



Cuba Initiative Chairman Welcomes Change in EU Position on Cuba

The Chairman of the Cuba Initiative has welcomed the decision by EU member states to change its approach to relations with Cuba. In a prepared statement Mr Ian Taylor MP (*pictured*) said that as Chairman of the Cuba Initiative representing a wide range of UK business, that he welcomed the decision at the European Council by EU leaders to scrap diplomatic sanctions against Cuba imposed in 2003.

"I had been pressing the British Foreign Secretary to play a positive role in this EU process and am pleased that he has done so.

The decision should encourage President Raul Castro to continue reforms of the Cuban economy and society. It will also improve the atmosphere and therefore assist EU representatives raising wider issues such as human rights with the Cuban Government.

This move gives UK businesses and organisations an opportunity to secure contracts, make investments and engage with health and voluntary bodies in Cuba before the next US Administration starts to recognise that its long standing anti-Cuba policy has not worked.

The signs are that the US may start next year to ease its embargo and hopefully lift its unacceptable attempts to prevent British companies dealing with Cuba.

Note: Ian Taylor made two official visits to Cuba in 1994 and 1996 as a DTI Minister to improve trade relations despite US attempts to discourage such efforts



Visit by the Commonwealth Caribbean Diplomatic Corp to the Scottish Parliament

Discussions on the establishment of a Cross Party Group on the Caribbean in the Scottish Parliament, the EU visa regime, ways of increasing the trade and investment relationship, and more frequent exchanges with the Scottish Parliament were among the issues discussed when Caribbean High Commissioners to the UK made a historic visit to Scotland on 12/13 June.

The invitation to visit the Scottish Parliament came from Lord Foulkes in his role as a Member of the Scottish Parliament and as President of the Caribbean-Britain Business Council. During their visit, the High Commissioners also met with the Scottish Council for Development and Industry and discussed with business representatives opportunities for strengthening trade and investment relations in the areas of tourism, renewable energy and a range of other areas. They also discussed possible collaboration in advance of the 2014 Commonwealth Games which will be held in Glasgow.

The High Commissioner for Guyana, Laleshwar Singh, speaking on behalf of the delegation from eight Caribbean states, said: "We believe this visit marks an important step towards closer relations between the Caribbean and Scotland and we would like to thank both the First Minister and the Scottish Parliament for the warm welcome which they have given us.

"The visit has been very fruitful and has given rise to discussion about a number of possible means to increase future cooperation including the creation of a Cross Party Group on the Caribbean in the Scottish Parliament. We also discussed the possible appointment of Caribbean honorary consuls in Edinburgh to better represent the Caribbean, and a regular annual meeting between the Caribbean High Commissioners and the members of the Scottish Parliament.

We were delighted during our visit to meet Alex Salmond MSP, the First Minister, Linda Fabiani MSP, Minister for Europe and External Affairs and to learn more from Parliamentarians and officials about the work and role of the Scottish Parliament."

George Foulkes MSP said: "The Caribbean is one of the regions in the world with which the UK shares the closest of historical ties, and I am delighted that the High Commissioners have been able to visit Scotland and the Scottish Parliament to strengthen the links we already share. "I look forward to working with the High Commissioners and their Governments to find new areas of cooperation for mutual benefit, particularly in the field of trade and investment."

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Events Diary

June 21-25, 2008
Annual Caribbean Tourism Summit,
Washington DC

June 24, 2008
Barbados- Providing Global Business
Solutions, Renaissance Chancery
Court Hotel, London

June 24, 2008
Breakfast Meeting – "Securing our
Future through Economic
Diversification and Effective
Governance" Paria Suites Hotel, La
Romaine

June 28-29, 2008
Carnival de Cuba 2008, Southwark
Park, London

June 30
Cuba Initiative Business Executive
Committee Meeting with new British
Ambassador to Cuba

17 July, 2008
Royal Commonwealth Society Debate
– The Chávez effect: The case of the
Caribbean, Commonwealth Club,
London

27-31 October, 2008
FCCA 15th annual cruise conference &
trade show, Hyatt Regency, Trinidad
and Tobago

For information on any of the above
events please contact Eileen Molloy
admin@caribbean-council.org

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In 2008, Virgin Atlantic celebrates 10 years of flying to the Caribbean. In this time it has become the largest scheduled airline between Europe and the Caribbean, carrying 735,000 passengers on its ten Caribbean routes last year. Virgin Atlantic's initial services to Barbados, St Lucia and Antigua have been supplemented by Grenada, Tobago, Havana, Montego Bay and Kingston flights from London Gatwick, and by Barbados and St Lucia flights from Manchester.

For more details and to make bookings, please visit www.virgin-atlantic.com.

Members of the Anglo Dominican Trade Council attend Parliamentary Group Meeting with Dominican Foreign Minister

The Foreign Minister of the Dominican Republic, Carlos Morales Troncoso (*pictured far right*), addressed a Parliamentary meeting of Peers and MPs during his recent visit to London. Members of the CBBC and Anglo Dominican Trade Council also attended the meeting.



During his speech, the Minister spoke about the recent Presidential elections in the Dominican Republic and President Fernandez's vision for the country for his second term in office. Carlos Morales said that the Government remains wholly committed to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and improving health and education for all Dominicans. He however noted a number of challenges for the country including food security, climate change and severe weather events, and the price of oil and its impact for the price of transport, energy and agricultural products. The DR he suggested can help internationally with these challenges, for example, acting as the bread-basket for the region in terms of food production, and increasing its production of ethanol and other renewable forms of energy; however, he emphasized that the DR will need support from international partners to achieve this. He also said that outcome of the elections confirmed the strength of democracy in the Dominican Republic and its increasing commitment to a less fragmented party system.

