



# NEWSLETTER

## The Antigua and Barbuda High Commission

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### THIS ISSUE

- 2 **Message from His Excellency Dr Carl Roberts, High Commissioner**
- 11 **PM attends Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Uganda**
- 12 **Antigua and Barbuda calls for implementation mechanism at WTO Aid-for-Trade discussions**
- 14 **Antigua and Barbuda and the UK signs Aviation agreement**
- 15 **PM Spencer addresses Tourism issues at Commonwealth Business Forum in Uganda**
- 17 **PM Spencer to establish Ruskin College Scholarship**
- 20 **Antigua and Barbuda Government reacts to WTO Arbitration ruling**

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### Prime Minister The Honourable W. Baldwin Spencer 2008 New Year's Address December 31, 2007

#### **"My Fellow Antiguan and Barbudans; Residents and Friends of Antigua and Barbuda:**

Today, Antigua and Barbuda stands on the threshold of a New Year - a New Year of opportunities and challenges - both within these 170 square miles and in the international arena.

Globalization has, indeed, created new opportunities for us. However, as a small island developing state, the challenges engendered by changes in the wider political arena and increased competitiveness in the international market are numerous; and if we are not extremely careful, these external factors could *marginalize* vulnerable developing states like ours.

In a nutshell, Antigua and Barbuda faces big issues; however, your government is committed to meeting these challenges at all costs in the interest of you, the people, whom we have always pledged to put first.

In the past, we have demonstrated our determination to provide for the greatest number of Antiguan and Barbudans and to ensure the sustainable development of our economy. We will do no less now, as we persevere in building a nation where no person is left out of the movement towards progress and development.

#### **My Fellow Antiguan and Barbudans; Residents and Friends of Antigua and Barbuda:**

Over the past year we have faced many tests. One such challenge - from which we have emerged with a reasonable measure of success - is our Internet gaming dispute with the United States at the World Trade Organisation.

On December 21, 2007 a Panel established by the World Trade Organization's Dispute Settlement Body issued its report on the matter.



Prime Minister Honourable Baldwin Spencer

*Continued on page 3*



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



*Dear Readers,*

*Each year at this time we are afforded the opportunity to reflect on how we have spent the better part of another twelve months of our lives. A few of us think beyond the obvious commercial activities, the giving and receiving of gifts, the exchange of best wishes and reflect also on how we have responded to God's blessings throughout the year just past.*

*When we stop and think of the missed opportunities to share the blessings given to us by the one source of our faith, Our Sovereign Lord, we should be saddened by the disappointment which must fill our hearts. The Lord has stated in his word that it is better to give than to receive, yet there are many around us who are in need of love, comfort, food, clothing and shelter and we have done very little in response to their obvious need.*

*Our Lord advises us to take time to do these things to the least of our brethren whom we see everyday and by doing so we will be doing his will. It would be as if we were doing*

*these deeds to him and for him.*

*For many of us we struggle at our jobs wondering sometimes how thankless it seems. How we long for more pay, more praise and more recognition. Our true reward comes from God. He asks only that we be the best that we can be in the posts to which he has assigned us.*

*For some of us Christmas is a sad reminder of the loss of loved ones or close friends. A reminder of the questions we had asked ourselves at the time of the sad event and the answers which are still being awaited. It is not, however, for us to demand such answers from God, but only to trust his loving influence in our lives. Sometimes these sad moments cause us to push aside the many good and positive things that the Almighty has done for us. He awakes us each day; he continues to provide for us and to protect us in spite of our attitudes towards him.*

*Other times we see the good things happening to our friends, our neighbours, our brothers and our sisters but not to us. We focus so much on this that we once again fail to see the blessings that are being poured into our cup because these blessings do not measure up to those we perceive being given to others.*

*It is therefore with much joy in my heart that I ask the Lord to continue his blessing in the New Year towards each of you reading this Newsletter. May your desire be to serve him faithfully, to extend love to your neighbour and to do your part to make this world a better place for everyone. I also take this opportunity to wish each of you on behalf of my family and I, the staff of the High Commission and the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year filled with God's Blessing and Peace. Have a Blessed and Peaceful 2008.*

**Dr Carl Roberts  
High Commissioner**



*Continued from cover page*

What this, in effect, means is that we can take counter-measures in the form of the suspension of concessions and obligations against US business interests in the areas of copyright and related rights; trademarks; industrial designs; patents; and protection of undisclosed information.

While your government is dissatisfied with the level of award, we take some solace from the fact that it is an annual award that will remain in place until the United States complies with the rulings and recommendations of the Settlement Body, or until both sides in this dispute reach a mutually agreed-upon solution.

Now that the legal aspects of the case are behind us, we look forward to sitting down with the United States - at the government-to-government level - to chart a course that will ultimately see this matter fully resolved to our mutual satisfaction.

I have already instructed our representative to the WTO, Ambassador Dr. John Ashe, to inform our friend and neighbour to the north that my government stands ready to meet at a moment's notice and to begin discussions on a fair and equitable resolution to a dispute that has dragged on for far too long.

### **My Fellow Antiguan and Barbudans; Residents and Friends of Antigua and Barbuda:**

The issue of crime and violence remains a serious concern of not only the governments and peoples of the region, but of us in Antigua and Barbuda, as well.

Your government is committed to rigorously attacking, in the New Year, this growing culture of crime and violence. We will continue our quest to

resolve political, economic and environmental crimes that have been committed against the people and the landscape of Antigua and Barbuda.

The restructuring and reorganization of the Antigua and Barbuda Royal Police Force, as recommended in the Breau Report, will play a major and decisive role in combating this unwelcome trend.

Commencing in the New Year, there must be changes in the strategies employed by the Force. The force will be provided with additional equipment, including a modern communications system, and the necessary tools to fight the purveyors of crime and violence in our society.

Training of police officers, strengthening of the forensic and intelligence divisions, and increasing joint foot and vehicle patrols with the army will also feature prominently in the government's crime plan for the New Year and beyond.

The removal of tints from motor-vehicles must be continued with greater vigour and determination. There are too many vehicles still on our streets with dark tints. If I can notice them, so should police officers.

The upgrading of the Antigua and Barbuda Coast Guard and the increased patrol of our waters will also receive renewed attention as part of the government's strategy, in 2008, to curb the smuggling of illegal firearms, drugs and other contraband materials into our twin island state.

In November, my government announced that it will introduce a community-lighting programme, "Light Your Neighbourhood," in areas perceived to be riddled with high crime.

The Light Your Neighbourhood

programme will partner with businesses to meet the costs of providing lighting fixtures and installation charges for a comprehensive street-lighting programme.

The overall goal of the programme is to install more than 2,500 street lights throughout Antigua and Barbuda, so as to ensure that suspect and dangerous areas are safer and more welcoming at night.

I am pleased to announce today that, since it was announced in November, our Light Your Neighbourhood programme has garnered support at the local, regional and international levels, and has received particular attention from the governments of Libya and Morocco.

Both countries have jointly purchased an initial 500 street lights and accessories, which will be installed in areas where they are needed most, upon their arrival in Antigua in January.

I thank the government of Libya and Morocco for their show of support for my government's efforts to combat crime, and I am also encouraged by the initial responses from other partners in this regard.

