



Report Published: A New Social Partnership for Jamaica?

Over the past three months the Caribbean Policy and Research Institute (CaPRI) supported by the Caribbean Council has researched how and why social partnership programmes worked in Ireland and Barbados, but previously failed in Jamaica. It explored whether there were lessons to be learnt from the comparative analysis of these and

other countries, and if a new social partnership was possible or even desirable for Jamaica.

The report outlines in detail how research support from Ireland was brought in to assist in a series of consultations undertaken by CaPRI with many stakeholders in Jamaica including the Prime Minister Bruce Golding, the Leader of the Opposition Portia Simpson-Miller, members of the Cabinet, small and large business owners, members of the academic community, and trade unionists.

The results of the research were clear. Virtually all stakeholders agreed that a new social partnership is necessary if Jamaica is to rise to the challenges that it faces – including the prospect of economic and social crises. The research indicates that the successful social partnerships of Ireland and Barbados were formed under similar circumstances.

And what are lessons coming from CaPRI's research and discussions in Jamaica?

One is that a successful social partnership does not simply copy foreign models. It has to be home-grown with local ideas to meet local needs, with the full understanding that this will mean some sacrifices.

The research also indicates that a new and successful social partnership will require the unambiguous support and leadership from the Prime Minister and his government and a willingness of all others partners to engage in a productive dialogue.

Such a partnership, it was suggested, might find a home in a body similar to the National Economic and Social Council in Ireland, consisting of stakeholder representatives and a small number of permanent staff leading policy research. Popular during the consultations, the development of a similar body is one of the recommendations of the report.

Despite present difficulties, and perhaps even because of them, this research indicates that this may be a unique moment for Jamaicans to make social partnership work, and to say to government: We are ready. Let us now, together, sit down.

The Caribbean Council, led by David Jessop, has worked with CaPRI to put this project together. The project was supported by the UK Department for International Development, De La Rue and Virgin Atlantic.

The report is available for download from the Caribbean Council home page www.caribbean-council.org or from Stephanie Whittle stephanie.whittle@caribbean-council.org

(Picture left to right: John Rapley, President of CaPRI and Prime Minister Bruce Golding MP)



Gillian Merron MP invited to be Guest Speaker for House of Lords Reception 21 April, 2009, House of Lords, London

The Caribbean Council has invited Gillian Merron MP, the Minister in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with responsibility for the Caribbean in the British Government to be the guest speaker at this year's annual reception at the House of Lords. Prior to taking up her current position in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Minister was Parliamentary Under Secretary of State in the Department for International Development.

Events Diary

9-13 February, 2009
International E-Commerce Workshop, Havana, Cuba

9-13 February, 2009
Informatica 2009, Havana, Cuba

12-22 February, 2009
Havana International Book Fair, Havana, Cuba

18 March, 2009
Business Roundtable on Global Economic Crisis, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

18-29 March, 2009
UKTI London Trade Visit to the Caribbean

17-18 April, 2009
Fifth Summit of the Americas

21 April, 2009 Reception, House of Lords, London

24-26 March, 2009
Round Table Meeting on Sustainable Cocoa, Trinidad and Tobago

19 June, 2009
Canada and the Cuban Revolution, London

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

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The reception traditionally is addressed by high level speakers and has been able to welcome in the past Douglas Alexander MP, Secretary of State for International Development, John Prescott MP in his former role as Deputy Prime Minister and Hilary Benn MP, in his former role as Secretary of State for International Development.

The 2009 reception once again will have a series of great prizes in its now renowned entry-ticket raffle and rum cocktails will again provide the flavour for the evening.

Invitations will be sent out via email to members of the CBBC, Cuba Initiative and Anglo Dominican Trade Council on during February. For non members, a limited number of tickets are available for sale; however the Council encourages any non members to take up membership so that they may benefit from all benefits provided by the organisation.

Anyone who requires more information about the reception should contact Stephanie Whittle stephanie.whittle@caribbean-council.org.