Members that would like to a copy of the speech given by the Foreign Minister should contact Stephanie Whittle stephanie.whittle@caribbean-council.org

Friends and Members of the Cuba Initiative Bid Farewell to Lord Moynihan



The Cuba Initiative celebrated the contribution of its immediate past Chairman, Lord Moynihan (*pictured*), at a party on 16 June in London. Lord Moynihan has now stepped down as Chairman in order that he can focus his efforts on London Olympics 2012 after serving for five years as Cuba Initiative Chairman.

Before presenting Lord Moynihan with an antique map of Cuba, Ian Taylor MP, the new Chairman, and David Jessop, the Director of the Cuba Initiative, paid tribute to Colin's continued support and personal commitment to nurturing the relationship between the UK and Cuba. In response, the outgoing Chairman underlined his ongoing commitment to UK-Cuba relations, especially in the field of sport. He also commented that the role of Cuba Initiative Chairman has always been made easier by the fact that the Cuban Ambassadors and Embassy staff in London had always been very supportive.

The farewell party was held at the Bodeguita del Medio Cuban Bar and Grill in Kensington, London, where guests were treated to mojito cocktails and Cuban canapés. To complete the atmosphere, a three piece band provided a background of Cuban music. The Cuba Initiative would like to thank Havana Holdings for their support with the party. Anyone who would like to find out more about the Bodeguita del Medio should visit www.bdelmlondon.com.



Anyone who would like more information about the Cuba Initiative should contact Stephanie Whittle Stephanie.whittle@caribbean-council.org

Meeting of the Cuba Initiative Business Executive Committee with the Cuban Ambassador

The Cuban Ambassador, Rene Mujica, privately addressed the Business Executive Committee of the Cuba Initiative on June 18 at the offices of Standard Bank updating them on current developments in Cuba with particular reference to the programme of reforms which are being introduced and to discuss the opportunities which exist for UK businesses in Cuba.

Barbados- Providing Global Business Solutions



9.30 – 1pm, 24 June 2008, Renaissance Chancery Court Hotel, London

Donville Iniss MP (*pictured*) Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and International Business will be the keynote speaker at an event hosted by Barbados Invest on Wednesday 24 June in London. The Barbados foreign Minister will speak about Barbados' policy towards international investment at the seminar that will highlight some of the opportunities available in Barbados. Also on the agenda is: Utilizing Barbados' suite of legislation for international business competitiveness; Barbados as a centre for financial and other professional services; and establishing a successful business processing outsourcing company in Barbados. *Attendance is free of charge and includes a buffet lunch, however anyone who wishes to attend must contact Jean-Paul Cumberbatch to register for a place* JCumberbatch@investbarbados.org

Royal Commonwealth Society Panel debate - The Chávez effect: the case of the Caribbean

6 pm, 17 July, 2008, Commonwealth Club, London

Chairman: Tony Lloyd MP, Chairman, All-Party Group on Venezuela.

Panel: Darcus Howe (*pictured*), Commentator and columnist for New Statesman, Sir Ronald Sanders KCMG. Further speakers to be confirmed



Since his re-election in May 2006, Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez has actively sought to sign economic trade agreements with all the Caribbean nations. Many Caribbean nations are benefitting from the cheap oil and economic subsidies. The debate will examine the impact that Venezuela's influence has had on political alliances in the Caribbean and the impact which this is having on Commonwealth countries in the region. HE Dr Samuel Moncada, Venezuelan Ambassador and former Minister of Education, will attend the event. *For further details please contact Claire Anholt* claire.anholt@rcsint.org



BVI Showcases Artists in London Exhibit

Demonstrating that the British Virgin Islands are not just about palm trees and financial services, four leading artists from the islands are bringing their work to London in July hoping to make an impact on the London Art Scene, and attract international collectors to their work. Works by Carol Vanterpool, John Black, Jim Scheiner (photo used), and Gath Hewlett will be on show from July 2008 to June 2009 in the Galleries at BVI House. The galleries are open from Monday to Friday between 10 am and 5 pm by appointment. BVI House has kindly invited all CBBC members to a private viewing of the exhibition on 1 July. *For more information please contact BVI House +44 (0) 20 7355 9570.*



First issue of IISC Academic Journal on Cuba is Released

The first issue of the International Journal of Cuban Studies is now available for viewing from the journal website http://www.cubastudiesjournal.org/iics_home.cfm. The journal provides a forum for objective investigation and informed debate about the Cuban experience.

Business Forum of the Greater Caribbean 23-25 September

The 9th Business Forum of the Greater Caribbean will take place in Aruba from 23 to 25 September 2008. The event aims to expand and strengthen trade relations among ACS associate members and member states of the Greater Caribbean region. There will be seminars, business meetings and an exhibition. For further information contact Mrs. Paola Vacca, E-mail: pvacca@acs-aec.org

Belize Tourism Expo (BETEX) 30 July- 4 August

Belize Tourism Expo(BETEX) will take place from 30 July to 4 August 2008 organised by the Belize tourism industry association. The event will be attended by travel trade professionals, Belizean suppliers and the media and will feature cultural shows, social functions, educational seminars, and multiple mini-marketplaces. For BETEX information, visit www.betex.bz or email info@betex.bz.