Commendation must go, once again, to the government of the People's Republic of China, which is also partnering with the government of Antigua and Barbuda in the provision and installation of street lights throughout the nation.

In the meantime, the government commends those individuals and organizations that have established neighbourhood-watch groups in an effort to curb the increase in crime.

Crime knows no colour, class

or creed. It affects each and every one of us - therefore it is a concern for every citizen and resident of this nation - no matter our social, political or religious affiliation.

Therefore, I urge members of *other* communities to join the government's preventative measures by establishing additional neighbourhood-watch groups. My government stands ready to provide the assistance needed in this effort.

Equally important to the reduction in crime is the prosecution of individuals who commit crime. Recent events have clearly indicated that the prosecution services in both the Magistrates Court and the Criminal Assizes are inadequate and weak as a result of the unsatisfactory preparation of the cases for prosecution.

The frequency with which matters in the Magistrates Court are dismissed for want of prosecution, or for lack of sufficient evidence; the number of matters in the Assizes which are either withdrawn from prosecution or charges reduced on plea bargaining; and the low number of matters committed for trial are cause for concern.

Additionally, the length of time which elapses before an accused person is tried after he has been charged speaks to a system which continuously results in injustice to both victims and accused persons; frustration of witnesses; and a growing skepticism among a fair-minded public.

This cannot be allowed to continue.

Early in the New Year, I will instruct the Honourable Attorney General to take steps to establish a Working Committee consisting of stakeholder-representatives from the various relevant departments within the Ministry of Legal

Affairs and the Ministry of Justice and Public Safety to prepare a Manual for the establishment of a Crown Prosecution Service.

This Crown Prosecution Service will be under the authority of the Director of Public Prosecutions, with the main objectives being:

- the integration of all police-prosecution services with the Crown Prosecution Service;
- to strengthen, enhance and consolidate the quality of prosecution services both at the Magistrates Court and Criminal Assizes level; and
- to identify and provide adequate professional resources, administrative support, and necessary equipment for the efficient operations of the Crown Prosecution Service.

As a government, it is our responsibility to put in place the necessary mechanisms to ensure that the public is not only protected, but that it maintains a high level of confidence in the criminal-justice system.

It is a responsibility that my government takes very seriously.

#### **My Fellow Antiguan and Barbudans; Residents and Friends of Antigua and Barbuda:**

The high cost of manufactured goods, the increase in shipping and air transportation costs, and the considerable increase in the prices of key staple foods in Antigua and Barbuda and across the region remain key concerns to your government.

Although Antigua and Barbuda can boast of having the largest list of zero-rated items in respect of the Antigua and Barbuda Sales Tax, we recognize that more is needed to contain the impact

of rising international prices on the local cost of living.

We will ensure that the consumer-protection rights are strengthened in relation to goods under Price Control and to those that are sold after expiry or recommended dates of sale.

Government will also place more emphasis, in the New Year, on food production. We will look seriously at providing opportunities for increased food production in order for farmers to meet the demands of consumers. The Ministry of Agriculture will be required to ensure that arable lands are utilised mainly for farming and not for other purposes. The Land Use Policy of the government of Antigua and Barbuda must be put into effect in 2008.

Government is committed to addressing the needs of our farmers and the agricultural sector, in general, and will ensure that the Ministry of Agriculture is fully equipped to meet those needs.

#### **My Fellow Antiguan and Barbudans; Residents and Friends of Antigua and Barbuda:**

Throughout the New Year, your government will continue its efforts, in collaboration with our international partners, to provide the highest level of education for our people.

With the cooperation of the governments of Malaysia, Morocco and Greece; and with the Polytechnic University in Brooklyn, New York, the University of Oklahoma, and the American University of Antigua-School of Medicine, 35 young Antiguan and Barbudans will commence university studies in January of 2008.

In addition, over 100 new

students will receive scholarships to commence their studies in Cuba, China, Malaysia and India in September of 2008.

My government believes that if our nation is to enjoy sustainable development, we must equip our young people with the knowledge and skills needed in a competitive world.

Parallel to the government's programme of providing tertiary education to our young people is the completion of the National Public Library.

The Ministry of Education and its associates must deliver the National Public Library by the first half of 2008. Nothing less will be acceptable.

Today, my government remains committed to ensuring that the critical areas of the National Youth Policy are implemented, as we continue our efforts to empower our most precious resource - our young people.

We will continue to provide avenues for them to express themselves, excel, and develop their skills and talents. Accordingly, the upgrade and expansion of sporting facilities across the island will continue, and we will ensure that the various sporting associations work in the interest of their advancement.

I also call on the adults to fulfil their roles as good parents to the future men and women of this country. Teach them well. Be positive role models to them and show love for them at all times.

A few weeks ago, I announced that I will be instructing the Ministry of Education to designate a day in the school term to be "Role Model Day," when students and young people in church and service organizations will be required to wear their church and or service uniforms as a show of support for the advancement of discipline and

respect for law and order among our young people.

Commencing in the January term of the school year, every last Monday of the month will be designated Role Model Day. I call upon the Pathfinders, Cubs, Scouts, Girl Guides, Red Cross and other church and service organizations to support this initiative. It can only produce positive results in our young people and develop in them pride of belonging to an organization that instils good moral values.

Of equal importance to the government in the New Year is the provision of quality health-care to Antigua and Barbuda. Most of the community clinics have been upgraded, and two new ones are to be built in 2008. New equipment has been sourced for our emergency medical services division, and more training has become available for healthcare providers.

However, the Mount St. John Medical Centre remains unopened.

The Ministry of Health and its associates must ensure that Mount St. John Medical Centre opens its doors to the general public by the first half of 2008, providing top-quality health care service to the nation. Nothing less will be acceptable.

The government's road programme will continue in earnest in the New Year. Focus will be placed on community roads and roadways affected by poor drainage and related problems.

The Ministry of Works, early in the New Year, will outline to the public a comprehensive road plan that will detail road repairs and construction, with timetables that will ensure that communities are served based on their needs.

#### **My Fellow Antiguan and**

#### **Barbudans; Residents and Friends of Antigua and Barbuda:**

In 2008, your government will be called upon to assume leading positions internationally and regionally. The New Year will see Antigua and Barbuda as the Chair of the Caribbean Community, CARICOM; the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, OECS; COFCOR; and the Group of 77 and China of the United Nations.

Our nation, in the New Year, will be thrust into a leadership role on the international stage like never before. This will require us to provide effective solutions to a growing number of global problems. My government believes that, although a huge challenge, the tasks ahead are achievable with the cooperation of our regional and international partners.

As incoming Chair of the G77 and China, I have written to my fellow CARICOM Heads and other international players requesting their support and that of their United Nations delegations, as we seek to ensure that the G77 and China continues to provide the means for the developing world to articulate and promote its collective economic interests and enhance its joint negotiating capacity on all major international economic issues in the UN System - and to promote economic and technical cooperation among developing countries.

For Antigua and Barbuda, we will utilise the opportunities presented to us to champion our "Diplomacy for Development" policy -- to develop strategic opportunities that will enable our nation to sustain our economic development. The coming year for Antigua and Barbuda will be crucial not only for building a better society, but also for the establishment of an

enviable position for our nation at the sub-regional, regional and international levels.