UKTI London Market Visit to the Caribbean 18-28 March 2008, Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago

UKTI London is running a trade visit to the Caribbean in March. During the visit, the delegation will have the opportunity to meet local companies, joint venture partners and financial and government support services. In addition, all attendees will receive a country briefing in London prior to departure. The approximate cost for the visit is £1670.00 plus a £150.00 admin fee. Those companies based in London may be eligible for a subsidy of up to £780.00. For further information please contact Bryan Treherne bryantreherne@uktilondon.org.uk



Tourism Opportunities Seminar

Jamaica will on 11 February host its second Tourism Outlook Seminar. David Jessop, Executive Director of the Caribbean Council is participating as a speaker at the event, which is the initiative of the Tourism Minister, Edmund Bartlett MP (pictured).

The one day seminar features a number of distinguished speakers from the region and further afield, including Taleb Rifai, Secretary-General Elect, United Nations World Tourism Organization and Mr. William Maloney, Chief Executive Officer, American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA).

The issues to be addressed relate to the impact of the economic crisis on the global industry, the status of the regional marketing strategy, developments in the cruise industry, challenges facing the accommodation sector, airlift, emerging markets and Jamaica's vision for the sustainability of the industry. For more information visit www.visitjamaica.com/tourismseminar.



Economic Challenges facing the Caribbean among issues discussed at Recent Caribbean Board Round Table in Birmingham, UK

The Caribbean Board, the UK community based advisory group to the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office held a round table meeting on 4 February with leading members of the Caribbean Diaspora groups in the Midlands. The meeting included a significant number of Caribbean High Commissioners to the UK.

During the meeting a series of papers were delivered, including one on the economic challenges facing the Caribbean by the Executive Director of the Caribbean Council. The meeting also heard from John Mair on Migration and Freedom of Movement, and Annell Smith of Kings College London on Security Issues. Completing the speaker line up was Rudi Page (pictured) of Statecraft who spoke about Diaspora Engagement.

The consensus was that the Caribbean faced significant challenges and that there was a need for the Caribbean Diaspora in the UK to work together to stimulate trade between the UK and the Caribbean and also to take a more active role in representing Caribbean interests in the UK. For a copy of David Jessop's paper, please contact Stephanie Whittle stephanie.whittle@caribbean-council.org. For more information about the Caribbean Board please contact Mary Maxwell mary.maxwell@fco.gov.uk.



Jamaica UK Investment Forum

Jamaica Trade and Invest, in partnership with DMA Associates and supported by the Caribbean Council, held an investment forum in London on 5 February. Deputy Prime Minister Baugh (pictured with David Jessop), Minister Samuda and Minister Wehby, gave detailed presentations about the opportunities for investment, focusing on the Economic Partnership Agreement, the proposed development of the Caymanas Economic Free Zone ten minutes from the port of Kingston, and the creation of an international financial centre in downtown Kingston.

In addition to the presentations by the visiting Ministers, the forum heard from the Chief Financial Officer of Virgin Atlantic, a Director of Digicel, Dr Trevor Thomas – a tax consultant, and David Jessop of the Caribbean Council, amongst many others. David Jessop delivered a paper on the opportunities provided by the EU CARIFORUM EPA in the services sector.

Premier Members of the Caribbean-Britain Business Council hosted a private dinner for the Ministers the night prior to the event.

Anyone who would like a copy of David Jessop's remarks should contact Stephanie Whittle stephanie.whittle@caribbean-council.org

Institute for the Study of the Americas: C.L.R. James and other Trinidadian Marxists, 1930s-1950s . Speaker: Peter Fraser

5 pm, 11 February, 2009, 35 Tavistock Square, London

The Institute for the Study of the Americas is organizing a lecture on C.L.R. James and other Trinidadian Marxists, 1930s-1950s. The speaker will be Dr Peter Fraser who studied at Sussex University and taught at the University of the West Indies and Goldsmith's College London. He is currently a research fellow at London Metropolitan University. *For more information please visit <http://americas.sas.ac.uk/events/events.php?id=5493>*

Second Roundtable Meeting for a Sustainable Cocoa Economy (RSCE2)

24 -26 March, 2009, Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago

This important event in the cocoa calendar is being hosted and supported by the Government of Trinidad & Tobago. The Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago is scheduled to open the meeting.

The Roundtable meeting will open in plenary session and discuss "Some principles for a Sustainable Cocoa Economy" on the first day. On the second day, stakeholders will break up into group sessions, working on "Standards for a Sustainable Cocoa Economy applicable to Mainstream Cocoa" and the next steps for the RSCE. A field trip for all participants will take place on Friday 27 March. The draft programme for the meeting is available on the Roundtable website www.roundtablecocoa.org.