute resolution procedures. Here as we in Antigua and Barbuda have found out, getting a judgement in one's favour and changing the behaviour of the other party in the trade dispute is not so easily achieved.

There are four principles which in the eyes of developing countries are tenets of the operations of the WTO. They can be listed as follows:-

- One-member one-vote
- Consensus based voting
- Member-driver character
- The prevalence of informal processes

The application of these four tenets calls for a certain mode of behaviour between members. If a particular trading benefit is offered to one member then it is also available to all other WTO members. There are a few exceptions to this principle but these are only allowed under very strict conditions.

According to the South Centre speaking on behalf of G77 the application of these four tenets is fraught with problems for developing countries. The principle of one-member-one vote may allow a theoretical equality to developing countries with their more developed counterparts, but the consensus-based method of decision-making assumes the informed presence of developing countries in all meetings.

Many developing countries find that they are unable to fulfil this requirement and find themselves considerably disadvantaged in comparison to the developed countries that have large and well-prepared delegations. The member-driven character of the WTO means that the Secretariat is neither mandated to nor capable of giving developing countries the representation and assistance they need to be on par with the developed countries. As a result, the power asymmetries outside the institution also get translated into the decision-making processes of the WTO. The importance of informal processes in building consensus among over 140 members offers some important advantages, but also produces additional costs for developing countries. These costs include lack of transparency in extending invitations to small group meetings, certain protocols of interaction that have led delegates to speak of the 'English Club atmosphere' of the WTO, excessive reliance on the chairpersons as mediator and facilitator of the negotiations in the absence of rules and so forth. Finally, procedural issues, such as the timing and venue of the Ministerials, the nature of technical assistance, and problems of both omission and commission that derive from the nature of the WTO Secretariat also affect the participation of developing countries in an adverse way.<sup>1</sup>

The pictures I have painted appear very bleak for the involvement of small states in any international institution. There is one other institution which has taken up the fight on behalf of several small developing states and which represents a unique grouping of 53 countries of the world. The

<sup>1</sup> "South Centre 'WTO Decision-Making and Developing Countries'"

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Commonwealth is a very special grouping of rich and poor nations, developed and developing, a population size of around 1 billion people and a common principle of **consulting and co-operating in the common interests of their peoples and in the promotion of international understanding.**

The modern Commonwealth is sixty (60) years old this year and has in its lifetime magnified the voice of the under-privileged few. It was instrumental in the fight against apartheid, the restoration the rule of democracy in several member states and has now joined the cry for reform of the international institutions. In its Marlborough House Statement issued in London on the 10th June 2008 the Commonwealth Secretariat released the following action points:

- We intend to accelerate UN reforms and their effective implementation, as a matter of urgency, through lobbying and advocacy in the UN itself as well as other international for a

- We intend to pursue the redefining of the purposes and governance of the Bretton Woods Institutions, including working towards a Commonwealth consensus and wider international support for an international conference to achieve these goals.

- We intend to pursue the possibility of an international conference to achieve improved global environmental governance, including the possibility of a new international organisation or reform of existing arrangements, again working on the basis of a Commonwealth consensus and wider international support.

- We intend, individually and collectively, to carry forward our reform agenda to relevant international for a. We will seek to enlarge the breath of international commitment to our Commonwealth reform agenda, and call on others to join us in this endeavour.

I believe it their sixtieth year of existence, the Commonwealth is at the threshold of a new representational

paradigm which will result in a fairer world and a more participatory mode of organisational dynamics.

Let me finish by recapping just a few brief remarks on the four selected institutions.

1. The IMF and WB were formed to bring stability to a world in the 1940s that is very different to the interlinked globalised world of today. Though the objectives and ideals were, and still may be, deemed laudable, the level of discontent about many of the IMF and WB's projects has reached a resounding wail. For every instance where there is a case of success, critics point to at least one case where these institutions have caused tremendous dislocation and social disorder. Here are just a few areas where there could be reform:-

- a. The institutions need to be less intrusive
- b. There should be a widening of the criteria used to measure success
- c. There should be more recognition of the social impact of policy implementation and assistance offered.

2. The UN needs to restore its credibility. Once again this institution has done much good work, but it is constantly being challenged to put down criticism of its effectiveness in addressing some of the world's current crises. Its officers are sometimes accused of corruption and other humanitarian abuses all of which take away from its acceptance. Here then are a few suggested areas of reform :

- a. Widen the representation on the Security Council especially the permanent members (currently 5) and the non-permanent members (currently 10).
- b. Limit the application of veto power by the permanent members to very specific cases.
- c. Improve the performance and effectiveness of its many subsidiaries
- d. Reduce waste and corruption

3. The WTO is the only international institution dealing with the global rules of trade between nations. It attempts to

ensure the smooth flow of trade between trading partners, to reduce protectionism and safeguard the rights of all parties to the transaction. Here too are a few areas where reform is needed:-

- a. Reduce all attempts to use size to circumvent natural justice and decisions of the dispute settlement tribunals.
  - b. Avoid at all cost attempt to form exclusive mini-groups.
- Let me end by leaving you with this quotation:

'History has shown that the greatest dangers to international stability often arise from those nations whose real power is inadequately reflected in the relevant sets of international arrangements and symbols of status therein. Such nations can challenge the legitimacy of the system with actions as well as rhetoric. Much of the current call for a new international economic order flows directly from such concerns, and a major need in the current phase of institution-building is to bring developing countries into effective participation in the international system.

First, serious and sustained attention must be paid to their substantive concerns. In terms of broad objectives, this requires the international economic system to attach priority to issues of income and wealth distribution as well as the more traditional goals of efficiency and growth. A second essential step is to provide major developing countries with a role in the international decision-making process which corresponds to their sharply increased importance to the system. A third step is to go still further and bring selected "newcomers" into the inner circles of international decision-making.'

Quoted from: The Trilateral Commission (© 1976)

**HE Dr Carl Roberts  
High Commissioner  
Antigua and Barbuda  
Presented Monday 9th March, 2009**

*52nd Antigua Carnival Celebration  
July 23rd to August 4th, 2009*