The Group of 77 and China is a key interlocutor for, and champion of, the economic interests of developing countries throughout the UN system.

At the same time, with so many important UN events slated for 2008 -- including the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's 12th meeting in Accra, Ghana, in the first quarter, and the Financing for Development review conference in Qatar in the last quarter of 2008 -- the Group will face many challenges and opportunities to ensure that its principles remain front and centre of the UN development agenda.

Antigua and Barbuda is up to the challenges that the position of Chair of this highly respected body holds. I am confident that my government is fully prepared to lead the international dialogue with a comprehensive understanding of international consensus-building and decision-making processes that will be vital to the successful stewardship of this important Group.

### **My Fellow Antiguan and Barbudans; Residents and Friends of Antigua and Barbuda:**

As your government continues to work to provide the greatest good for the greatest number of our people, we are fully cognizant that with the many and varied challenges, we cannot exist on our own.

In 2007, the Caribbean has been engaged in a series of negotiations towards an Economic Partnership Agreement with the European Union, which has proven to be a valuable partner of Antigua and Barbuda and the region.

With a forward thrust of increasing investment, my government believes that the EPA can make a major contribution to the development of Antigua and Barbuda and our people.

In order to ensure maximum benefit from the EPA, my government, during the first quarter of 2008 -- along with input from the private sector -- will scrutinize the Legal Text of the recently concluded negotiations leading to an Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and CARIFORUM Member States. We view this as a necessary step towards ensuring that we maximize the benefits under the Agreement prior to signature.

Over the past year, Antigua and Barbuda played a pivotal role during the negotiations, always emphasizing that an EPA must translate to corresponding technical and financial assistance for the region's priority sectors and programmes.

We were the leading advocate of the primacy of development support and the elaboration of a distinct DEVELOPMENT CHAPTER in the Agreement.

Antigua and Barbuda engaged in frank articulations of our vision of CARIFORUM-EU cooperation and the economic transformation agenda, in the context of the CARICOM Single Market.

I recall that I wrote a letter, in September, to Prime Minister Owen Arthur, Chairman of CARICOM, and Secretary-General Edwin Carrington, unequivocally stating that development must "constitute the heart of an EPA Agreement".

As a result of our persistence, the Development Chapter was strengthened, and the EU assured the region that the promised assistance will be substantial, and that the Culture Industry, particularly artists from the

Caribbean, will be allowed to practice its trade within Europe.

Additionally, through Antigua and Barbuda's efforts, we have ensured that before CARICOM engages in other bilateral negotiations, the lessons from the EPA negotiations will be studied during a Reflections Meeting in early January 2008. This will allow CARICOM to calculate and calibrate our various positions in the upcoming negotiations with Canada and the United States.

My government believes that the Agreement will provide our services sector with significant opportunities, while creating new avenues for investment. We will ensure that we continue to play a major role in this process.

### **My Fellow Antiguan and Barbudans; Residents and Friends of Antigua and Barbuda:**

The New Year will also see government moving towards formulating a National Policy on Energy which will encompass the use of alternative energy sources and the effective implementation of energy-saving mechanisms and strategies.

It is the government's intention, early in 2008, to sign on to a regional Energy Security Treaty that is designed to increase the utilization of renewable energy from the current level of 9.8% to 20%.

During the coming months, citizens and residents will be called upon to contribute to the transformation of the country's energy-utilization patterns, as we reduce our reliance on fossil fuels in favour of the more environmentally friendly and sustainable renewable-energy sources.

Upon assuming office, the UPP administration made a commitment that every effort will be made to reduce the cost of utilities to consumers. A significant component of achieving this goal is to ensure that the Antigua Public Utilities Authority is in a position not only to be the distributor of utility services, but the producer of utility services in Antigua and Barbuda.

In moving towards that goal, my government has commenced negotiations with the principals of the West Indies Oil Company (WIOC) towards purchasing the remaining 75% shares of that company. Negotiations are at an advanced stage and very shortly an announcement will be made in this regard.

The government regards the purchase of the remaining shares of the WIOC as a strategic move towards ensuring that a national asset remains in the hands of the people of Antigua and Barbuda. Once the government's objective of having 100% ownership of the West Indies Oil Company is completed, it is our intention to further empower our people by offering shares in the company to the public in a manner that will ensure the widest possible participation in this enterprise by the people of Antigua and Barbuda.

"People First" will always remain constant in the decisions we make as a government. It is our guiding philosophy.

"People First" was our philosophy when we introduced the School Meals and School Uniform Grant programmes.

"People First" was our philosophy when we increased the minimum wage and contributions to pensioners.

"People First" was our

philosophy when we introduced the largest list of zero-rated items under the ABST and paid monies to the Half Moon Bay workers who were owed for over twelve years.

"People First" was our philosophy when we raised salaries to public servants by 10%, and "People First" is still our philosophy as we prepare to launch the \$6.7 million annual Senior Citizens Utility Subsidy programme under the PDV Caribe Antigua and Barbuda initiative.

#### **My Fellow Antiguan and Barbudans; Residents and Friends of Antigua and Barbuda:**

The Senior Citizens Utility subsidy, which will give much-needed relief in the area of utility services to over 6,000 persons, is possible through Antigua and Barbuda's participation in the PetroCaribe Initiative established by the government of Venezuela.

In November 2006, PDV CAB celebrated the arrival of its first shipment of some 90,000 barrels of fuel. Since then, over 700,000 barrels of fuel have been imported by Antigua & Barbuda. This places Antigua & Barbuda fourth -- behind the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Nicaragua -- as a major importer under PetroCaribe.

The total purchase price for the imported fuel stands at approximately US\$63 Million. Of this amount, some 40% has been financed at a highly concessionary rate.

In 2008, Antigua and Barbuda intends to further expand the role it plays in the regional context. This development will be closely linked to the Government's acquisition of the remaining 75% shares in WIOC. That acquisition will position Antigua and Barbuda to fill a need that currently exists for an effective and efficient fuel-storage and distribution site

in the region.

Prior to my Government's announcement of its plans to take over WIOC, PetroCaribe member-states were examining a short- and medium-term plan to upgrade and expand a tan farm and sea terminal in northeastern Venezuela, in order to meet the needs of the Eastern Caribbean. The availability of the West Indies Oil Company's infrastructure will uniquely position Antigua and Barbuda as a major player in the distribution of fuel throughout the region.

It is also important to realize that the PetroCaribe Agreement has a much broader context than simply the importation and distribution of fuel. The Initiative is geared towards the creation of socio-economic development, energy security, and the further integration of the peoples of the Caribbean and Central and South America.

The socio-economic development is directly linked to the funding of social programmes from the proceeds of the financed portion of the fuel purchase price. One such project is the Senior Citizens Utility Subsidy Programme. Registration for this programme has already begun for eligible seniors and will continue in earnest in the upcoming weeks.

Surely, no true patriot would deny the social benefit this programme will deliver to such a deserving, yet vulnerable, sector of our society. During 2008, citizens can look forward to the launch of other social projects as my Government advances our "People First" agenda.

Social development projects are also funded by the ALBA Fund, which is another component of the PetroCaribe Initiative. Very shortly,

approval will be granted for a major water-infrastructure project developed by APUA that will constitute a major component of that body's strategic plan, with a total price tag of some US\$8.5 Million.

Antigua and Barbuda's ongoing participation in the PetroCaribe Initiative gives us access to significant material, technological, human and financial resources such as would not be available to us under normal circumstances.

For this reason, my Government is extremely grateful to the Government and People of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. However, I wish to note that no less a debt of gratitude is owed to the Government and People of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago for the support that it has provided - and continues to provide to Antigua & Barbuda through the Petroleum Fund.

By continuing our collaboration with these and other regional and international stakeholders, I am confident that Antigua & Barbuda will realize the required level of energy security and sustainability.

### **My Fellow Antiguan and Barbudans; Residents and Friends of Antigua and Barbuda:**

Throughout 2008, the Sunshine Administration will continue cooperation with our regional and international partners. Our ties with the Republic of Cuba will continue to grow as we enter a New Year faced with new challenges.

Today I pay tribute to the hard work and dedication of Ambassador Marcelino Fagardo towards advancing the relations between Antigua and Barbuda and the Republic of Cuba. I pray God's blessings on him as he goes through a period of recovery from a recent illness.

My government will also continue to cherish our long-standing relations with the People's Republic of China.

January 1, 2008 marks 25 years of diplomatic relations between The People's Republic of China and Antigua and Barbuda. Our diplomatic friendship is akin to one that a brother holds for his brother. Our economic and diplomatic relationship has been based on the principles of independence, equality, mutual respect and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.

Thus, the People's Republic of China, our brother-nation, can be assured that it has a lasting friend in the Government and People of Antigua and Barbuda.

As a further demonstration of China's commitment to Antigua and Barbuda, a Memorandum of Understanding was recently signed with a Chinese state company; this paves the way for negotiations to be finalized for China to finance the expansion, upgrade and modernization of the St. John's Deep Water Harbour, as well as the construction of a new terminal, with all the modern features, at the V.C. Bird International Airport.

These concessionary loans for infrastructural development are made possible under a US\$600 million soft-loan facility, made available by the government of the People's Republic of China to CARICOM countries.

Negotiations are expected to be finalized shortly to allow for work on the Deep Water Harbour expansion and upgrade to commence in a matter of months, and the construction of a new airport terminal early in 2008.

Meanwhile, airside work at the V.C. Bird International Airport -- which

includes the relaying and expansion of the runway, among other things -- will commence in the next few weeks.

### **My Fellow Antiguan and Barbudans; Residents and Friends of Antigua and Barbuda:**

Antigua and Barbuda is in the midst of the greatest upward surge of economic well-being in the history of our nation. Our thriving progress has been marked by your government's sound economic and social policies and programmes. We have worked three years to climb to this peak of prosperity. But we still have much work to do to fulfil the "People's Agenda."

Before us now is a summit where each can endeavour and all will achieve. We pledge to continue building this nation and to serve you, the people. To do this, we must, together as a country, join hands and build a prosperous society.

For my part, I will continue to carry out my responsibilities as your Chief Servant in the interest of you, the people. I also call on the members of my government to set higher standards of their stewardship and to recommit to holding their offices to the highest ideals and principles.

As servants of the people, we must always be reminded that the greatest task before us is not simply knowing what is right, but doing what is right. Doing what is right in the interest of the greatest number of people must be a constant in our decisions.

As a government, and as the head of the United Progressive Party Administration, I pledge always to do what is right for every Antiguan and Barbudan.

As we enter the New Year, I thank God for you, the people of this



great nation. I thank God for the efforts of all of our public servants and members of the private sector who work tirelessly in the development of this land we call home.

I also ask God's blessings on the members of the many civic and voluntary organizations who gave of their time and resources to assist the less fortunate of our society throughout the past year.

I thank all who have expressed kind sentiments and mentioned me and your government in their prayers during the Christmas Season and throughout the year just ended. I further ask for your prayers for God's continued guidance for your Government in the New Year.

May God bless you and your loved ones with health, happiness, peace and security in the New Year and ever after, and may God continue to bless our beloved nation, Antigua and Barbuda.



## Three important instruments of Governance

by  
*H.E Dr. Carl B. Roberts*

Following this year's Budget Statement which was delivered on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2007, it has come to my attention that many of our country's citizens are not fully cognizance of the reasons for presenting each year the budget speech or some of our other tools of governance.

According to Section 92 of the Constitution of Antigua and Barbuda, the Government of the day, through the Minister of Finance, must present before Parliament an estimate of revenues and expenditure for each fiscal year. This must be done no later than ninety (90)

days after the commencement of each financial year. Since the fiscal year for the Antigua and Barbuda is January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>, the presentation before Parliament must be made no later than March 31<sup>st</sup> of the fiscal year for which the estimates apply.

Governments mark the start of each parliamentary year, which most times coincides with the fiscal year, with a presentation speech given by the Head of State, represented in Antigua & Barbuda by our Governor General, Dame Louise Lake-Tack. The presentation speech details many of the plans of the Government for the year and in conjunction with the Government's election manifesto, allows the general public to keep track of the Government's progress in delivering the promises made to the electorate.

How important then are these two actions in the calendar of Parliament and the governance principles which are expected of any Government. As I have said above, the presentation by the Governor General, that is the Throne Speech, gives the plan of action of the Government for the next Parliamentary Session.

In spite of the detailed plans enunciated in the Throne Speech each year, Section 91 of our Constitution mandates that no monies shall be withdrawn from the Consolidated Funds except as required by law enacted by Parliament.

If the Throne Speech is a call to action or the outline of an action plan for the upcoming year, then the Budget Statement gives the indication of how the money for Government's activities will be used and where it is to come from. By using these two presentations, Government demonstrates to the citizens and residents of the State how they are running the country and conducting the business of Government.

Though it is not stated here, the corollary action that follows from these two presentations is a third responsibility of Government. This last action is fulfilled when Government tables before Parliament the Audited Public Accounts for each year. The completion of this last dimension of good governance allows clear comparisons to be made between the budgeted expenditure and estimated revenues and the actual figures at the end of the fiscal year.

Not all of the actions presented in the Throne Speech are direct money items though it could be argued that most activities incur costs which must be covered by the Budget Statement. Other actions in the Throne Speech are expectations that are Government planned actions which they expect will result in financial or other benefits to the country. An example of this is the enactment of New Investment & Incentive Legislation and the expectation that this would result in an increase in Foreign Direct Investment.

Without these three instruments, any country would be deprived of critical aspects of governance. These are, however, just one set of a number of dimensions on which good governance is assessed. The World Bank publishes Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) for many countries (in fact about 212 countries) and the last report issued in July 2007 shows results for 1996, 1998, 2000 and then annually from 2002 to 2006. One of the six dimensions which are assessed is "Voice and Accountability".

According to the 2007 Report, Antigua and Barbuda has shown some improvements in this dimension over the period covered by the report. This is further substantiated by evidence on the ground where Budget Statements are presented to Parliament and

approved before the commencement of the fiscal year. This is a significant improvement over previous practice of the governance and avoids the need to invoke Section 93 of the Constitution. Audited Public Accounts, long overdue for many years, are also being presented and it would not be too long before Audited Statements are presented to the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament in a timelier manner.

I can only hope that the improvements we have seen since 2004 continue apace and that within the next five years Audited Public Statements will be publicly available within twelve (12) months after each fiscal year. When this happens we will have move even further along the path to good governance.

## Tribute to a dear lady at 91 years of age

Miss D. Samuel better known as Miss Charlie was born in Sea View Farm, Antigua on the 2nd January 1916. She migrated to England on 6th June 1962.



When she **Miss D. Samuel** left school, her job was in Pottery Making which included coal pots, water jars and the like in the clay industry. She has always been a very hard working woman, holding three jobs and working her land; planting vegetables, cane, potatoes etc. She continued to work in other areas such as cosmetics and with Bishop Knight when she left Antigua for England.

After her arrival in England Miss Charlie continued to work until she

retired at 60 years of age. She worked at Foxes Glacier Mints.

She has three (3) children - Paultine, Rallyford and Hazeline. She also has sixteen (16) grandchildren, over fifty great grandchildren and three great, great grandchildren and continues to be a strong influence within the family.

Her daughter, Mrs Hazeline Andrews, believes that her mother is the oldest surviving Antiguan living in Leicester.

## Senior citizens to benefit from EC\$6.7M utility subsidy

More than 6000 seniors will soon receive financial assistance with public utilities though a subsidy provided by the Antiguan government in conjunction with PDV Caribe Antigua and Barbuda.

"The Senior Citizen Utility Subsidy Programme, made possible by the Petro Caribe Initiative demonstrates my government's commitment to putting people first. We are a caring government and this financial assistance, by way of a \$100 monthly subsidy towards public utilities, would offer some much-needed relief to our nation's senior citizens," Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer said.

"My government, through PDV Caribe Antigua and Barbuda, will provide some EC\$6.7 million worth of utility subsidies to this deserving group of people who have, over the years, contributed to the development of our twin-island nation," the Prime Minister added.

The programme is open to all individuals who currently receive a monthly benefit from the Antigua and

Barbuda Social Security Scheme in the form of Age Pension, Invalidation Benefit or Old Age Assistance. Continued eligibility will be verified by the twice-annual Social Security life certificate.

Each person who qualifies will receive a booklet of six certificates valued at EC\$100 each. This booklet will be issued twice per year. The certificates, one for each month, can then be used as credit against the designated APUA account(s). Each certificate must be used by its expiration date.

These certificates carry a unique serial number and will be issued in the name of the applicant. They cannot be transferred to a third party. The certificates are not replaceable if destroyed or lost and cannot be exchanged for cash. They can only be used to make payment against the utility accounts that have been designated by the applicant.

The registration phase will begin shortly in St John's and satellite locations around the island and in Barbuda. Once, complete the names are processed and participants will receive their certificate booklets during the distribution phase in early 2008.

Individuals over the age of 80 who already receive free utilities from APUA are not eligible to participate in this new programme.

The Senior Citizens Utility Subsidy Programme is a direct benefit of the Petro Caribe Initiative between the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.





*PM Spencer and Ambassadors Goodwin and Roberts on arrival in Kampala. Seen here in discussion with members of the Commonwealth Business Council*

## PM Spencer attends Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Uganda

Prime Minister the Hon. Baldwin Spencer attended the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting which took place in Kampala, Uganda from the 23rd to 25th November, 2007. The Conference was addressed by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, President of Uganda HE Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni and Commonwealth Secretary General Rt. Hon. Don McKinnon.

Prime Minister Spencer, who led the country's delegation which also included High Commissioner to the United Kingdom HE Dr. Carl Roberts and Ambassador to Cuba and the African Union HE Mr. Bruce Goodwin, said that the meeting addressed a number of issues around the theme "Transforming Commonwealth Societies to Achieve Political, Economic and Human Development."

"The meeting gave us the opportunity to address issues such as Climate Change which is very critical to Antigua and Barbuda as a Small Island Developing State. We believe that this

issue poses a significant challenge to the development of our economy and our people, therefore, there is the need for greater assistance and cooperation from developed countries in addressing this problem," Prime Minister Spencer said.

Other issues discussed during the three-day meeting included terrorism, Education, Information Technology, Health and HIV/AIDS, the Millennium Development Goals and Investment.

Prime Minister Spencer also attended a number of Foreign Ministers' Meetings held on the margins of the Heads Meeting.

## PM Spencer and Baroness Chalker discuss Trade and Climate change with Sir David Frost

Prime Minister the Hon. Baldwin Spencer and former member of the British Parliament Baroness Lynda Chalker were guests of Sir David Frost during a special interview programme at the Commonwealth Heads of

Government meeting in Kampala, Uganda.

The interview, which was aired on Al Jazeera English Channel as part of the "Frost Over the World" Programme, dealt with the issues of Climate Change and its importance to Commonwealth countries and Aid versus Trade.

Prime Minister Spencer issued a call for developed countries to play a more significant role in mitigation action outlining the various vulnerabilities and challenges faced by countries such as Antigua and Barbuda.

"As Small Island Developing States, we contribute far less to the cause of Climate Change however we are the worst affected. We see that hurricanes for example are becoming more frequent and more intense causing greater destruction to our economies within the region. We need for developed nations to act more responsibly in addressing this issue," noted Prime Minister Spencer.

The Antigua and Barbuda Leader on the issue of Aid versus Trade said that his government is of the view that the issue should be aid to trade because this will enable countries such as Antigua and Barbuda to achieve sustainable growth and development through trade.

"In order for Aid for Trade to work effectively, both donors and recipients must agree to work together in areas such as policy support, infrastructural financing and support, trade adjustment financing and supply side support such as assistance to companies and small industries to build the ability to become competitive," said PM Spencer.

The "Frost Over the World"



**PM Spencer and Baroness Chalker discuss Trade and Climate Change with Sir David Frost**

programme is broadcast every Friday at 6:00 p.m. GMT on Al Jazeera English Television via London to countries around the world including Africa, the USA and Doha, Qatar.

## Antigua and Barbuda calls for implementation mechanism at WTO aid-for-trade discussions

On the 22nd November 2007 the WTO concluded its first ever two-day Global Aid-for-Trade Review at the Ministerial level with a debate in the General Council among members on the outcomes of the review, that was intended to provide feedback to WTO Director General Lamy on the future direction of WTO monitoring of this important initiative.

In her summary report to the Council, WTO Deputy Director-General Valentine Rugwabiza assured members that, in relation to the three objectives of the review, namely: to take stock of what is happening on Aid for Trade, to identify

what should happen next, and to improve WTO monitoring and evaluation, progress had been made on all fronts. She also noted that: "One meeting alone cannot give a complete picture of something as complex as Aid for Trade, but I believe we can all agree that we are much more knowledgeable and better informed today than we were a year ago. We know, for example, that after a long-term decline in spending on trade and growth-related projects since the 1980, the pendulum is starting to swing back - and that if current trends continue an additional \$8 billion in Aid for Trade should be available by 2010 reaching a total of some \$30 billion."

In her statement to the Council, Antigua and Barbuda's representative, Mrs Natasha George, Senior Foreign Affairs Officer in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said, "We have full intentions of taking advantage of the benefits of being a member of the WTO. Indeed Antigua and Barbuda is the smallest WTO member to use the dispute settlement mechanism of the WTO. So we understand the benefits, but to have them fully realized, we need assistance.

Such assistance can be through AID-for-Trade...this is notwithstanding the fact that there is still a lack of clarity on any formal request mechanism for Aid-for-Trade. This is obviously something we all as WTO members must address-that is a *clear, simple, AID-for-Trade mechanism*.

Throughout the review, there were repeated calls for improved monitoring and evaluation of Aid-for-Trade. These include a greater emphasis on country monitoring, on capturing the regional dimension of Aid for Trade, and on expanding the scope of the donor - and partner- country self assessments - which were considered highly useful tools for encouraging countries to focus more on trade. The view was that while the existing monitoring mechanism is not perfect, it provides a very solid foundation on which to build.

In her response to these calls, Mrs. George noted that "measurement, monitoring and evaluation are important so that we can judge what progress we are making. That is pellucid! This was a recurring theme this week. Antigua and Barbuda believes that many solutions came from the discussions this week, especially those with the major donor agencies. We hope that we will not spend another year or two discussing how best to monitor and evaluate Aid-for-Trade. As (*Finance*) Minister Sithauen of Mauritius of Mauritius noted this morning, let's focus on *actual implementation* so that we can have real eradication of poverty through trade."

This call for implementation was also echoed by the WTO Deputy Director General, who said that "we look forward to hearing from the respective regional banks and organizations about their plans for implementing the recommendations as

soon as possible. My proposal is that we hold a stocktaking meeting - at a technical level and involving key stakeholders - in the first half of next year in order to assess progress. The aim then would be to hold discussions on how the strategies can be made operational at regional meetings towards the end of the year. Progress in implementation by providing more and better Aid for Trade in key identified priority sectors at the country, regional, global and sector level - reinforced by the newest chapter of WTO/OECD monitoring - will be the focus of the next Global Aid-for-Trade Review."

## Finance Minister welcomes World Bank initiative on Trade

Minister of Finance and the Economy Dr. Errol Cort welcomed the initiative announced by World Bank Group President Robert B. Zoellick, in his keynote address to Ministers, heads of regional development banks and key organizations, who met in Geneva for the first global review of the World Trade Organization's "Aid for Trade" initiative.

In his address, Zoellick said that the Bank will assist countries in expanding efforts on trade so as to enable them to take advantage of the global market to accelerate economic growth and overcome poverty.

"This announcement could not have come at a better time," said Minister Cort. "Right now, momentum is building on the aid for trade agenda, and international attention is being paid to the notion that developing countries need to develop their trade infrastructure, institutions and policies if there are to be successfully integrated into world markets," he said.

Zoellick told the high-level gathering that development assistance

should be made available to countries undertaking reforms to lower their costs of trading and use exports for growth, and that the World Bank Group will be increasing its development support to trade activities. He announced several areas for additional trade-related efforts by the World Bank Group (WBG). These areas include:

- (a) Increased support to country programs on trade and competitiveness, including policy analysis, lending and technical assistance;
- (b) More resources for trade-related infrastructure;
- (c) Expanded programs for financing trade through the Bank's private sector arm, the International Finance Corporation (IFC);
- (d) Expanded assistance in trade facilitation, including logistics, transport and supply chains;
- (e) More investments in training and capacity building for policy-makers, particularly in low-income countries;
- (f) Greater work on tools to help countries analyze trade obstacles, as well as indicators comparing countries, such as the recently released Logistics Performance Indicators, to guide policy makers to areas in need of improvement. These tools will be made freely available to all countries; and
- (g) Further development of knowledge on how to harness globalization for growth and overcoming poverty, and to inform key trade policy debates.

Zoellick said the exact amount of the increase in trade-related activities provided by the WBG will depend on country demand, and on whether countries make trade a priority part of their development strategy. Moreover, he indicated that a successful



*Minister of Finance and the Economy,  
Dr the Honourable Errol Cort*

replenishment by donor countries of the International Development Association (IDA), which is the part of the WBG that provides interest-free loans and grants to the poorest nations, will also determine how much additional resources will be available for aid for trade.

Developing countries received as much as US\$21 billion a year in aid for trade over 2002-2005, according to the definition now used in WTO/Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) estimates. These estimates include all investments in transport, energy, and telecommunications infrastructure. The Bank is working with the WTO and OECD to refine the measurement of aid for trade.

About US\$3.1 billion of this amount is provided by the International Development Association (IDA). However, the Bank's ability to help "depends crucially" on further replenishing IDA's financial resources. To this end, the World Bank Group expects to contribute some US\$3.5 billion of its own resources to IDA, and

has also asked the developed country donors to increase their contributions.

The Geneva conference is intended to take stock of what has been happening on the aid for trade front around the world and identify how additional aid can help low-income countries build their capacity to integrate into and benefit from global markets.

## Antigua and Barbuda and the UK Signs Aviation Agreement

The United Kingdom and Antigua and Barbuda on Wednesday signed a new aviation agreement, which removes most of the remaining restrictions on air services between the two countries.

The agreement, which is in effect, updates the previous agreement of 1985. It was signed in the House of Commons by Aviation Minister the Hon. Harold Lovell, and the UK Aviation Minister the Hon. Jim Fitzpatrick.

Minister Jim Fitzpatrick said: "I am very pleased to sign this new agreement, which will be good for passengers, for the aviation industry and for the development of the tourist industry in Antigua and Barbuda."

"It confirms the already close links that exist between our two countries. And it represents another step forward in liberalizing air services by removing outdated restrictions on airlines' ability to fly people to the places they want to go."

Minister Harold Lovell said: "This is an historic agreement as it enhances the legal framework of air transportation between Antigua and the United Kingdom. It provides a number of



*Minister of Aviation  
The Honourable Harold Lovell*

new features whereby we can designate other carriers from Antigua and Barbuda and CARICOM to fly to the UK, while the UK can designate carriers from the European Union to fly to Antigua."

"It also provides greater flexibility between air transportation and brings a greater sense of formality to transportation and tightens up areas which were previously unregulated. Our tourism industry, through the signing of this agreement will receive a considerable boost."

## Memorial Service of the Rt. Hon. Sir John George Melvin Compton

On the occasion of the passing of the Rt. Hon Sir John George Melvin Compton SLC, OCC, KCMG, LLB and the subsequent Memorial Service held in the United Kingdom, the following letter was received by His Excellency Dr Carl Roberts from the Honourable Stephenson King, Prime Minister of Saint Lucia:

### "Your Excellency

The Government of Saint Lucia is pleased to convey its deepest appreciation to you for the part which you played in ensuring the success of the Memorial Service held at Westminster Cathedral on November 10, 2007, in memory of the life of the Rt. Hon. Sir John George Melvin Compton SLC, OCC, KCMG, LLB, the late Prime Minister of Saint Lucia.

We wish in particular to thank you for taking time off your very busy schedule to participate in the service, and specifically for undertaking one of the readings. Sir John was not only a leader of Saint Lucia but one of considerable regional stature. Your presence certainly helped to highlight this fact, and on behalf of the Government and people of Saint Lucia, I am honoured to express thanks.

Please accept Excellency the assurances of my highest consideration."

*Here's Wishing*  
  
*Everyone*  
  
*a very Blessed*  
  
*and*  
  
*Prosperous*  
  
*2008*

## PM Spencer addresses Tourism issues at Commonwealth Business Forum in Uganda

Prime Minister the Hon. Baldwin Spencer has called for the Caribbean to become the world's first "Carbon Neutral" tourism destination and urged large developing and industrialised nations to take decisive action to address global warming.

The Prime Minister was speaking during the Commonwealth Business Forum at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Kampala, Uganda.

The forum focused on tapping the potentials of travel and tourism in the Commonwealth and PM Spencer pointed out to delegates that the sector is the foremost export sector in Antigua and Barbuda and the Caribbean.

Seventy-five per cent of Antigua and Barbuda's economy is dependent on travel and tourism.

PM Spencer told the forum that while the benefits are unquestionable, with its ability to stimulate other sectors and help develop and diversify regional economies, tourism faces major challenges which need to be addressed. These, he said, include the challenge of global warming and environmental sustainability.

"The creation of 'green tourism' can provide the region with win-win situations. In this regard it is important to craft strategies to support the transition of the Caribbean region to become the world's first "Carbon Neutral" tourism destination, thereby affording the region a unique labelling and branding platform



*Prime Minister Spencer addressing the over five hundred persons assembled for the Business Forum*

that will support growth within the global eco-sensitive client market," he said

This suggestion came in response to the threats associated with global warming which, he noted, poses serious potential problems such as rising sea levels, coastal erosion, flooding, the loss of mangroves and other coastal ecosystems or even, in a worst case scenario, the submersion of some islands in the region.

The Prime Minister noted that addressing such issues and balancing firm action to reduce the industry's carbon footprint with sustainable growth of the tourism sector are among the challenges faced within the industry. "Developing countries are responsible for a negligible percentage of global green house gasses emissions but we stand to bear the brunt of climate change impacts because of our inherent vulnerability.

"As the region must adapt to climate change and take proactive action that would decrease climate change impacts, we must insist on mitigation or the reduction of green house gasses emissions by the industrialised and large developing countries," he said.

## Antigua and Barbuda Introduces BizJet – To-Yacht Service

Antigua and Barbuda is now prepared to cater to the luxury traveller with the re-introduction of the newly renovated FBO Operations, that provides seamless transfer from private plane to yacht .

Tourism Officials at the Ministry of Tourism were on hand at the VC Bird International Airport, late last week to witness one of FBO's airside to yacht transfer of 287 passengers.

Joyce Henry, Marketing Manager for the Caribbean Region stated that, "The Ministry of Tourism welcomes this BizJet-to-Yacht Service to Antigua noting that this type of service is a clear indication that Antigua & Barbuda is poised for the high-end traveller whose interest is getting to the Caribbean in a short time and then sailing around in their luxury yacht.

She noted that the service will definitely enable the Ministry of Tourism to achieve greater penetration of the luxury travel market and attract more of this desired type of visitor to our destination.

"It is indeed another aspect of our tourism product that we will be excited to promote and we are ready to partner with FBO 2000 on this venture."

Makeda Michael, proprietor of FBO 2000, noted that the Operation has looked after many high profile guests (including Royal Families) over the years and understands the needs of their clients.



*Antigua and Barbuda and UK delegations during discussions at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London*

## PM Spencer and UK MP Meg Munn discuss Developmental Issues

Whilst in the United Kingdom in late November 2007 Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda the Hon. Baldwin Spencer and UK Parliamentary Under Secretary at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister Meg Munn held extensive discussions on a wide range of issues of interest to Antigua and Barbuda and the Caribbean.

Prime Minister Spencer during the meeting advanced the need for the United Kingdom to support Antigua and Barbuda and other countries within the region in their quest to provide tertiary level education to their people. "In our effort to develop our human capital we believe that it is necessary for the United Kingdom to further advance the relations it has with the Caribbean and provide further assistance in education," Prime Minister Spencer said.

The Prime Minister also stated that links could be created with regional educational institutions which would ensure the success of any programme.

Minister Munn outlined that her government has been examining various areas in which there could be closer cooperation between the two countries and educational development was high on the agenda. She pledge to maintain focus on this issue during her tenure.

The issue of the reform of the Royal Antigua and Barbuda police force was also discussed with Minister Munn. Prime Minister Spencer said that he has held discussions with the UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Canadian officials in Uganda during the Commonwealth Heads of Government on the issue.

He reiterated the urgency of the matter and outlined that his government is seeking to implement a number of recommendations made in a recently commissioned report.

Minister Munn said that her government is finalising discussions on the issue and how best the UK can assist Antigua and Barbuda. She said that her government is willing to provide the requested assistance considering its critical nature.

Discussions were also held on

the UK's reform of its overseas based offices and the UK CARICOM Forum which will be held from 14th to 16th April 2008.

Both Prime Minister Spencer and Minister Munn pledged to continue the close relations that currently exist between Antigua and Barbuda and the United Kingdom.

## PM Spencer to Establish Ruskin College Scholarship

Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda and former student of Ruskin College, Oxford United Kingdom, the Hon. Baldwin Spencer, announced his government's intention to establish a scholarship programme for students to pursue Trade Union Studies at Ruskin College.

Prime Minister Spencer made the announcement during a visit to Ruskin College, where he met with the Principal and staff of the 108 year old institution along with three of his professors while he was a student there from 1971 - 1973.

"It was a nostalgic moment to walk the grounds of Ruskin after thirty years. To see the room where I studied and most importantly to be able to interact once again with some of my professors was truly a pleasant emotional experience for me," said the Prime Minister.

"I credit Ruskin College a great deal for my love for workers rights. It provided me with a strong foundation and the knowledge gained there helped greatly in all of my trade union encounters in Antigua and Barbuda and the region," he added.

The Prime Minister said that



he has decided to establish the scholarship programme because he wished to maintain the link with the institution and it has contributed greatly not only to his education but also a number of other trade unionists in Antigua and Barbuda. Senators Chester Hughes and David Massiah are also graduates of Ruskin College.

Ruskin College was established in 1899 specifically to provide educational opportunities for working class men, who were denied access to university. It was deliberately placed in Oxford, the city in which its young American founders had studied, because the city symbolised the educational privilege and standards to which ordinary people could never previously have aspired.

Ruskin College became, in turn, a symbol of working people's education. It served as a model for labour colleges around the world, and Gandhi made a point of visiting during a brief stay in Oxford in 1931 because he had been so inspired by the writings of John Ruskin on workers' education, just as the College founders had been.

Ruskin's educational work may be divided into further education activity (including short courses and external



*PM Spencer with two of his former professors at Ruskin College*

trade union courses), supported by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), and higher education work, funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and validated by the Open University Validation Services (OUVS).

The College's work in higher education constitutes:

- A one-year full-time Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) that currently recruits to six pathways: English and Creative Writing, History, Law, Studying Society, Labour Relations and Law, and Women's Studies (part-time).
- Three Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE) in English Studies: Creative Writing and Critical Practice, International Labour and Trade Union Studies and in Social Change.

- Four BAs in English Studies: Creative Writing and Critical Practice, International Labour and Trade Union Studies, Social Work and Sociology, Politics and Economics.

- A Foundation Degree in Youth and Community Work, with five core options and fourteen optional ones: seven offering a pathway in Youth Work and seven in Community Development. This course will be offered at BA level from 2008.

- Three MAs in International Labour and Trade Union Studies, Public History and Women's Studies.

Prime Minister Spencer will soon announce the start up date of the Ruskin College Scholarship Programme.



*Prime Minister Spencer seen here with the Principal of the Institution, Dr Audrey Mullender, at its Walton Street Campus*





*PM Spencer with the Lord Mayor of Leicester, Mr Suga Christopher and High Commissioner Dr Carl Roberts and Mrs Roberts*

## St. John's City and Leicester City United Kingdom to be twinned

Plans are progressing for the twinning of St. John's City, Antigua and the city of Leicester, England.

The announcement was made during a Civic Luncheon hosted by the Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor of Leicester, England Councillor Gary G. Hunt in honour of the visit of Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda the Hon. Baldwin Spencer.

Prime Minister Spencer and Mayor Hunt agreed during the luncheon that Antigua and Barbuda's High Commissioner Dr. Carl Roberts and Mr. Suga Christopher of the Antigua and Barbuda Leicester Association should proceed with discussions with members of the Council of Leicester to finalise the arrangements.

Prime Minister Spencer said that Leicester and Antigua and Barbuda has a long standing relationship with the highest number of Antigua and Barbuda nationals residing in England living in Leicester.

Councillor Gary Hunt said that he welcomed the move and will give it his

full support. Leicester is known as the Caribbean of the United Kingdom because of its high concentration of West Indians.

## Government aims to reform Police Force during first quarter of 2008

Prime Minister the Hon. Baldwin Spencer has announced that his government is aiming at implementing a number of the recommendations contained in the Breau Report to reform the Royal Police Force of Antigua and



Barbuda during the first quarter of 2008.

During a town-hall meeting with Antiguan and Barbudan nationals living in Leicester, England Prime Minister Spencer in response to a question on crime said that he is in receipt of a report from retired Canadian Mounted Police Alphonse Breau who reviewed the force recently. He noted that his government has been in discussions with the UK and Canadian Governments and United Nations police officials in an effort to make arrangements to implement the recommendations.

He pointed out that the report that speaks to many short, medium and long-term changes within the force to tackle crime and better serve the public has been shared with the UK and Canadian officials. "There are a wide range of issues that need addressing and there is considerable preparatory work that is being carried out behind the scenes in order to implement the recommendations," Prime Minister Spencer said.

It was also noted that government is determined in a very comprehensive way to move forward and is currently putting in place a super structure to deal with the police's ability to fully tackle crime and at the same time restructure the force.

"It is going to be a costly affair to deal with this issue, however government is prepared to expend the funds needed to deal with the issue. The three entities we have been speaking with have pledged their assistance and we will be moving forward," he added.

The country's leader who is responsible for National Security matters said that he could not disclose the specifics of the report as government realize that it is a sensitive issue and is treating it as such.



*Above and centre - PM Spencer, organizers and nationals of Antiguans and Barbudans living in Leicester, England*

## VACANCY NOTICE

### Particulars of the Post of Chief Magistrate, Magistrates Court Ministry of Justice & Public Safety

<b>Post:</b>	Chief Magistrate
<b>Qualifications:</b>	Bachelor of Law Degree Legal Education Certificate At least seven (7) years experience as an advocate in a Court having unlimited jurisdiction in civil matters in some part of the Commonwealth.
<b>Salary:</b>	\$69,240.00 per annum.
<b>Travelling Allowance:</b>	\$ 8,736.00 per annum (provided the officer maintains a car for the performance of official duties)
<b>Housing Allowance</b>	\$18,000.00 per annum.
<b>Duty Allowance:</b>	\$18,000.00 per annum.
<b>Payment in lieu: (of Private practice)</b>	\$36,000.00 per annum.
<b>Utilities:</b>	
Telephone	Limited to local calls
Water	Free
Electricity	Free
<b>The Officer will be required to contribute towards the Educational Levy, Medical Benefit and Social Security Schemes. There will be also a deduction in the form of personal Income Tax. Employment will be subject to Medical fitness.</b>	
<b>Vacation Leave:</b>	Twenty-seven (27) working days per annum in accordance with existing regulations. (which said leave shall be taken during the life of the contract).
<b>Sick Leave:</b>	Thirty (30) calendar days during the period of twelve (12) months.
<b>Duties:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Be responsible for the administration of the Magistrate Division.</li> <li>(b) Adjudicate all criminal, quasi-criminal and civil cases within the limits prescribed by the Magistrate's Code of Procedure Act, Cap. 255 and any other law.</li> <li>(c) Conduct coroners' inquest and licensing sessions.</li> <li>(d) Conduct of Juvenile court.</li> <li>(e) Hear affiliation matters, certain matrimonial matters and other matters relating to the custody of children.</li> </ul>

- (f) Preside over certain Appeals Boards as stipulated by Law (example. Income tax and Property tax etc.)
- (g) Perform certain judicial and administrative functions (e.g., issuing of warrants and granting of bail) when called upon to do so by the Police on Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays.

Gratuity: Twelve and a half percent (12.5%) of aggregate salary payable on the completion of the employment.

- Hours of Work:
- (1) Mondays to Thursdays 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Fridays 8:00 a.m. To 3:00 p.m.
  - (2) Notwithstanding (1) above, the nature of the duties will require the Officer to perform work outside of the hours mentioned above, in addition to Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays when necessary.

Applications stating qualifications, experience, the names and addresses of at least two referees, along with copies of Certificates should be sent to:

**The Permanent Secretary  
Ministry of Justice  
New Office Complex  
Parliament Drive  
St John's  
Antigua W.I.**

## Antigua and Barbuda Government reacts to WTO Arbitration ruling

On the 21st December the government of Antigua and Barbuda reacted to the issuance of the report of the arbitrators of the WTO Panel in its dispute over Internet gambling services with the United States. In an unusual and lengthy opinion, the panel of arbitrators ruled that Antigua could apply trade sanctions through the suspension of US intellectual property rights, but limited Antigua and Barbuda's annual damages to US \$21 million (EC \$56.7 million). This amount will remain in place until the US comes in compliance with the rulings and recommendations of the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body, or until it reaches a mutually agreed settlement with Antigua and Barbuda under the Article 21 of GATS agreement.

Nevertheless, the country's Minister of Finance and the Economy, the Honourable Dr. L. Errol Cort, expressed his government's mixed emotions over the highly-anticipated ruling.

"Although we are pleased that the extraordinary sanction of the suspension of intellectual property right protection for US interests has been given to us - only the second such authorisation in WTO history - we are disappointed by the portion of the decision limiting our annual compensation to such a mere fraction of our industry's lost revenues," said Minister Cort.

"We believe that this portion of the ruling is flawed and may have far reaching implications for the future of dispute resolution at the WTO, particularly for its small developing country members. That being said, we

can and do intend to make the most of what we can from this ruling," he said.

The Minister further observed that the objective of this process is not to actually apply sanctions, but to encourage the United States government to negotiate with his government towards a fair and mutually satisfactory resolution of the dispute.

"Despite the size of the award, the value of WTO - sanctioned suspension of intellectual property rights should not be underestimated. We think that this decision, as terribly flawed as it may be, should still have the desired result of getting the US to sit down with us and seek a amicable resolution to our disagreement. In this regard, we look forward to meeting with the US delegation in the very near future in an effort to have this matter fully resolved," said the Minister